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## 22 hospitals fined for poor waste handling

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By Our Correspondent

LAHORE

The Punjab Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has fined 22 public and private hospitals across the province for not obeying the hospital waste management rules, 2005, during year 2009.

Officials said the department had sent the cases of hospitals to an environmental tribunal for non-implementation of the rules during year 2009. They said the hospitals were fined by the tribunal which also directed the department to continue pursuing the cases against the hospitals till implementation of the rules.

The hospitals included Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Lahore, (Rs 400,000), Mayo Hospital, Lahore, (Rs 300,000), General Hospital, Lahore (Rs 200,000), Jinnah Hospital, Lahore (Rs 50,000), Umer Hospital, Lahore (Rs 30,000), Mumtaz Hospital, Lahore (Rs 30,000), Heart and International Hospital, Rawalpindi (Rs 10,000), Al-shifa Hospital, Vehari (Rs 10,000), Jinnah Medical Center, Multan (Rs 10,000), Al-Huda Medical Center, Multan (Rs 10,000), Anum Medicare Center, Multan (Rs 10,000), Sameen Zafar Medical Center, Multan (Rs 10,000), National hospital, Multan (Rs 10,000), Punjab Medical Center, Multan (Rs 10,000), Sayal Hospital, Multan (Rs 10,000), Talal Medical Clinic, Multan (Rs 10,000), Taiba Medical Center, Multan (Rs 10,000), Medicare Hospital, Multan (Rs 10,000), Al-Kareem Hospital, Multan (Rs 10,000), Ayesha Clinic, Multan (Rs 10,000), Central City Hospital, Sheikhpura (Rs 10,000) and Children and General Hospital, Sheikhpura (Rs 5,000).

EPD officials said the department had also directed all public and private hospitals, pathological laboratories and other health related business concerns to submit details of their ways of disposing of clinical and medical waste as

well as equipment used on their premises. They, however, said the response rate was low.

In most cases, hospital waste is simply mixed with municipal waste in skips on roadsides and disposed of. Some waste is simply buried without any appropriate measure. Disposable syringes and needles are also not disposed of properly. Many patients, who routinely use syringes at home, also do not know how to dispose them of properly. They just throw them in a dustbin or other similar places.

According to the rules, all hospitals, medical centers, clinics, pathology laboratories and other health related businesses are bound to get membership of the collection system of the government for disposing of hazardous waste safely. Hospital waste includes infectious material containing pathogens in high concentration or quantities that, if exposed, can cause diseases.

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