

COVID-19 INFORMATION ON WASTE MANAGEMENT

March 25, 2020

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus that can cause illness ranging from the common cold to more serious respiratory infections. For the latest information about COVID-19 in York Region, see york.ca/covid19. This fact sheet provides guidance on waste management in regards to COVID-19.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD WASTE

- Throw used tissues, used gloves and masks in a wastebasket lined with a plastic bag
- When emptying wastebaskets, take care to not touch any waste with your hands
- All used disposable contaminated items should be placed in a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste
- Clean your hands with soap and water after emptying the wastebasket
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDICAL WASTE

- All health care waste produced during the care of a COVID-19 patient should be collected safely in designated containers and bags, treated, and then safely disposed of or treated, or both, preferably onsite.
- All who handle health care waste should wear appropriate PPE (e.g., boots, apron, long-sleeved gown, thick gloves, mask, and goggles or a face shield) and perform hand hygiene after removing it.
- See [WHO Technical Brief: Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for COVID-19](#) for more details

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOLID WASTE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Currently there are no special precautions for managing household waste from a COVID-19 household. Continue to use those precautions already in place (e.g., puncture-resistant gloves and face/eye protection) to protect workers from the hazards they encounter during their routine job tasks.

Additional guidance for workplaces and employers:

- Keep employees informed on COVID-19
- Remind employees to [monitor themselves for illness](#) and to stay at home when they are sick
- Employees who have recently travelled to affected areas should self-isolate for 14 days
- Symptomatic employees should self-isolate for 14 days after first symptoms started.
- Ensure availability and accessibility of alcohol-based hand rub throughout waste facilities
- Post signage to promote [personal protective practices](#); including hand washing, hand sanitizing, avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth, and coughing/ sneezing into your sleeve



- Promote [physical distancing](#); including options to work from home where possible, maintain at least 2 metres (6 feet) space between you and others (outside of your immediate family), avoid non-essential trips in the community, cancel gatherings
- [Increase cleaning and disinfection](#) of high-touch surfaces like toilets, sink tap handles, doorknobs, countertops, etc.

If you have additional questions, please speak to your management for further guidance or visit york.ca/covid19 for more information.

REFERENCES

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