



# ***Disposal Guidance for COVID-19 Rapid Testing Kits from Schools***

**RG-504 • November 2020**

TCEQ regulatory guidance regarding the handling, storage, labeling, transportation, and proper disposal for schools using COVID-19 rapid testing kits.

## **Handling**

COVID-19 medical waste should be handled as **regulated medical waste** (*49 CFR §173.134 and 30 TAC Chapter 326, Subchapter B*). Schools must maintain records of proper disposal—transporter name and TCEQ ID number; name of the destination facility—for 3 years following the pickup date of each shipment. Records should include the weight or volume of waste.

## **Storage and Labeling**

Before labeling and packaging, testing kits (medical waste) should be kept separate from regular garbage. Any waste combined with testing kits will also be considered medical waste.

TCEQ requires medical waste be placed in a rigid container that is leak resistant, impervious to moisture, and strong enough to prevent tearing or bursting from handling. Medical waste may be placed in a *red biohazard bag* and then placed in a rigid container to meet the packaging requirements.

## **The container must be marked with the following:**

1. Warning symbols and wording on two sides of the container:
  - a. International symbol for biohazardous materials.
  - b. "CAUTION, contains medical waste which may be biohazardous".
  - c. "PRECAUCIÓN, contiene desechos medicos que pueden ser peligro biológico".
2. Name and address of the generator (school) and a date of shipment.
3. Label must be at least 0.25 inches in height or greater.

For specific criteria and other methods for labeling, refer to [30 TAC §326.21](#). A registered transporter can also assist you with labeling. A list of registered medical waste transporters can be found on the [TCEQ Medical Waste webpage](#).

Waste can be stored as long as it is secured and does not create a nuisance.

PPE used while handling and administering the rapid COVID test kits are not considered medical waste.

## **Transportation**

A school may transport their own medical waste to an authorized disposal facility if less than 50 pounds per month. If the quantity is greater than 50 pounds per month, a registered transporter is required. Registered transporters can be found on the [TCEQ Medical Waste webpage](#).

However, due to the pandemic, the TCEQ is allowing enforcement discretion on [30 TAC §326.31](#) to allow schools the ability to transport their own medical waste of used testing kits, even if they have greater than 50 pounds, with the following stipulations.

1. This enforcement discretion only applies to schools, Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), or the contractors performing the rapid testing at schools.
2. This enforcement discretion only applies to the COVID-19 rapid testing kits. All other medical waste must be handled and managed following the medical waste rules.

## **Disposal**

Proper treatment and disposal of medical waste is required and must take place at a TCEQ-authorized facility. A list of authorized medical waste facilities can be found on the [TCEQ Medical Waste webpage](#).

## **More Information**

For more information regarding TCEQ medical waste regulations, please visit our [TCEQ Medical Waste website](#) or contact us via email to [mswper@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:mswper@tceq.texas.gov).