

This CD ROM is a result of several healthcare guidance documents coming into existence around the same time and the need for one tool where healthcare facilities could have access to these documents and other valuable healthcare resources regardless of connection to the internet.

Through Regional EPA healthcare initiatives, namely Region's 1 and 2, it was established that many healthcare facilities pose environmental and public health concerns. Hospitals contribute to the presence of toxic chemicals such as phthalates, mercury, and dioxin in the environment. In addition, hospitals are also generators of a wide variety of hazardous wastes (e.g., chemotherapy and antineoplastic chemicals, epinephrine, pharmaceuticals, solvents, formaldehyde, photographic chemicals, radionuclides, and waste anesthetic gases), which many are mismanaged, and hospitals produce two million tons of solid waste which is 1% of the total municipal solid waste in the U.S.

Many hospitals have only one person in charge of all health, safety and environmental issues and it is very difficult for one person to manage all the environmental aspects of a healthcare facility let alone the health and safety issues as well. A hospital may have, for example, laboratories, operating rooms, pharmacies, radiological facilities, cafeterias, housekeeping and laundry units, fleet maintenance facilities, boilers, medical waste incinerators, emergency generators, grounds and landscaping facilities, underground or above ground oil and fuel storage tanks, air conditioning and refrigeration equipment, morgues, lead-based paint, and asbestos. As a result, they are regulated by a myriad of environmental statutes including the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Oil Pollution Act and the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act, not to mention the various state and local regulations that may be more stringent than the federal laws.

This CD ROM is a tool that will help the user better understand the healthcare sector's relationship to the environment and to help them come into compliance, maintain compliance, and go beyond compliance.