

July 21, 2020

Solid Waste & COVID-19

Guidance for Solid Waste Managers

For the safety of solid waste managers and customers during the COVID-19 state of emergency, Vermont DEC recommends solid waste facilities and haulers take the following precautions:

- Direct staff to stay home if they feel sick.
- Practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet of space between people.
- Staff should always wear gloves and avoid touching their face. Staff should be provided with a change of gloves as needed and have access to a hand washing station or, at a minimum, hand sanitizer. Eye protection also makes sense for some duties.
- Staff should wear masks when interacting with one another or the public.
- For staff and customer safety, schedule periodic shutdown breaks to allow staff to wash/sanitize hands and sanitize surfaces.
- Avoid handling trash that is not bagged or wear gloves/wash/sanitize hands after handling.
- Customers should stay in their vehicle while waiting at the scales or in line to drop their trash.
- Discourage loitering/chatting with signage.
- Limit the number of people in an enclosed space at one time.
- When possible, encourage payment with cards, checks or prepaid vouchers rather than cash.
- Provide a collection container to pass cash or checks instead of handing money directly to staff.
- Disinfect the collection container and any areas that are touched frequently, such as compactor buttons, dumpster covers, door handles, railings, etc.
- Designate vehicles/equipment to one staff person – or thoroughly disinfect between operators.
- Where possible, limit staffs' exposure when taking money by installing clear plastic sheeting or a plexiglass barrier at the attendant's booth.
- Consider implementing no-cash procedures such as advance payment or self-pay collection bins.
- For requests to increase or change operating hours or daily tonnage limits, please contact Dennis Fekert at dennis.fekert@vermont.gov.

- Clearly communicate any change in operating hours or operations to the public via various media, such as local newspapers, sandwich board sign, Front Porch Forum, Facebook, website, press releases, radio, or online newsletters.
- For additional information on waste worker safety, please refer to:
 - Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) - <https://www.isri.org/covid-19-guidance-to-help-recyclers-operate-safely>
 - Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) - <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html#solidwaste>
 - Center for Disease Control (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html#waste>
 - Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) - [https://swana.org/news/guidance-on-coronavirus-\(covid-19\)](https://swana.org/news/guidance-on-coronavirus-(covid-19))

If you have questions, please contact the [VT DEC Solid Waste Program](#) at 802-828-1138 or DEC Solid Waste Program staff at <https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/contacts>.

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19 throughout Vermont. Learn more at [VT Department of Health](#).