



## **Disaster Debris and Demolition Waste Separation**

North Dakota Department of Health

Division of Waste Management – Solid Waste Program

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Management of disaster debris and demolition waste resulting from floods, storms, tornadoes and similar events from all sources must be properly separated to remove problem materials if the bulk of the debris or waste is to be managed at appropriate solid waste facilities and/or to be recycled. Careful waste separation is essential to expedite disaster clean up and removals, hold down costs, reduce waste, and protect human health. Recycling certain materials will help hold down costs. **Poorly separated waste or debris may not be managed as inert waste and may be subject to further waste evaluation and disposal costs as municipal waste, asbestos waste or even hazardous waste.** Problem loads may be rejected and contractors may be asked to do additional work.

Wastes should be carefully separated into categories described below and properly managed at approved recycling, processing or disposal facilities in accordance with state, federal and local requirements. Keep records on the amount removed from each unit, how it is segregated and eventually managed, recycled or disposed:

**Electronic waste (E-Waste)** including televisions, computers, monitors, stereos, mercury devices and fluorescent lighting equipment such as thermostats, mercury switches, fluorescent fixtures and bulbs, light ballasts and similar materials. Please package fluorescent bulbs and other fragile materials to avoid breaking.

**Hazardous waste** includes, but is not limited to: paints, solvents, varnishes, stains, cleaners, degreasers, spot removers and similar ignitable products; aerosol cans, and compressed gas containers or cylinders; ammunition including unused shells, lead shot, bullets, powder loading supplies, etc; oils, fuels, automotive additives, fluids (transmission, hydraulic, brake, etc.); batteries (including lead, mercury, ni-cd, etc.); acids and bases – often labeled corrosive (store acids separately from bases and do not mix!); toxics, poisons, pesticides (includes insect, rodent and weed killers); electronics (computers and screens, TVs, stereo equipment, etc.); mercury devices (switches, fluorescent lighting, mercury bulbs, thermometers, etc.); light ballasts and transformers; antifreeze; fertilizers; and other ignitable, corrosive, reactive, toxic, pcb, problem or unknown wastes. **Label containers and do not mix materials.**

**Medications and infectious waste** including pills, medicines, dressings, needles, sharps, human blood or tissue, isolation waste, pathological waste, infectious human or animal waste, etc.

**Asbestos-containing material from individual all sources** may include asbestos pipe wrap, boiler coatings, loose insulation, transite (older cement type siding and electrical backing), vermiculite (light, platy insulating material) and other materials. Please label all bags or containers “Asbestos Waste.” Asbestos Waste must be disposed at approved solid waste facilities. See other Department of Health guidance on Asbestos.

**Scrap metal and appliances** includes refrigerators, freezers, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, which must have the Freon removed by licensed technicians at the processing site. Remove these Freon containing appliances carefully to avoid damage to the refrigeration units. Capacitors and other electronic equipment may need to be removed. Remove food from appliances, seal food in plastic bags, and place in household garbage for quicker removal and to reduce odors. **Remove or secure doors** to keep children out of large appliances. **Other metal materials** such as stoves, water heaters, dish washers, metal yard equipment, motorized equipment (mowers, snow blowers, boat motors, etc.) metal furniture, metal bed frames,

furnaces, ducting, pipes, metal toys, pots and pans, and other metal items can be managed to recover metal. **Oil and fuel may need to be removed** from some equipment for proper management. Appliances and scrap metal are prohibited from disposal in North Dakota.

**Household garbage and putrescible waste**, including discarded food, bagged garbage, paper, packaging, sanitary products, small animal carcasses, and similar household waste should be placed in plastic bags and may be managed as Municipal Solid Waste at a Municipal Solid Waste Landfill or Transfer Station.

**Vegetative waste** includes tree branches, limbs, leaves, logs and plants. Tree branches may be used as firewood or fuel or shredded to make mulch. Vegetative/tree materials may be separately managed and processed at a local solid waste facility or appropriate processing site. Open burning may create local air quality issues and may violate clean air act provisions.

**Concrete and asphalt** may be recycled at a local processing site, or it may be disposed as inert waste.

**Disaster debris clean up, renovation and demolition** waste, which is properly screened as described above to remove non-inert waste materials outlined above, can be disposed at inert waste landfills. Inert waste includes drywall, lumber, carpet, wood/upholstered furniture (non-metal), plastic, non-asbestos insulation (fiberglass, foam, Styrofoam and cellulose), plastic toys, and similar materials that do not readily contaminate water, air or be a food for vectors. Screened inert waste may be managed at approved inert waste facilities, typically at lower costs than Municipal Solid Waste or Hazardous Waste.

Thank you for your cooperation in this emergency clean up. Should you have any questions regarding these issues, please contact the North Dakota Department of Health, Division of Waste Management, at 701.328.5166.