

Solid Waste Management during the COVID-19 Outbreak

Priority: Health and Safety of ALL Community Members

What managers and directors can do:

- Mandate social distancing 2 meters for all employees. Have collections drivers remain in the vehicle with the window rolled up when others are in close proximity
- Ensure membership is disposing of waste in serviced locations and single-use disinfectant cloths are disposed of in the solid waste trash and not flushed
- Work with Housing and Health departments to identify units that have reported members with COVID-19 symptoms
- Support those homes with adequate information and supplies – ensure they understand the importance of double bagging all COVID-19 waste before setting out for pick up
- For employees: emphasize staying home when sick, using proper cough and sneeze etiquette, and proper hand hygiene
- Perform routine environmental cleaning in your workplace. Wipe commonly used surfaces like telephones and handles with disinfectants
- Consider solid waste as part of critical infrastructure and ensure plans are in place for back up
- Communicate with service providers and regional landfills to keep up to date on changes to hours of operation, service frequency, policy change



More Information:

1. COVID-19 info for Albertans
<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>
2. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – Business Continuity Plan
<https://www.ccohs.ca/publications/PDF/businesscontinuity.pdf>
3. World Health Organization
Best practices for safely managing health care waste should be followed, including assigning responsibility and sufficient human and material resources to dispose of such waste safely. There is no evidence that direct, unprotected human contact during the handling of health care waste has resulted in the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. All health care waste produced during the care of COVID 19 patients should be collected safely in designated containers and bags, treated, and then safely disposed of or treated, or both, preferably onsite. If waste is moved off-site, it is critical to understand where and how it will be treated and destroyed. All who handle health care waste should wear appropriate PPE (boots, apron, long-sleeved gown, thick gloves, mask, and goggles or a face shield) and perform hand hygiene after removing it. For more information refer to the WHO guidance, Safe management of wastes from health-care activities.
<https://www.who.int/publications-detail/water-sanitation-hygiene-and-waste-management-for-covid-19>
4. Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management Municipal waste management and COVID-19
The current pandemic of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, raises questions and brings challenges regarding municipal waste management practices and procedures (safety and health measures for employees, waste treatment requirements, general procedures due to coronavirus for waste sector).
<https://www.acrplus.org/en/municipal-waste-management-covid-19>
5. Solid Waste Association of North America
[https://swana.org/initiatives/guidance-on-coronavirus-\(covid-19\)](https://swana.org/initiatives/guidance-on-coronavirus-(covid-19))

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