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Attention: The Waste Manager Mr. Craig Mitchell

## **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. Expanded 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.

Should any of the information change or you require any further information please contact the following officials: -

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Yours faithfully



Piet van Zyl  
**Head of Department**  
**Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning**  
**Date:** 27 March 2020

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