

This is a category III project according to IIC's environmental review procedures. Environmental and social issues related to this project include: handling and disposal of medical materials including bio-hazardous waste, disposal of solid and liquid waste, power and water supply, air emissions, employee health and safety training/fire protection and safety.

Compliance with Mexican Environmental Law: The Environmental Secretariat (General Direction of Ecological Policies) of the Mexican Government approved the project on November 9, 1999, after reviewing the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Santa Fe Hospital. According to Mexican regulations, the construction of a new hospital requires the preparation of a General EIA prior to approval. (Depending on the nature of the project, the government can require either a General EIA (Modalidad General), Intermediate EIA (Modalidad Intermedia), or Specific EIA (Modalidad Específica)).

Biological and Infectious Waste: The Santa Fe Hospital plans to use the services of a private contractor, Sterimed, for the collection, treatment and incineration of the biological and infectious waste generated at the hospital. ABC's existing hospital currently uses Sterimed to handle this type of waste from the existing hospital. Sterimed has been certified by SEMARNAP (Secretaría del Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales y Pesca) to provide these types of services. Stack emissions from Sterimed's facility comply with Mexican and international guidelines for air emissions. In addition, Sterimed has plans to voluntarily upgrade the type of pollution control technology currently being used to reduce emissions in the stack in the year 2000. Residual waste from the sterilization and incineration process, such as ashes is periodically tested by a nationally accredited lab that uses USEPA testing methods. These tests indicate that the treated waste is not corrosive, reactive, explosive, toxic, or flammable. Therefore, according to Mexican regulations Sterimed is authorized to dispose of this waste in the municipal landfill. Workers that handle the bio-hazardous waste are provided with the appropriate protective equipment and are periodically trained in accident prevention and emergency procedures (i.e. clean-up procedures in case of vehicular accidents when transporting bio-hazardous waste, etc.).

Domestic Solid Waste: The solid waste from the hospital will be collected by the authorities and disposed of at the municipal sanitary landfill located in Huixquilucan.

Liquid Effluent: Wastewater generated at the Santa Fe hospital will be treated at a newly constructed municipal wastewater treatment plant (MWWTP) that will comply with both Mexican government and international guidelines for liquid effluents. The plant has a capacity to treat 560 l/s and consists of primary, secondary and tertiary treatment. The treated water will be stored in above city tanks for irrigation, and the remaining water will be discharged to a local watercourse. In addition, ABC will install grease and digestion traps for the kitchen residual water. Once the hospital is operational, the effluent will be analyzed in order to determine the need for additional pretreatment.

Water Use: The hospital will receive treated water from the municipal treatment plant, some of which will be stored in an artificial lagoon located on the hospital land. Water used to irrigate the green areas around the hospital will be obtained from this lagoon. The rainwater drainage system, which is separate from the sewage system, will drain into these artificial lagoons in order to be used for irrigation.

Power Source: Electrical power for the hospital operations will be supplied by the Compañía de Luz y Fuerza del Centro through two feeders. The hospital will have two back-up generators for emergency purposes. Diesel used for the generators will be stored in tanks with appropriate secondary containment.

Fire and Safety: The Santa Fe hospital will fully comply with NFPA fire and life safety codes and will have features, such as a sprinkler system, two emergency exits/stairs per floor, fire extinguishers, evacuation route signs, personal protective gear and other equipment to combat fires. In addition, 285 cubic meters of water will be reserved for fire control. ABC will train the hospital staff for emergency situations, such as earthquakes, bomb threats, fires, etc., as is done at the current ABC hospital facility. At the existing hospital, fire drills, emergency evacuation drills, and other emergency situations are simulated in coordination with neighbors (i.e. surrounding schools), the fire department, and in some cases the police. Details of these measures are included in the Civil Prevention Plan (Programa de Protección Civil), which was prepared by the hospital as requested by the Environmental Secretariat.

Labor: The project will comply with IIC's labor requirements, regarding freedom of association, the right to organize and collective bargaining, abolition of forced labor and harmful child labor, and non-discrimination in employment and occupation. Personnel at ABC are part of an active labor union in Mexico, which has good relations with the hospital.

Monitoring and Annual Reporting: The sponsor will develop an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), which will include a schedule for the implementation of environmental projects and a monitoring and reporting program to ensure that the project is complying with Mexican laws and IIC's environmental guidelines. The EMP will also include an Environmental Management System that describes who will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of environmental activities at the hospital. ABC will submit an annual report summarizing the monitoring data related to wastewater discharge, solid waste disposal, air emissions from Sterimed's incinerators, health and safety training, and accident reports.