

Disposal of Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Contaminated Waste

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations:

On January 21, 2020, the first case of an infection with the new coronavirus was reported in Washington State. The information provided below was obtained from the January 17 and 21, 2020, CDC published guidance 1) [Preventing 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) from Spreading to Others in Homes and Communities](#), 2) [Interim Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients Under Investigation for 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#), and 3) [Interim Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines for Handling and Processing Specimens Associated with 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#). The CDC is still conducting more research about how easily 2019-nCoV spreads from person to person and the severity of the illness. CDC recommends that disposable materials (e.g., any single-use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), cleaning cloths, wipes, single-use microfiber cloths, linens, food service) and linens, privacy curtains, and other textiles be placed in leak-proof containment and discarded as **regulated medical waste** ([49 CFR 173.134](#)) - **Regulated medical waste** means a waste or reusable material derived from the medical treatment of an animal or human, which includes diagnosis and immunization, or from biomedical research, which includes the production and testing of biological products.

To minimize contamination, place the waste bag in a rigid waste receptacle designed for this use. The CDC recommends that all disposable waste should be managed as infectious waste and treated by steam-sterilization (autoclaving).

The U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT): Has transportation requirements for infectious waste. In accordance with the [Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration guidance](#): “An infectious substance is regulated as a hazardous material under the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (DOT’s) Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 171-180).” In addition, the guidance states, “an infectious substance classification is based on the patient or animal’s known medical history or symptoms, endemic local conditions, or professional judgment concerning the individual circumstances of the source human or animal”

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS): Defines regulated medical waste and approves treatment methods. The Texas DSHS definition of regulated medical waste does not make a distinction between Coronavirus contaminated waste and regulated medical waste. Medical waste is defined as special waste from health care-related facility (see [25 TAC §1.132\(44\)](#)).

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ): Manages medical waste including transportation, storage, treatment and transfer facilities. [30 TAC Chapter 326, Subchapter B, §326.21\(c\)](#) regarding packaging requirements for generators of medical waste make reference to the U.S. DOT rule [49 CFR §173.134](#) which contains requirements for regulated medical waste. [30 TAC §326.19\(a\)](#) makes reference to [49 CFR §173.134\(c\)](#) regarding labeling requirements for regulated medical waste.

As of August 2019, the State of Texas has a total of fifteen (15) active medical waste treatment facilities, of those three (3) use incineration, thirteen (13) use steam sterilization, and five (5) use an alternative treatment method. Some of those facilities are authorized to use two different treatment methods. (See Attached – *Active Medical Waste Facilities in Texas*)