

Abstract plant growth
is also affected by



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Abstract

The paper is for the opinion that the disposal of medical wastes on the environment has negative effects to the general public. Therefore the manner in which this waste is disposed on the environment should stop unless analysis is conducted to prove otherwise. Until then, the concerned parties should do more analyses so as to determine more effects which are accompanied by this move of disposing medical waste on the environment.

The disposal of waste on the environment has contributed to numerous effects to both human and animals. In humans major diseases are caused whereas the animals contribute to the spread of undesirable effects in the food chain cycle. Worse still, the soil that is used for plant growth is also affected by this waste and this could lead to low harvest due to poor soil structure. In essence, proper measures should be adopted as the only solution to this problem. The measures should hence be initiated by the hospitals officials who are at the forefront.

Introduction

Medical wastes occupy a larger percentage whenever pollution on the environment is mentioned. This is a common occurrence since the number of hospitals in most countries continues to rise as the number of population increases. Therefore these hospitals play a vital role as far as human health is concerned since they are dedicated to safeguard that.

Even with such motives, some if not all of the hospitals continue to pose a greater risk to the humans whom they claim to care for if they go around disposing their waste in uncontrolled manner. African countries for example

Tanzania, has been on the limelight for lack of proper mechanism of disposing this waste. For the developed countries, this is a minor issue since measures are always in place for handling this problem. However the comfort is not enjoyed in the developing countries because they lack the strict measures deployment.

If strict measures on the disposal of this waste are deployed, developing countries will no doubt have a brighter future as far as medical wastes on the environment are concerned. According to Mato (2), direct exposure of medical waste brings about reproductive system damage, carcinogenic effects, respiratory damage and other effects which could go unnoticed to the affected persons. Damages of this nature can be quite expensive when treatment is undertaken. For some countries the process is not even affordable meaning that they will have to depend on well wishers and this could take time risking the lives of the affected even more. Such consequences can be handled by a few while for some it could be “ the never ending nightmare”. Human resources can be at a greater risk if the ground water gets contaminated.

Contamination normally begins at a slow pace and within no time, the existing or adjacent aquifers also get affected. The aquifer source will continue to serve the residence of that area without knowing the risks at hand. This can even go on for years without the contamination being detected not unless a monitoring system is employed and the reality is detected. The exposure can therefore cause permanent damage to the concerned parties (Mato 5). The Views paper (63) denotes that some hospitals have a tendency of disposing their wastes in open dustbins which

are meant for ordinary wastes such as papers. This is a very risky move since it exposes its hazardous effects to the general public. Children are at a greater risk of such disposal since they may start playing around with such items unaware of the risks.

Worse still, the accumulation of this waste may go for days before being collected by the relevant authorities. This in the long run may form breeding grounds for harmful bacteria among other things. The view paper adds that the medical waste is normally composed of heavy metals which are known to emit harmful elements when exposed to the environment without proper rules. The fumes produced could cause damage to a person's respiratory organ (74). According to Thornton et al, Waste products also affect the soil since it may harm the necessary elements normally present in the soil.

In essence, the toxic waste can degrade the usefulness of this soil making it unworthy for plant growth. When such waste is exposed to the soil then this in turn makes the soil weak meaning that it cannot support any plant or if it does, the plant does not reach its maturity level. Worse still the toxic waste can destroy the present organisms which reside in the soils and which makes the soil fertile (45).

To add to this, Wildlife and animals are also affected by such waste product. (The Views paper 8). The dumping sites of this waste can also pose a greater danger when domestic animals are allowed to roam near them; this move ideally introduces pathogenic organisms into the food chain and the cycle may continue for years to come. The Views paper also adds that the waste on the environment causes a number of nuisance such as bad odors,

blockage to the walk paths among other things. The plastics waste bags are normally contaminated in the soil and also affect the numerous events on the soil such as percolation. A dangerous move is when the burning of these bags is undertaken since they release toxic fumes into the environment hence this may cause blockage to the breathing organs (85). Also noted by Thornton et al. (20) is that Pit latrines areas are also used as the dumping sites for this waste and as a result the waste products starts getting into contact with human being as it begins to decompose.

This can be witnessed from the bad smell that may begin to stink from such a site. (Mato 15). Chlorinated dioxins and other compounds are among the most harmful substances on the environment and the accumulation of these substances is harmful to both man and animals alike. If this dumping of solid medical waste persists in the environment, it ends up accumulating thus causing some effects on different food chains. Reports indicate that a sizeable number of this contamination has reached a large scale level.

In addition, the view papers continue to say that polyvinyl chloride plastics are the primary cause of harmful dioxin category, which happens to be quite dangerous (14). According to Mato (15), the cycle of toxic products could reach the mothers milk meaning that the baby may also be affected and this can be a serious case since the baby's system is generally weak and with such an exposure it will be for it to survive. Accordingly, it has been argued that the exposure of medical waste usually takes effect in small doses.

This means that an exposure on the environment which happened, say one year ago may start showing its signs at later date. After this time, a person's

body may be damaged on the inside without prior knowledge and the doctors may not be able to treat such as a condition. Worse still, it could prove expensive if a number of tests are required as it's usually the case. For some patients who have had exposure to the medical waste, they may be requested to undertake numerous visitations to the clinics so as to get the right medication while for others they may be required to use medications on regular basis.

Conclusion

As discussed here in, careless disposal of medical waste can be very harmful to both the environment and animals.

To avoid such, stringent measures must be taken while handling and disposing such waste; this can be done by enacting rules and policies which must be followed without fail. If this approach is undertaken, developing countries that are facing this waste problem will be guaranteed of a safe and a well conducive environment at all times. Offenders should be punished accordingly as the only solution since it has proved viable in the developed countries. In essence, there is still hope regarding the medical waste being disposed on the environment since the governments in the respective countries have embarked on the ideal policies and measures designed to work wonders. Other than that, public awareness should also be encouraged in both the rural and urban areas without limitation.

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