



## Categories of Waste Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the different categories of waste?

**Industrial waste** - waste generated on industrial premises through manufacturing, industrial or fabricating processes.

This includes agricultural activities, mining activities and power stations.

**Business waste** - all waste that emanates from business premises - commercial, retail, wholesale, entertainment, government as well as informal traders and home-based businesses.

**Dumped waste** - waste disposed of illegally anywhere. Littering is another category.

**Event waste** - waste generated at any event held in the Western Cape.

**Garden waste** - organic waste from gardening or landscaping such as soil, grass cuttings, leaves and branches, but excludes waste products of animal origin.

**Hazardous waste** – includes health care risk waste and any waste that may have a significant adverse effect on the environment or any living organism.

**Health care waste** - any waste from medical or veterinary sources. A detailed list is included in the [Integrated Waste Management By-law](#).

**Infectious waste** - waste that is suspected to contain pathogens in a sufficient concentration or quantity to cause disease.

**Pathological waste** - all animal and human tissues, organs, body parts, foetuses, blood, bodily fluids etc.

**Sharp waste** - any items that could cause cuts or puncture wounds including hypodermic needles, scalpels, broken glass, nails and any blades, knives, saws etc.

**Pharmaceutical waste** - any expired, unused, spilt and contaminated pharmaceutical products, drugs, vaccines and sera that need to be disposed of appropriately.

**Genotoxic waste** - highly hazardous waste that includes certain drugs and the human waste matter from patients treated with specific drugs, chemicals and radioactive material.

**Chemical waste** - includes discarded solid, liquid and gaseous chemicals.

**Waste with heavy metals** - includes mercury waste from thermometers, blood pressure gauges, residues from dentistry, cadmium waste from discarded batteries, reinforced wood panels used in radiation proofing and drugs containing arsenic.

**Pressurized container waste** - refers to pressurized cylinders and cartridges used in health care facilities to store gases.

**Radioactive waste** - includes solid, liquid and gaseous materials contaminated with radio nuclides, including waste produced as a result of procedures such as in vitro analysis of body tissue and fluid, in vivo organ imaging and tumour localization and various investigative and therapeutic practices.

**General waste** - a generic term for waste that, because of its composition and characteristics, does not pose a significant risk to public health or the environment if managed properly, and typically consists of plastics, paper, food and liquids not considered to be infectious or contaminated with hazardous chemicals or radioactivity.

**Health care risk waste** - is health care waste that is also hazardous. This includes infectious waste, pathological waste, sharp waste, pharmaceutical waste, genotoxic waste, and chemical waste, waste with heavy metals, radioactive waste, and any other health care waste that is defined as hazardous in any other applicable legislation.

### **What are the special provisions regarding hazardous waste?**

Both the waste generator and the owner of the property where hazardous waste is generated must contract with an [accredited service provider](#) to collect and dispose of the waste at a [licensed hazardous waste disposal facility](#). A person transporting the hazardous waste must ensure that the facility or place to which the hazardous waste is transported is authorised to accept such hazardous waste prior to off-loading the hazardous waste from the vehicle.

### **What is Priority waste?**

There is a special provision in the [Integrated Waste Management By-law](#) that empowers the Director to categorise any waste as 'priority' when special measures are required to manage that waste because it poses a significant threat to health or the environment.

### **The [Integrated Waste Management By-law](#) talks about "Emergencies requiring the management of waste" What emergencies are these?**

Any emergency involving waste, such as pollution. In the event of an emergency, the Director can insist that the owner or the waste generator must manage the waste emergency within a stipulated period.

The Director is empowered to arrange for the clearing and cleaning of debris and pollution effects, transporting and disposing of the waste at a licensed waste disposal facility accredited for the specific type of waste generated.

The Director may also arrange for the rehabilitation and repair of any infrastructure, buildings, equipment or natural environment.

All the costs of management, rehabilitation and repair are for the account of the person responsible for the emergency.

If the emergency is an act of God the City will deal with the emergency as the circumstances and funding best allow.

### **What does the [Integrated Waste Management By-law](#) say about the storage and transportation of special categories of waste?**

The waste generator and the holder of waste must both ensure that waste is transported to the nearest licensed disposal facility that has capacity to deal with the waste.

If the waste is not in a container provided by the City, the storage containers used for the storage or transportation of waste must be intact and not corroded or in any way unfit for use.

Ensure that the waste cannot be blown away.

Prevent all nuisances such as odour, visual impacts and breeding of vectors.

Pollution and harm to health must be prevented.

Any waste items or substances must be safe for handling, collection or disposal. Not harmful, even if accessed by unauthorised persons or members of the public.

## Categories of Waste

**Hazardous waste** must be sealed in an impervious container and suitable measures put in place to prevent tampering.

Suitable measures must be in place to prevent accidental spillage or leakage.

The penalties for non-compliance include fines or imprisonment, as the court sees fit. The court may also order the removal of the waste and the payment of the expenses incurred and any other costs or damages.