

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Scott A. Rivkees, MD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

May 8, 2020

The Department of Health (Department) is aware that some biomedical waste generators intend on providing COVID-19 cleaning or disinfecting services. The Department would like to remind generators providing these remediation services that the waste generated during the cleaning or disinfecting service would not be considered biomedical waste unless it meets the definitions of biomedical waste and body fluids in accordance with Rules 64E-16.002(2) and (4), of the Florida Administrative Code.

Biomedical waste is defined as any solid or liquid waste which may present a threat of infection to humans, including nonliquid tissue, body parts, blood, blood products, and body fluids from humans and other primates; laboratory and veterinary wastes which contain human disease-causing agents; and discarded sharps. The following are also included:

- Used, absorbent materials saturated with blood, blood products, body fluids, or excretions or secretions contaminated with visible blood; and absorbent materials saturated with blood or blood products that have dried.
- Non-absorbent, disposable devices that have been contaminated with blood, body fluids or, secretions or excretions visibly contaminated with blood, but have not been treated by an approved method.

Body fluids is defined as those fluids which have the potential to harbor pathogens, such as human immunodeficiency virus and hepatitis B virus and include blood, blood products, lymph, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal, synovial, pleural, peritoneal, pericardial and amniotic fluids. In instances where identification of the fluid cannot be made, it must be considered a regulated body fluid. Body excretions such as feces and secretions such as nasal discharges, saliva, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, and vomitus shall not be considered biomedical waste unless visibly contaminated with blood.

COVID-19 is a Category B infectious substance, and is not required to be handled differently than any other regulated medical waste per the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.^{1,2} This includes the disposal of personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE consists of, but not limited to gloves, mask, gowns, and face shields as well as any waste resulting from a COVID-19 cleanup. The enclosed best practices document will assist with determining the correct disposal method for absorbent and non-absorbent materials.

Should you have questions regarding the information contained in this letter, please direct them to Jenelle Williams at (850) 901-6523 or Jenelle.Williams@FLHealth.gov.

¹Occupational Safety and Health Administration, COVID-19 Control and Prevention, <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html#healthcare>

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Finfection-control%2Fcontrol-recommendations.html#adhere

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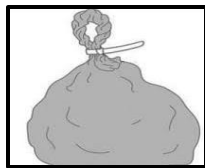
BEST PRACTICES FOR DISPOSAL OF PPE AND CLEANUP MATERIALS

DISPOSAL OF PPEs & CLEANUP MATERIALS

- Dispose of PPEs and cleaning materials per the following requirements:

| Non-absorbent Materials | If Contaminated ² with Blood/Body Fluids ¹ | If No Blood/Body Fluids Contamination ² |
|--|---|---|
| Eyewear/Face Shield |  |  |
| Gloves |  |  |
| Absorbent Materials | If Saturated ³ with Blood/Body Fluids | If No Blood/Body Fluids Saturation ³ |
| Gown |  |  |
| Mask |  |  |
| Paper Towel |  |  |
| Key:  = Solid Waste  = Biomedical Waste | | |
| ¹ Body Fluids include blood, blood products, lymph, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal, synovial, pleural, peritoneal, pericardial and amniotic fluids. Body excretions such as feces and secretions such as nasal discharges, saliva, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, and vomitus shall not be considered biomedical waste unless visibly contaminated with blood. ² Contaminated/Contamination defined as soiled by any biomedical waste. ³ Saturated/Saturation defined as soaked to capacity. | | |

- Consider double-bagging solid waste items.
- Ensure bags are properly tied to prevent contents from falling out.



Gooseneck
Correct



Single Knot
Correct



Bunny-ear
Wrong