



Agenda Report

TO: CCCSWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: PAUL MORSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LOIS COURCHAINE, PROGRAM MANAGER
DATE: JULY 22, 2010

SUBJECT: HOME-GENERATED MEDICAL SHARPS; COMMUNITY DROP-OFF PROGRAM

SUMMARY

The State of California banned medical sharps (e.g. needles, lancets, pen needles) from landfills beginning in September, 2008. Since that time Authority staff has attempted to work with retailers and the medical community to establish take-back locations for those items. However, staff has had very little success in getting the cooperation of sharps retailers to play a role in their disposal. As a result, staff has established two different strategies for collection of sharps that were approved by the Board at the June Meeting when the FY 2010/2011 Budget was approved. At the June Meeting, AWS made a verbal proposal to implement a community sited drop-off program. As a result, staff has requested proposals from other providers in order to compare the AWS proposal to other possibilities—and to elicit more detailed information on the AWS proposal—so that a decision can be made on moving forward.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Authorize staff to implement the community Sharps Drop-Off program with Allied Waste Services.

DISCUSSION

The first approach to implementing a sharps disposal program was to quickly implement a home-generated sharps disposal program at no-cost to the Authority in FY 1010/11. This program is a mail-in program by Waste Management's Health Care Solutions Division that is being implemented during this month.

The second portion of the Sharps Disposal Program was discussed and approved at the June, 2010 Board of Directors' meeting. This community-based program entails locating one drop-off container in each CCCSWA member agency community, with an additional container being placed at the Martinez Household Hazardous Waste Facility for our residents using that facility. Residents will be required to purchase their own personal sharps container, but the disposal is at no cost to the sharps user. Estimated costs of this portion of the program have been included in the Diversion Incentive Fund's FY 2010/2011 budget.

As we sought the viability of a community based drop-off approach to managing this waste, staff initially received informal proposals for collection and disposal of sharps from Allied Waste Services (using their contractor, Curbside, Inc), as well as Waste Management Healthcare Solutions Division. This information was used as a basis for staff's estimates of program costs.

AWS's General Manager made a verbal proposal to the Board at the June Meeting stating that a drop-off program, sponsored by AWS using Curbside Inc. as the provider, has been implemented by AWS in Clayton, Martinez, Pleasant Hill and Benicia. It was stated at the meeting that adding CCCSWA communities to this already existing program will save costs due to economies of scale. Furthermore, AWS stated that they would implement the program at no cost to the authority (stated in writing within their proposal) for a period of one year allowing for an accurate compilation of annual costs which the CCCSWA Board could place within the rates or in the DIF as felt appropriate after a year's experience with the collection program.

Using an RFP process enabled Staff to obtain additional information from AWS which allowed evaluation of AWS's original verbal proposal against other providers of this service. The following providers of this type of service were invited to propose: Waste Management's Health Care Solutions Division; Stericycle; Clean Harbors; and AWS (using Curbside Inc. as its contract service provider). Follow up calls were made to all companies to clarify any questions regarding the submitted proposals. The analysis of each proposal is detailed below.

Clean Harbors. Staff contacted Clean Harbors prior to the proposal due date and was informed they were not able to bid on the project within the time frame set in the request for proposal.

Stericycle. Stericycle's proposal was incomplete and staff had to contact their representative on several occasions to obtain or clarify required information. Their proposal did not include a community-based drop-off collection approach. Instead, the containers that they specified for the program were plastic carts or tubs that would have to be managed by the "host" personnel. This approach is problematic because it would create undue safety and staff cost burdens on the host location.

The estimated costs for the Stericycle program are:

- \$65 for each 20 gallon collection container
- \$0.0127 additional per-pound charges added on for State fees, which were not stated by the other proposers.
- \$25 annual California Small Quantity Generator Fee; again, not state by the other proposers.

Stericycle did not provide their experience (with community drop-off) in their proposal. However, staff research found that all their experience is with medical providers, such as hospitals and clinics. To our knowledge, Stericycle, while having vast experience in servicing medical sites with collection and disposal of various bio-hazard and medical wastes, has no experience with community based drop-off locations outside of medical facilities.

Waste Management Healthcare Solutions. Waste Management provided a very comprehensive proposal that included a community-based kiosk program.

Outlined costs contain several different components:

- \$150 for each 28 gallon container collected
- \$195 per-month "kiosk" rental fee for each location
- \$20 per-occurrence and \$35 per-hour labor fee for sharps that are deposited loose or that are not in an authorized sharps container. These charges would be very difficult to estimate, therefore costs for the entire program may be hard to predict.

Healthcare Solutions is a relatively new subsidiary of Waste Management, and as such, they appear to have no actual experience in this type of program that provides collection locations in the community.

Allied Waste Services/Curbside Inc. Allied Waste submitted a proposal to provide a community-based sharps drop-off collection program. The program will be serviced by Curbside, Inc. under contract with AWS.

The proposal costs include:

- \$155 for each 44 or 20 gallon container collected
- Estimated \$50 per month for managing the entire program
- The kiosk rental fee is included in the cost of collection
- There is no extra charge for improper disposal of sharps

The charges outlined by Allied are the most predictable and lowest overall. In addition, they have offered to begin the program at no charge for the first year.

Allied Waste Services began managing community sharps programs in 2009, with the cities of Clayton, and Benicia. In early 2010, AWS teamed up with Curbside, Inc., a special-waste service provider that has extensive experience working with local governments on this type of program throughout California. Curbside, Inc.'s local programs now include collection in Benicia, Clayton, Vallejo, Martinez, and Rossmoor as well as in East County.

CONCLUSION

The Allied Waste proposal, which would provide a preliminary no-cost home-generated sharps program for one year, will allow staff to gain cost and volume data that can be considered by the Board and used to budget for the program in the future. Furthermore, staff will also be able to garner valuable information about what issues our agency might encounter with such a program.

Making convenient sharps disposal options available to CCCSWA ratepayers will increase the likelihood that they will be properly disposed, thereby increasing solid waste workers safety from possible "needle sticks" and will provide CCCSWA customers with an appropriate disposal option for their sharps since the State of California has banned this waste stream constituent from landfill disposal.

**Medical waste transporters need to be registered with the State of California's Department of Public Health.*