

SAFE TRANSPORTATION AND THE PROPER HANDLING OF TEXTILES

All healthcare textiles will be handled and collected in accordance with OSHA regulations and federal guidelines with the goal of minimizing potential exposure to patients, hospital personnel, or laundry personnel to Bloodborne pathogens or other infectious agents. All soiled healthcare textiles will be assumed to be contaminated, and Universal Precautions shall apply at all times to all personnel who handle soiled textiles.

In order to separate the soiled textile processing area from clean textile processing and storage, the facility is divided into two sections. The first is the soiled side of the plant in which the soiled textiles from the accounts are received, sorted, and loaded into washers. From this section of the facility, the textiles after they have been washed, move to the finish side of the plant. The finish side encompasses the drying, ironing, folding and packing sections.

TRANSPORTATION AND PROCESSING OF SOILED TEXTILES

The collection of soiled textiles begins at the point of collection designated by the customer in accordance with their contract. All soiled textiles should be enclosed in reusable laundry bags or disposable plastic bags placed within carts by hospital personnel before they are picked up from the accounts. These collection bags must functionally contain wet or soiled textiles, preventing contamination of the environment during collection, transportation and storage prior to processing. The drivers should have no direct contact with the soiled textiles. In case of a bag accidentally tearing open, disposable gloves and antiseptic hand sanitizer are to be maintained in all vehicles. The driver should first put on disposable gloves, then pick up any soiled textiles that may have fallen onto the truck bed, and finally

should remove the gloves and sanitize their hands. If they still at the facility, they should also wash their hands there. All drivers will receive training in Bloodborne pathogen and the proper handling and transporting of soiled textiles and will be offered the hepatitis vaccination program. If a spill occurs and is noticed at a location other than the plant, a disposable spill kit is maintained in the vehicles to be used for this purpose. Drivers should closely follow the instructions provided in the kit for the products contained in it.

When soiled textiles are loaded onto a truck, care must be taken to ensure the soiled textiles never come in contact with clean textiles. Whenever possible, all clean textiles should be removed from the truck before any soiled textiles are loaded. When the route includes multiple deliveries, the carts should be kept as separate as feasible. Care must be taken that the carts of clean textiles remained covered, and that no soiled textiles comes in contact with it. Soiled carts should always be anchored in place so that they do not tip over and soiled textiles fall out.

The employees sorting and working with the soiled textiles are required to wear the required personal protective equipment. This includes a full set of scrubs, long-sleeved impervious lab coat, shoe covers, hair net, and gloves. Face masks are worn as appropriate. All soiled sort employees and washroom personnel must follow Universal Precautions when handling the textiles. The washer-extractor operator is required to wear PPE when loading soiled textiles into the washer. The tunnel operator is required to wear PPE if a bag of soiled textiles opens and they are picking up the soiled textiles to place it into a different bag. Upon leaving the soiled side, all employees are required to remove their personal protective equipment and thoroughly wash their hands. Hand washing facilities are conveniently located next to the sorting deck. Soiled PPE is to be placed in the designated containers.

Any sharps found in the textiles are immediately placed in a sharp's container located on the sorting deck. Any medical waste that is found is immediately placed in a contaminated waste container for pick-up by an appropriate agency.

Eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses are not permitted on the soiled side of the plant.

New employees attend an educational in-service which discusses the company's infection control plan, blood borne pathogen standard and the service the company provides. Employees are not to work on the soiled side sorting area until they receive the proper training.

The textiles are properly sorted by category by the soiled sort personnel. Any sharps, needles etc., discovered in the textiles are placed into a sharp's container located in the area and logged on the "Sorting Deck Sharps Received - Daily Log". Any regulated medical waste is placed into the red Stericycle pails to be picked up by the medical waste disposal company. Any drugs or pharmaceuticals which are found are placed in the designated container by the cart dumper marked "Drug Disposal".

The textiles are then washed through either the tunnels or washer extractors and continue to the appropriate dryer for processing. If the textiles are processed through a tunnel washer, it enters on the soiled side of the plant and exits on the clean side. The textiles are then sent by the finish side rail system for ironing, folding and order completion. If the item is processed through a washer extractor, care must be taken to ensure that clean textiles coming out of the washer extractors does not come in contact with soiled textiles. After the soiled textiles are loaded into a washer extractor, the loading area of the washer shall be sprayed with a disinfectant to ensure the clean textiles coming out of the washer does not contact a soiled surface.

Separate carts are used for soiled textiles going into the extractor and clean textiles coming out of them.

All textile carts used for soiled textiles must pass through the cart washer as they are sent from the soiled side to the clean side of the plant. All carts are dried at the end of the cycle.

The clean textiles are placed in the hospital carts and covered with poly protective wraps. The carts are weighed on an electronic scale for accurate billing and production scheduling. The textiles are delivered to the accounts in the company trucks. The trucks are swept out on the soiled side after unloading and disinfected using UV Disinfection. A log is maintained in the truck bed.

Washing and Drying Process

The wash formulas have been tailored to our accounts' needs by a representative of Gurtler, Inc. Care has been given to ensure proper balance needed to achieve maximum washing properties, minimum fabric damage, softness, whiteness and maximum germicidal properties.

Wash formulas are monitored using bi-monthly titrations performed by a representative from Gurtler Inc.

All wash formulas are automatically controlled to respond to proper amounts of wash product, temperature, water, time and mechanical action.

Components used by Tri-State in the control of bacteria include:

- High water temperatures (in excess of 160°F)
- Mechanical action

- Detergents
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Oxcellerate
- Sour at proper ph. level
- Softeners
- Ironer chest temperatures of at least 300 degrees
- Dryer temperature of 225 degrees

Sanitization of Finish Side Equipment Prior to Start-up

Finish side equipment (including folders, linen trays, work tables, belts and conveyors) is cleaned as scheduled during the evening.

Each morning, this equipment will be sanitized as follows:

1. Feeding surfaces, trays, and tables shall first be wiped off with a general-purpose cleaner to remove any lint that may have accumulated overnight.
2. After this, surfaces shall be sanitized by spraying them using a ByoPlanet Electrostatic Sprayer containing a 1 to 1 (8 oz. per gallon of water) mixture of Pathocide.
3. The surfaces should be sprayed maintaining a distance of 3 feet using an easy rhythmic motion (side to side or up and down) to thoroughly treat the area.

Finish Side

Care should be taken while handling clean textiles to keep it away from the face and body as well as to prevent it from coming into contact with the floor. Food and drink should also be kept away from the clean textiles.

In-Service Education

All employees must attend the appropriate training in services for educational purposes such as: Infection Control and Bloodborne Pathogen Standards, Hazardous Communication (Right to Know) and Back Safety. Management members are encouraged and do attend formal outside educational seminars to keep current with standards and to enhance their understanding of textiles use and the laundry processing environment.

Housekeeping

Tri-State follows a regular schedule of housekeeping procedures designed to minimize contamination of clean textiles items. Floors and equipment in the soiled textiles area are cleaned on a regular basis with the appropriate cleaning supplies. The ceiling has been equipped with fans which automatically blow down accumulated lint each night. All clean textiles are covered before this takes place. Cleaning is performed each evening in accordance with a schedule maintained in the PrevM program. Each morning before start-up the finish side is sanitized (see policy 2.2.2.3. Cleaning, Sanitization and Disinfection). A day shift housekeeper maintains the plant's cleanliness throughout the day.

The shipping carts are cleaned before moving from the soiled side to the finish side in the cart wash.

The responsibility for maintaining a clean work environment is shared by all employees of Tri-State.

Quality Assurance

Tri-State puts forth diligent effort in its quality assurance program to deliver to all accounts clean, sanitized textiles with minimal amounts of stained and torn pieces. The maintenance and washroom personnel check wash detergent, bleach, PH and sour softener quantities.

The management personnel keep constant communication with each account to aid in accurate information regarding special handling, requests and concerns.

Stain and mending bags are provided at each account to ensure that unsatisfactory textile items are removed from the system and the hospital is not charged for any reprocessing.

The Quality Assurance mender has received instruction regarding the proper handling of worn, torn or stained items.