

CIRCULAR: DEA&DP 0006/2020

To: **All Executive Mayors**
All Municipal Managers
All Municipal Waste Managers

AMENDMENT TO DEA&DP PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING GENERAL HOUSEHOLD WASTE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning's (DEA&DP's) letter issued individually to all Municipalities in the Western Cape Province on 27 March 2020, on the subject of "Managing Covid-19 General Household Waste", the text of which is attached hereto as Annexure 1, refers. This letter is referred to as the General Household Waste Protocol ("Protocol").
2. It has come to the Department's attention through enquiries received from Municipalities that Paragraph 1 of the Protocol would be challenging for Municipalities to implement, due to patient confidentiality and its ethical implications, and the possible stigmatization of infected persons. The Protocol states "The Municipality is to stay abreast of the number and locations of households within the Municipality of the infected patients through the Metro and District JOC to plan logistically".
3. Due to these operational and confidentiality challenges, and the associated challenge to obtain information at household level, the Department now proposes that emphasis should be placed on communicating to citizens in communities within the jurisdiction of the municipalities on how to manage Covid-19-infected general household waste, as outlined in Paragraph 2 of the Protocol. It is also suggested that this Protocol be adopted for managing any infectious materials from all households.
4. In terms of Regulation R399 Disaster Management Act (57/2002): Directions made in terms of Section 27(2) by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs on 25 March 2020, Section 6.4.2 states that Municipalities are directed to identify hotspot areas and mitigation measures within their areas of jurisdiction. In line with these Directions, Paragraph 1 of the Protocol is therefore amended (bold text insertion) as follows:

*"The Municipality is therefore requested to stay abreast of **the hotspots** (as defined in Regulation R399) within the Municipality to plan logistically and should be guided by the DEA&DP Protocol as previously issued on 27 March 2020 (Annexure 1)".*

5. Furthermore, Paragraph 4 of the Protocol is amended (bold text insertion) as follows:

"The Municipality needs to provide **all communities** with the required information to appropriately manage the waste generated and to create awareness, **using the most appropriate means of communication under these circumstances**".

6. Annexure 2 is therefore the amended **DEA&DP Protocol for Managing COVID-19 General Household Waste** issued on 2 April 2020 and replaces the letters issued to the Western Cape Municipalities on 27 March 2020.
7. Should any of the information change based on the current situation or you may require any further information, please contact the DEA&DP Directorate Waste Management officials, as listed in Annexure 2.

Yours sincerely



PIET VAN ZYL
Head of Department
Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning

Date: 02 April 2020

Copied to:

Heads of Metro and District Disaster Management (DM) Centres:

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[Text of DEA&DP Circular Letter to all Municipalities on 27 March 2020]

MANAGING COVID-19 GENERAL HOUSEHOLD WASTE

Considering the current Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa, with reference to the Western Cape, urgent and drastic measures to manage the disease is necessary. Firstly, to limit the contact of persons who may be infected with other groups of people. The current circumstances require extra-ordinary measures to curb the spread of infections and therefore we need to take all possible measures to combat and contain the virus.

In line with the Regulation R399 Disaster Management Act (57/2002): Directions made in terms of Section 27(2) by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs of 25 March 2020, Waste Management has been declared as an essential service, and is crucial to the management and containment of the spread of the virus, therefore a concern has been raised that waste from the households of infected or quarantined patients could pose a considerable risk if not managed appropriately.

After consultation with the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), the Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) proposes that the following measures be put in place:

1. The Municipality is to stay abreast of the number and locations of households within the Municipality of the infected patients through the Metro and District JOC to plan logistically.
2. Waste management officials need to be permitted in terms of Regulation 11B of GN R398 of 25 March 2020 (GN 43148) in the Municipalities to move around freely for the provision of waste management services.
3. The Municipality must ensure: -
 - That all waste items that have been in contact with individuals that are confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 (e.g. used tissues, disposable cleaning cloths, gloves, masks, etc.) are disposed of securely within disposable plastic bags.
 - When full, the plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied.
 - These bags should be stored separately for five (5) days before being put out for collection by the municipality.
 - Other household waste can be disposed of as normal.
 - Alternative services should be provided to communities where this protocol cannot be practically implemented, such as informal areas. Expedited Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers can assist in collecting these bags provided they have the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and are trained to handle this waste.
4. The Municipality needs to provide these households with the required information to appropriately manage the waste generated to create awareness (such as pamphlets).
5. The collection personnel should be made aware of the risks associated with working with Covid-19 waste and should be provided the appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE).

6. Municipalities should ensure synergy between the Environmental Health officials and the Waste Managers.
7. Municipalities are requested to update their status of new cases and the progress of the pandemic on a weekly basis to manage the collection and safe disposal of this waste, and if required by the DEFF, DEA&DP or the Disaster Management Centres.
8. Municipalities must ensure that infectious material must be treated as isolation waste when Covid-19 patients are treated at clinics or hospitals and in accordance with the Western Cape Health Waste Legislation.

DEA&DP PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING COVID-19 GENERAL HOUSEHOLD WASTE (AS REVISED ON 2 APRIL 2020)

Considering the current Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa, with reference to the Western Cape, urgent and drastic measures to manage the disease is necessary. Firstly, to limit the contact of persons who may be infected with other groups of people. The current circumstances require extra-ordinary measures to curb the spread of infections and therefore we need to take all possible measures to combat and contain the virus.

In line with the Regulation R399 Disaster Management Act (57/2002): Directions made in terms of Section 27(2) by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs of 25 March 2020, Waste Management has been declared as an essential service, and is crucial to the management and containment of the spread of the virus, therefore a concern has been raised that waste from the households of infected or quarantined patients could pose a considerable risk if not managed appropriately.

After consultation with the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), the Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) proposes that the following measures be put in place:

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 - Alternative services should be provided to communities where this protocol cannot be practically implemented, such as informal areas. Expedited Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers can assist in collecting these bags provided they have the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and are trained to handle this waste.
4. The Municipality needs to provide **all communities** with the required information to appropriately manage the waste generated and to create awareness, **using the most appropriate means of communication under these circumstances.**
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8. Municipalities must ensure that infectious material must be treated as isolation waste when Covid-19 patients are treated at clinics or hospitals and in accordance with the Western Cape Health Waste Legislation.
9. Should any of the information change or you require any further information please contact the following officials: -

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