Case Study

The Benefits of Bulking Waste

Overview

Cost savings/labor efficiencies are typically self-imposed and required by the customer. More so the labor efficiencies are self-imposed by the InSite personnel in anticipation of being able to take on more responsibilities at the customer site as well as do what they currently do in a more efficient, quality driven manner. A task that is done time and time again is bulking. Bulking is often overlooked for its benefits and therefore at times forgotten.

Background

Pharmaceutical R&D InSite locations are often supported with three or less InSite personnel. These locations often require daily rounds throughout their laboratories and can encompass off-site locations as well. Because they are R&D their waste by-products is ever changing and thus a little more readily available to lab pack in lieu of profiling. Lab packing is often at a higher cost but to maintain RCRA compliance with regard to labeling requirements and aisle space, it often became the preferred approach for these smaller packaged, yet, high volume waste streams.

Challenge

Certainly not a difficult endeavor; the technicians and chemists have a good background with regard to chemical compatibility, familiarity with conducting fingerprint analysis and other parameters prior to consolidating. The larger challenge was finding the time to draft the new waste process flows and Job Hazard Analysis (JHAs) to officially retrain the InSite teams to the new approaches.

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Approach

Prior to lab packing or profiling the waste has to be reviewed to apply the correct waste codes, proper shipping name, container selection and disposal method. The InSite teams at the R&D facilities recognized this and thought to pour-off/consolidate compatible liquid streams and for solid streams they would bulk into larger containers. These streams were then profiled. Many of the containers that were poured off/ emptied were put back into circulation for the R&D labs to re-use.

Results

Benefits of profiled waste versus lab packed waste

- Disposal costs for profiled waste streams is ~50% less than disposal costs of lab packed waste streams
- Absorbent material not used in profiled streams, hidden cost
- Reduced administrative burden = labor efficiency....lab pack items require full inventory of all pieces in container

Prior to bulking the solid waste stream the InSite employees were shipping daily due to space constraints. Benefits of bulking waste

- Shipping 3 days / week from 5 days = 40% reduction in transportation cost
- 40% reduction in manifesting
- Increased aisle space
- Housekeeping improvements
- Return 16 gal drum to production for re-use, reduces supply usage and ordering needs
- Ability to use customer's UN rated emptied raw material containers for consolidating waste into
    - o Avoids empty container disposal
    - o Avoids purchase of new UN rated containers for waste streams
- Glass and fiberboard containers may be recycled, decreasing industrial waste volumes and increasing recycling
- ~$2000/wk savings

An overall benefit was labor efficiency among the teams. Increased efficiencies enhances operational quality of the program and customer service.