

Frequently Asked Questions: Waste Management

Adapted from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html>

Should medical waste or general waste from healthcare facilities treating PUIs and patients with confirmed COVID-19 be handled any differently or need any additional disinfection?

Medical waste (trash) coming from healthcare facilities treating COVID-2019 patients is no different than waste coming from facilities without COVID-19 patients. CDC's guidance states that management of laundry, food service utensils, and medical waste should be performed in accordance with routine procedures. There is no evidence to suggest that facility waste needs any additional disinfection.

What do waste management companies need to know about wastewater and sewage coming from a healthcare facility or community setting with either a known COVID-19 patient or person under investigation (PUI)?

Waste generated in the care of PUIs or patients with confirmed COVID-19 does not present additional considerations for wastewater disinfection in the United States. Coronaviruses are susceptible to the same disinfection conditions in community and healthcare settings as other viruses, so current disinfection conditions in wastewater treatment facilities are expected to be sufficient. This includes conditions for practices such as oxidation with hypochlorite (i.e., chlorine bleach) and peracetic acid, as well as inactivation using UV irradiation.

Do wastewater and sewage workers need any additional protection when handling untreated waste from healthcare or community setting with either a known COVID-19 patient or PUI?

Wastewater workers should use standard practices including [basic hygiene precautions](#) and wear the recommended [PPE](#) as prescribed for their current work tasks when handling untreated waste. There is no evidence to suggest that employees of wastewater plants need any additional protections in relation to COVID-19.