

# THINKING OUTSIDE THE BIN



INVENTORY MANAGEMENT EXPERT

 BEYOND  
CLEAN

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## Thinking Outside the Bin

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When it comes to hospital storage, there are a couple of common mistakes that may impede success. Incorrect bin sizes and not considering all the touchpoints for sterile barrier protection are two that come to mind.

Sometimes it's just a matter of not seeing the true storage possibilities that you have. If you feel like there simply isn't any storage space available, consider the following:

- Conduct an inventory count
- Identify the high-use, high-volume, and one-of-a-kind custom items
- Remove excess stock
- Invest in new storage equipment
- Develop a process for inventory control

Just like at home, clear plastic drawers and bins offer a huge storage advantage by allowing easy viewing of contents while eliminating additional touchpoints and reducing time spent searching for an item.

Stainless steel shelving racks are among the most common types of wire shelving units used today. Their benefits include durability and natural resistance to rust and corrosion, which is especially valuable in a humid environment or for wet objects. The primary advantage that stainless steel shelving offers is its weight capacity.

### **The Magic of Vertical Space**

Specifically, when you have vertical space available, here are some things you should know:

- Vertical shelving utilizes available room height from floor to ceiling
- It may eliminate the need to search storage carts placed throughout the department
- Items can be picked quickly and accurately with shelving automation

Enclosing both sterile and unsterile instruments in cabinets is a growing preference in sterile processing departments.

Taming storage challenges may save time, avoid mad scrambles in search of needed items, and help with management since you can't manage something you can't even see. In the end, a better storage system may provide a cost-effective plan for improved patient safety.

Have more questions? Contact Debra at: [debra.burns@aesculapusa.com](mailto:debra.burns@aesculapusa.com)

*Beyond Clean Inventory Management Expert™ Biography:*

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Debra has 39 years of experience working in the Sterile Processing field, with 16 years in SPD consulting and 20 years in management. Debra maintains certifications such as CRCST, CIS, and CHL and is a certified instructor through HSPA. She also maintains certification as a Lean Black Belt Professional (LBBP). Her consulting experience includes interim management, process improvement, HSPA certification course instruction, new construction logistics, SPD assessments and asset management relating to instrument tracking systems.

Debra has managed four healthcare system SPDs, ranging from a multi-facility healthcare system in Saudi Arabia to a teaching medical center in the United States. Debra has served as President of the Nebraskaland Central Service Association. She was a member of the ASHCSP Education Committee.

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