

# Coronavirus COVID-19 Medical Waste Management

## Background

COVID-19, also known as the novel coronavirus, is a respiratory illness that is spread through the air via respiratory droplets from an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces. Symptoms of the virus can include fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath.

Please check the EMD website for the most current information:

<https://emd.saccounty.net/Pages/default.aspx>

## Guidance

Medical waste coming from healthcare facilities treating COVID-19 patients is no different than waste coming from facilities without COVID-19 patients. CDC's (Center for Disease Control) guidance states that management of laundry, food service utensils, and medical waste should be performed in accordance with routine procedures. **There are no additional regulatory handling, marking, storage, and transportation or treatment requirements for medical waste contaminated with COVID-19.** Continue to follow the requirements of the [Medical Waste Management Act](#) (MWMA) for managing medical waste in California. This includes using red biohazard bags, a designated accumulation point and transportation of medical waste by a licensed hauler.

Additional guidance about environmental infection control is available in section 7 of CDC's [Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations](#) for Patients with Confirmed COVID-19 or Persons Under Investigation for COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings.

## **Disinfecting Agents**

Coronaviruses are easily disinfected with the use of appropriate disinfectant products per the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For cleaning and decontamination information, see the CDC guidance for [cleaning and disinfecting environments](#), including those [contaminated with other coronavirus](#).

## **Transportation of Medical Waste within a Facility and Offsite**

Each facility shall develop a Medical Waste Management Plan (Plan) specific to the facility while complying with the MWMA. Each Plan should include the procedures of transporting waste from the room it is generated in to the interim storage room and ultimately to the Designated Accumulation Area. From this area, the waste will then be treated onsite or prepped for transportation offsite for treatment.

## **Additional Resources**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities \(2003\)](#)

California Department of Public Health

- [Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [Environmental Infection Control for the Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [CDPH Interim Guidance Medical Waste](#)

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

- [COVID-19 Overview](#)
- [OSHA control](#)