

Position Statement

Medical Laboratory Responsibility to the Environment

The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) believes that committing to environmentally responsible practices must be a priority.

CSMLS acknowledges that an expanding global population has negatively impacted ecosystems around the world. Uncontrolled industry, technology and consumption have depleted natural resources, creating an environment that is becoming unsustainable. In addition to entrusting environmental protection to governments, each individual shares responsibility for the planet's welfare.

Clinical laboratories use 10 times more energy than offices, more than four times more water, and generate billions of pounds of waste every year, nearly all of it considered hazardous. Through simple, easy changes, lab staff can make reductions in each of these four key areas—energy, water, waste, and hazardous chemicals—that will result in a safe, more sustainable lab.¹

Medical laboratory professionals must:

- Promote safe and environmentally friendly, ecologically acceptable products to reduce toxic wastes.
- Implement waste **R**eduction practices and **R**euse and **R**ecycle whenever possible.
- Encourage other members and non-members to practice environmental responsibility, recognize environmental waste and address environmental concerns in their workplace through education and sharing best practices.

Medical laboratory professionals, who work in medical laboratories that generate biological and hazardous wastes, must work diligently to protect the environment for future generations.

References:

¹ American Association for clinical Chemistry

<https://www.aacc.org/publications/cln/articles/2019/march/clinical-labs-making-the-switch-to-green>

/ Web June 2020

CLSI *Clinical Laboratory Waste Management; Approved Guideline—Third Edition*. CLSI document GP05-A3. Wayne, PA: Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute; 2011.