



## Waste Disposal Guidelines

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) provides the following guidelines for disposal of household and potentially hazardous materials after a flood.

DO NOT MIX the following waste materials:

- Materials that quickly spoil (fruits/vegetables, meats, dairy products, small animal carcasses, diapers, sanitary products)
- Contaminated medicines
- Household hazardous waste and electronics
- Scrap metal, appliances, water heaters and furnaces
- Other inert or inactive materials (demolition materials, clothing, furniture and other bulky items)

### Household waste

Waste materials that quickly spoil should be separated from other waste or debris, contained in heavy-duty plastic bags and/or secure garbage cans, and placed in a designated area for separate collection. Containment prevents release of this waste to the environment and exposure to insects and rodents that may carry or spread disease.

### Food wastes

Food may be unsafe because of damaged containers or because the refrigerator/freezer was without power. Take these steps to dispose of food waste:

- Do not keep food that may be spoiled or contaminated, including food from refrigerators/freezers (e.g., condiments, pickles, jelly, meat, milk, juices).
- Dispose of damaged dried food packages. **When in doubt, throw it out!**

### Appliances

Take the following steps to clean refrigerators and freezers:

- Remove everything from the refrigerator or freezer.
- Use paper towels or rags to wipe up spills and leaks and dispose of them with the food waste.
- Wash out the appliance with warm, soapy water.
- Clean the surfaces of the refrigerator or freezer with a strong bleach solution. Use 1½ cups of bleach in 1 gallon of water. (Note: Never mix bleach and ammonia. The fumes are toxic.) Use proper personal protective equipment and venting when cleaning with bleach (gloves, eye protection, masks and protective clothing).
- To remove odors, wipe out the appliance with a mixture of water and baking soda, or place a box of baking soda inside the appliance. You also may want to air out appliances for a few days before restarting and using them. Secure doors in an open position to provide air flow, and keep children away.
- Appliances that cannot be cleaned and repaired and other scrap metal materials should be recycled.

### Furniture, Carpet, Books, Non-recyclable Paper

- Place together for collection and disposal.

### Demolition Debris

- Place together for collection and disposal. Be aware some demolition materials may contain lead paint and/or asbestos. For information about the proper handling of asbestos and lead-based paint, contact the NDDEQ Division of Waste Management.

### Concrete and Brick

- Stockpile for recycling.

### Branches and Clean, Nontreated Wood

- Separate to be ground for mulch.

## Household Hazardous Waste

If hazardous materials were not removed prior to flooding, an investigation should be conducted to locate any leaking or damaged containers. If materials within the property could be dangerous, the property owner or response personnel should cordon off the area until the site can be cleaned up.

Look for leaking or damaged containers of:

- Cleaning products (oven, drain and toilet cleaners)
- Lawn and garden products (pesticides, fertilizers)
- Automotive products (oil, antifreeze, batteries, transmission, brake and starter fluids)
- Workshop/painting supplies (adhesives, glues, paint, stains, finishes, thinners, strippers, solvents)
- Flammable products (propane tanks, kerosene, heating oil, diesel fuel, gas/oil mixture)
- Other products (fluorescent lights, lead-acid batteries, mercury thermometers or thermostats)

If you have any materials of concern such as those listed above, take the following steps:

- Place in more secure containers, if possible.
- Absorb spilled materials with kitty litter and place in a plastic bag or durable container.
- Label the containers with the following information: (1) contents, (2) owner's name and (3) condition of the contents.
- Do not mix chemicals or products. For example, do not mix latex paint with oil-based paint.

Usable materials that are properly labeled, placed in a secure location and separated by waste type can be evaluated later for proper reuse.

Hazardous household waste materials can be taken to a designated collection site. Contact local officials to determine if your community has such a site. If a collection program is not available, this waste may be disposed of in a permitted municipal solid waste landfill. Do not burn the waste or pour any waste down the sanitary sewer or into a septic tank. Used automotive fluids can be taken to a service station or other collection point for disposal.

Because electronics often contain metals such as lead, cadmium and chromium that can contaminate water and soil, they must be disposed of properly. Check with your local collection site for guidelines specific to your community. See *Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics* at [www.deq.nd.gov/Flood](http://www.deq.nd.gov/Flood).

For more information about pre- and post-flood waste disposal, see Guideline 1 - Emergency Waste Management and Disposal, which can be found at [www.deq.nd.gov/Flood](http://www.deq.nd.gov/Flood).



## Livestock

Under normal situations, the department prefers dead animals be managed by renderers or disposed of at permitted municipal solid waste landfills. A list of these facilities is available at [www.deq.nd.gov/wm](http://www.deq.nd.gov/wm) or by calling the NDDEQ Division of Waste Management at 701-328-5166.

In some emergency circumstances, transportation to a permitted landfill may not be feasible or may pose a threat of spreading disease. In these cases, the NDDEQ and North Dakota Department of Agriculture will coordinate to issue variances for one-time disposal events. For more information, see *Guideline 14 - Emergency Waste Disposal Variance Notification: Dead Or Diseased Livestock*. This publication and the "Emergency Waste Disposal Variance Notification" form can be found at [www.deq.nd.gov/Flood](http://www.deq.nd.gov/Flood).

## Assistance

Check with your local waste hauler or community emergency officials for guidelines specific to your community for disposal of flood-related waste. For other questions or assistance, call your local public health unit or the NDDEQ.

*Feel free to use this information, but please credit the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality.*