

# Contracting Change on Expired Medical Items Makes a \$337,000 Difference

Corry Weidman-Sibell, a material examiner in Warehouse (Whse) 19 turned a \$200,000 bill into a \$137,434 rebate for DDJC. Weidman-Sibell works in Whse 19 coordinating the disposal of medical items that cannot be issued. In previous years her budget to dispose of medical items could be anywhere between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

However, in 2000, as a result of her initiative to seek a different contractor, DDJC paid nothing for disposal of medical items. Instead, the Defense Supply Center Philadelphia has received \$68,963, and is scheduled to receive another \$68,471. The change is a result of Weidman-Sibell's suggestion calling for a contract that would recycle or recover rather than dispose. She will get a \$2,770 suggestion award for her efforts.

In years prior, medical items such as penicillin, vaccines, dextrose solution, antiseptics and up to 5,000 other medical items which were expired, damaged, or returned in a condition that could not be reissued, Weidman-Sibell would arrange for their disposal. This usually meant calling one of six or so different contractors who would handle that particular pharmaceutical item.

"Some contractors would only take items that could go in a landfill," noted Weidman-Sibell. "Some would only take items that would go to an incinerator. Some would take only liquids."

After watching a Public Broadcasting Service program about a small company that was taking the same types of medical items and recovering or recycling them, she did some research.

"I figured that as much disposal material we generate, there must be something similar that we could do," she recalled.

She started contacting veteran's hospitals and military medical centers to find out who was disposing of their expired pharmaceuticals. She found EXP Pharmaceutical Waste Management Inc., in San Mateo, CA who would take all of our not ready for issue items.

Not only did this contractor eliminate the requirement to segregate the material, it also arranged with manufacturers to buy back certain items.

Last year EXP hauled away 50 pallets of medical items. Under the terms of the contract, EXP charges DDJC nothing to haul away the pharmaceutical items. After recycling, recovering and disposing of the medical items, EXP takes 12 percent of the revenue. The remainder is returned to the U.S. Government. "Very few items can't be recycled or recovered," noted Weidman-Sibell. "There are several pharmaceutical companies that have arrangements with clearing houses to buy back their products."

So far this year, EXP has hauled away 101 pallets of medical items not ready for issue.

Corry Weidman-Sibell checks the listing of recommended disposal methods for a gallon of antiseptic solution. As a result of her suggestion instead of paying between \$200,000 and \$250,000 per year to dispose of pharmaceutical items, the Uncle Sam is getting paid. She is scheduled to receive a \$2,770 suggestion award.



*Material Examiner, Corry Weidman-Sibell.*

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