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GUIDANCE FOR EVALUATING MEDICAL WASTE TREATMENT TECHNOLOGIES

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DISCLAIMER

The material presented in this document has been funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under contract number 68-WO-0032. It is a final report that has not been subject to the Agency's peer and administrative review. The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and are based upon previous EPA sponsored evaluation of medical waste treatment technologies, as well as current thinking regarding medical waste treatment, and do not represent official Agency policy.

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ABSTRACT

The Medical Waste Tracking Act of 1988 (MWTA) requires EPA, among other things to evaluate national medical waste issues. Section 11008 of the MWTA requires EPA to prepare a series of reports to Congress on various issues related to medical waste. Specifically, Sections 11008 (a)(6) and (7) require EPA to evaluate available and potentially available methods for treating medical waste and their ability to render medical waste noninfectious or less infectious, and unrecognizable and otherwise protect human health and the environment.

This document presents guidance for the evaluation of the effectiveness of medical waste treatment technologies to reduce or inactivate microorganisms that may be present in medical waste. The treatment technologies addressed in this guidance document are:

- Incineration
- Steam Autoclaving
- Chemical Treatment, Mechanical/Chemical Treatment
- Nonionizing Radiation
    - Microwave Irradiation
    - Radiofrequency Irradiation
- Gamma Irradiation (no test method)

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