

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Robert Cename, Deputy Finance Director <i>RC</i>	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Finance Room 454, City Hall		
	SUBJECT	23-0201R Informational Hearing - Medical Waste Incinerators		

DATE:

TO

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400

March 6, 2024

The Department of Finance is herein reporting on City Council Bill 23-0201R, Informational Hearing – Medical Waste Incinerators, FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Department of Public Works, the Baltimore Health Department, Baltimore City hospitals, institutions that make use of medical waste incinerators in Baltimore City, and any other relevant stakeholders to discuss: (1) which local hospitals send waste to medical incinerators in Baltimore City and which local hospitals do not; (2) what, if any, oversight mechanisms these hospitals have in place over their hazardous waste disposal service contracts; (3) the sustainability and environmental justice commitments local hospitals have made and how those commitments may conflict with service contracts the hospitals have with medical waste incineration companies that have long histories of environmental violations; and (4) what hospitals intend to do in the immediate future to mitigate the negative effects of their medical waste disposal on Baltimore’s communities.

Background

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) have had primary responsibility for the permitting and regulation of medical waste in Maryland, since the Federal government Medical Waste Tracking Act expired in 1991.

MDH defines and regulates medical waste are spelled out in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). MDH medical waste regulations are split into two groups, people or institutions who generate and handle medical waste, and those that treat and dispose of medical waste. The regulation of medical waste can be found in COMAR 10.06.06. MDE is responsible for permitting and regulation of all aspects of special medical waste transportation and requires medical waste handlers to notify MDE of medical waste activity.

Fiscal Analysis

The City of Baltimore does not have a contract with a medical waste incinerator. For medical waste disposal, the city has been using the service of BWS Biomedical Waste Services (BWS), a Baltimore County-based medical waste firm, since the mid-2000s. BWS does indicate, on its website, that it does use a waste-to-energy incinerator for some of its waste disposal purposes. It is unknown to the Finance Department at this time, what if any City generated waste is disposed of through an incinerator.

In Fiscal Year 2023, Fire, Police, and Health Departments spent \$34,264.83 for services provided by BWS. In FY24, this figure is \$13,782.96 as of mid-February 2024. BWS’s service is used by the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) Health facilities, Fires’s EMS teams, and BPDs Crime laboratory.

Conclusion

The Depart of Finance is happy to speak to the expenditures mentioned in the Fiscal Analysis section of the report.

cc: Michael Mocksten
Nina Themelis