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## **Health institutes urged to segregate biomedical waste**

Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: Few hospitals segregate biomedical waste in different coloured bags, based on the nature of each material and hazards it could pose, as prescribed under the Biomedical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1998, said Chairman of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) A.S. Sadashivaiah.

Speaking at a general body meeting of the Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association here on Sunday, he said many hospitals failed to segregate and place human and anatomical wastes in yellow, sharp objects and tubing in blue or white, and discarded medicines and incinerator ash in black bags.

The KSPCB, which oversees biomedical waste treatment facilities in hospitals in the State, had submitted a report, following which the Lok Adalat of the Karnataka High Court directed the State Government to set up liquid biomedical waste treatment plants in its hospitals in the city.

Mr. Sadashivaiah said the KSPCB also oversaw biomedical waste treatment in 652 small nursing homes and hospitals which had less than 100 beds. Many of these institutions did not have facilities for biomedical waste disposal and destruction of sharp objects such as needles and surgical equipment.

The KSPCB, however, has devised a way to address the problem. "We have started a scheme,"

Written by Administrator

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Mr. Sadashivaiah said, “wherein a nursing home can pay one year’s fees and get authorisation for three years. Specialised firms dealing with biomedical waste disposal will regularly visit the authorised nursing homes/hospitals and take away the waste at a prescribed rate. Private hospitals are being motivated to subscribe to this scheme, which is now mandatory,” he said.

He said that once the small health institutions were covered, the KSPCB would cover 11,000 clinics and veterinary hospitals in the city.

Mr. Sadashivaiah said that except for districts such as Bangalore and Mysore, facilities for biomedical waste disposal were yet to improve. Although 23 districts had put in place mechanisms such as incinerators and places for deep burial of waste, they were not up to the prescribed standards. Six districts had no facilities at all, he said.

Hospitals should ensure responsible disposal of waste, he said.

Mr. Sadashivaiah said the KSPCB did not have adequate regulating and monitoring personnel. “There are 200 vacancies for such posts,” he said and added that they were being filled.

Police Commissioner Shankar M. Bidari said that the police had been directed to accept complaints of medical negligence, but not to initiate action without seeking expert advice.