

COVID-19

RECOMMENDATIONS OF PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR SANITATION WORKERS

WASTE WATER, MUNICIPAL WASTE, RECYCLING, AND HEALTH CARE WASTE

Ensure that protective measures are applied for workers in the management of wastewater and solid waste. COVID-19 requires the application of existing standards for the protection of the health of workers.

BEST PRACTICES TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF SANITATION WORKERS INCLUDE:

- Provide training to sanitation workers to emphasize standard precautions and prioritize risk areas for potential exposure.
- Reduce or avoid contact with sewage, solid waste, drops, splashes, aerosols, sharp objects and fragments.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect exposed skin (wounds) and mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth).

PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

To work in wastewater plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waterproof gloves when cleaning pumps or screens and when handling sewage, mud or grit• Rubber boots (Wellington boots)• Face and eye protection: goggles and a face mask or a face shield• If you perform cleaning processes that generate aerosols, wear an approved N-95 respirator• Water resistant overall in case of direct exposure to wastewater in wet wells, sewer main, etc.
For solid / municipal waste workers, including recyclers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heavy duty clothing (pants, shirt, or overalls)• Puncture proof gloves• Safety boots• Face and eye protection: goggles and a face mask or a face shield
For waste handlers in healthcare facilities (from the point of generation to the final disposal site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thick gloves• Face mask• Long-sleeve shirt• Plastic apron• Strong pants/trousers• Rubber boots (Wellington boots)

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PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR SANITATION WORKERS:

- Wash skin with soap and water immediately after handling wastewater or any material that has been in contact with wastewater.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and safe water at different critical moments (before and after eating; after using the bathroom; before and after performing a cleaning task; before and after using personal protective equipment; before and after drinking; and after touching money).
- Eat only in designated areas away from waste and aerosols.
- Do not smoke or chew gum while handling waste or any material that has been in contact with human waste.
- Avoid touching your face, mouth, eyes, nose, or open skin wounds when handling waste, or any materials that have been in contact with waste.
- Do not touch your nose, mouth, eyes or ears with unwashed hands.
- Keep your nails short; use a stiff soapy brush to clean under the nails.
- Always wear gloves when your hands are cracked, cut, burned, or have a rash. Cover open sores, cuts, and wounds with clean, dry bandages.
- Shower and change into civilian clothes before leaving work.
- Leave dirty work clothes at work and separate from civilian clothes. Wash work clothes at work.
- Have a regular medical check-up (at least once a year), including stool samples.
- Keep up to date with vaccination against hepatitis A and B, diphtheria, tetanus, and typhoid.

MANAGEMENT OF WASTE COLLECTING VEHICLES IN GENERAL (NORMAL AND HOSPITAL):

- Clean inside the cabins of vehicles (trucks, equipment, cranes) with soap and water and then apply a disinfection solution of 0.1% sodium hypochlorite following the instructions in the table below, each time a shift change is made.
- Wash the vehicle with soap and water daily and discard the leachate that the truck brings directly into the sewer
- Wash the floor of the transfer stations each turn with soap and water and then apply a disinfection solution of 0.1% sodium hypochlorite following the instructions in the table below
- Place clean vehicles in a designated, closed parking lots.

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COMMUNICATION MESSAGES TO THE POPULATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

- Place used needles (from insulin users and users of other injectable medications) in puncture-proof containers (e.g., soda or mineral water bottles) and cap them before putting in the waste bag
- Separate medical waste from municipal waste.

HOW TO PREPARE THE DISINFECTANT SOLUTIONS

- Use the concentration of sodium hypochlorite available in the country as indicated on the label of the container, to mix the concentration of disinfection solution, according to the intended use following the indications in the table below.
- Use protective measures such as gloves, mask, eye protection and apron for mixing the solutions.
- Prepare solutions daily. If you don't need a liter per day, make adjustments to the amounts in the table below.
- Use a dedicated container for the prepared solutions, and mark (label) the container with the concentration clearly.
- Do not reuse packaging of edible products to prepare the disinfectant solution to avoid poisoning.
- Add the amount of sodium hypochlorite to the amount of water as indicated in the table below.
- Do not mix sodium hypochlorite with soaps or cleaners.
- Store sodium hypochlorite out of the reach and sight of children, in a safe place that is not exposed to light and heat.
- Use sodium hypochlorite products that come without fabric softeners colors or perfumes.

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Sodium hypochlorite concentration (as on label)	Disinfection solution concentration			
	0.1%			
For disinfection of cabins and cleaning utensils				
	Quantity of Sodium hypochlorite		Quantity of Water	
1%	100 ml	4/5 cup	1 liter	1 quart
3%	30 ml	1 oz	1 liter	1 quart
4%	25 ml		1 liter	1 quart
5%	20 ml	2/3 oz	1 liter	1 quart
10%	10 ml	1/3 oz	1 liter	1 quart

Climate Change and Environmental Determinants of Health Unit
 Communicable Diseases and Environmental Determinants of Health Department

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