Cleaning and Sterilizing Reusable Catheters (plastic & red rubber)

To clean and sterilize plastic & rubber catheters in a practical, safe way, follow the steps below. Suggestions are given on how to provide sterile storage for catheter until needed.

**Equipment Needed**
- liquid soap—Ivory or Sunlight
- microwave—650 watts
- ziploc freezer bags
- glass of water—8 oz (heat sink)
- used catheters (6)
  * the glass of water absorbs extra heat which would meld catheters and bags.

**What to do**
- Rinse catheter well under warm water immediately after use.
- Wash catheter with soap and water solution to remove all visible debris. If you need to, roll catheter between finger and thumb down the length of the catheter then rinse well with running water.
- Place catheter in a ziplock bag and seal closed.
- Place catheter bags in microwave and partially overlap, starting at the back and place each bag moving toward the door. This is to avoid cold spots at the sides of the microwaves (see diagram).
- Place glass of water (heat sink) at the back and to the side of the bags.
- Microwave at full power for 6 - 12 minutes. (Caution: As every microwave is different, the timing must be adjusted accordingly.)
- Remove bags from microwave when cool.
- Keep catheters in bags until needed.
- It is recommended 6 catheters be micro waved at one time so the microwave power is spread out evenly.
- Ivory or Sunlight liquid soap is less hardening to the catheters.

**Ziplock baggies:**
These should be washed in soapy water, rinsed and dried before storing clean catheters inside. Keep the baggie locked until the catheter is needed. This keeps the catheter clean/sterile for storage.