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**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL  
HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGY  
COMMITTEE**

*Mission Statement*

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the mission of the Health, Environment, and Technology (HET) Committee is to study, review, and recommend policies to improve overall public health and welfare, achieve environmental justice and sustainability, and promote the adoption of, and equitable access to, technology to better meet the needs of all City residents.

**The Honorable Danielle McCray  
Chair**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024  
10:00 AM**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

*Council Resolution 23-0201R*

**Informational Hearing – Medical Waste Incinerators**

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## BILL SYNOPSIS

**Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology**

**Resolution: 23-0201R**

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### Informational Hearing - Medical Waste Incinerators

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**Sponsor:** Councilmember Porter

**Introduced:** November 20, 2023

**Purpose:**

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.

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### Agency Reports

Department of Public Works	Favorable w/ comments
Department of Finance	Comments

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## Analysis

### Background

This resolution addresses concerns related to medical waste incinerators in Baltimore City. It seeks to invite representatives from various city agencies, including the Department of Public Works and the Baltimore Health Department, as well as stakeholders such as Baltimore City hospitals and institutions utilizing medical waste incinerators. The purpose of the hearing is to discuss several key issues, including which local hospitals utilize medical incinerators, oversight mechanisms governing hazardous waste disposal service contracts, sustainability and environmental justice commitments made by hospitals, and immediate actions to mitigate the negative effects of medical waste disposal on Baltimore communities.

This resolution is significant for Baltimore as it addresses pressing environmental and public health concerns related to medical waste incineration. By convening stakeholders and city agencies for an informational hearing, the resolution provides a platform to examine the current practices surrounding medical waste disposal and identify potential conflicts between environmental commitments and service contracts with incineration companies known for environmental violations. The resolution underscores the city council's commitment to promoting sustainability, environmental justice, and community well-being by fostering dialogue and seeking actionable solutions to mitigate the adverse impacts of medical waste incineration on Baltimore's neighborhoods and residents.

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### Additional Information

**Fiscal Note:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Reporting Agencies, Bill 23-0201R.

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*Deontre Hayes*

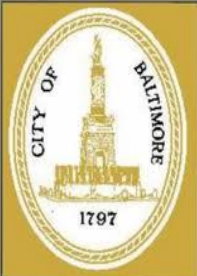
Analysis by: Deontre Hayes  
Analysis Date: March 18, 2024

Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396-1260

# **HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

## **AGENCY REPORTS**

**SEE ATTACHED**

<b>FROM</b>	<b>NAME &amp; TITLE</b>	Richard J. Luna, Interim Director	CITY of BALTIMORE  <i>MEMO</i>	
	<b>AGENCY NAME &amp; ADDRESS</b>	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	<b>SUBJECT</b>	City Council Resolution 23-0201R		

February 20, 2024

**TO:**

Health, Environment, and Technology Committee

I am herein reporting on City Council Resolution 23-0201R introduced by Council Members Porter and Bullock.

The purpose of the Resolution is to invite representatives from the Departments of Public Works, the Baltimore City Health Department, and Baltimore City hospitals and institutions that make use of medical waste incinerators in Baltimore City. The intent of the informational hearing is to determine which local hospitals send waste to Baltimore City medical waste incinerators, what oversight mechanisms these hospitals have in place over their disposal service contracts, how these hospitals' sustainability and environmental justice commitments may conflict with waste disposal contracts with medical waste incineration companies having long-standing environmental violations, and what these hospitals intend to do in the immediate future to mitigate the effects of medical waste disposal on impacted Baltimore communities.

While the Department of Public Works is not privy to hospitals' private contracts with special medical waste transporters and disposal facilities, the following information is offered to the Committee in the hopes of facilitating its discussions.

There is a distinction made between special medical waste and hazardous waste. Hazardous waste is regulated by the U.S. EPA and state regulations under the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Special medical waste is the portion of the medical waste stream contaminated by blood, bodily fluids, or with potentially infectious materials that could pose a risk of transmitting infections. Medical waste is not covered by federal environmental laws, nor is it regulated by the EPA. Except for OSHA standards and NIH guidelines for the handling of special medical waste, medical waste is mostly controlled by state laws and regulations.

The Honorable President and Members  
of the Baltimore City Council  
February 20, 2024  
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In Maryland, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has regulations that define special medical waste and the criteria for evaluating what treatment methods are required for safe disposal (COMAR 10.06.06). The Maryland Department of the Environment issues special medical waste generator ID numbers and certifications of special medical waste haulers and regulates the transporting of medical waste (COMAR 26.13.11 - 26.13.13). Depending on the type of special medical waste, treatment is required before disposal either by autoclaving, chemical disinfection, cremation, disinfection, mechanical destruction after decontamination, or other alternative methods that meet the regulations criteria.

Baltimore City's recently adopted Ten Year Solid Waste Management Plan (2024-2033) estimates that approximately 5,700 tons of medical waste is generated within the City. The Plan lists the following medical waste facilities located within the city's borders:

- Triumvirate Environmental Medical Waste Transfer Station (2300 Sun Street), a privately owned environmental and medical waste acceptance facility;
- Stericycle, Inc. (5901 Chemical Road), a privately owned facility that accepts chemotherapeutic, pharmaceutical, and pathological waste that is shipped to its facility in Haw River, North Carolina, where it is incinerated;
- Daniels Sharpsmart (6611 Chandlery Street), a private facility that accepts medical waste; and
- Curtis Bay Energy Facility (3200 Hawkins Point Road), AKA Curtis Bay Medical Waste Services, a privately owned medical waste incinerator (with energy recovery), with the resulting ash shipped out-of-state for landfill disposal.

The City's Quarantine Road Landfill does not accept medical waste.

The Department of Public Works supports the intent of City Council Resolution 23-0201R for information gathering on this important topic. Representatives of the Department will attend the Committee hearing.



Richard J. Luna  
Interim Director

RJL/MMC

<b>FROM</b>	<b>NAME &amp; TITLE</b>	Robert Cename, Deputy Finance Director <i>RC</i>	CITY of <b>BALTIMORE</b> <b>MEMO</b>	
	<b>AGENCY NAME &amp; ADDRESS</b>	Department of Finance Room 454, City Hall		
	<b>SUBJECT</b>	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

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 23-0201R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmembers Porter and Bullock

Introduced and read first time: November 20, 2023

Assigned to: Health, Environment, and Technology Committee

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REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, Health Department

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A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Medical Waste Incinerators**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Department of Public Works, the Baltimore  
4 Health Department, Baltimore City hospitals, institutions that make use of medical waste  
5 incinerators in Baltimore City, and any other relevant stakeholders to discuss: (1) which local  
6 hospitals send waste to medical incinerators in Baltimore City and which local hospitals do  
7 not; (2) what, if any, oversight mechanisms these hospitals have in place over their hazardous  
8 waste disposal service contracts; (3) the sustainability and environmental justice  
9 commitments local hospitals have made and how those commitments may conflict with  
10 service contracts the hospitals have with medical waste incineration companies that have long  
11 histories of environmental violations; and (4) what hospitals intend to do in the immediate  
12 future to mitigate the negative effects of their medical waste disposal on Baltimore’s  
13 communities.

14 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the City  
15 Council invites representatives from the Department of Public Works, the Baltimore Health  
16 Department, Baltimore City hospitals, institutions that make use of medical waste incinerators in  
17 Baltimore City, and any other relevant stakeholders to discuss: (1) which local hospitals send  
18 waste to medical incinerators in Baltimore City and which local hospitals do not; (2) what, if any,  
19 oversight mechanisms these hospitals have in place over their hazardous waste disposal service  
20 contracts; (3) the sustainability and environmental justice commitments local hospitals have  
21 made and how those commitments may conflict with service contracts the hospitals have with  
22 medical waste incineration companies that have long histories of environmental violations; and  
23 (4) what hospitals intend to do in the immediate future to mitigate the negative effects of their  
24 medical waste disposal on Baltimore’s communities.

25 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Director of the  
26 Department of Public Works, the Commissioner of the Baltimore Health Department, relevant  
27 stakeholders, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.  
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.