

Guidance for Solid Waste Industry Workers

March 13, 2020

Solid Waste industry employers and workers who handle solid waste may have questions about occupational exposure risks associated with COVID-19.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment is monitoring guidance available from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and SWANA (Solid Waste Association of North America). Key points are summarized below.

- Solid waste generated during care of COVID-19 patients should be handled like other regulated medical waste. BWM's Medical Waste Technical Guidance Document and the accompanying letter to health care facilities are available at KDHE's COVID-19 Resource Center <http://www.kdheks.gov/>.
- At this time, there are no special precautions recommended to protect solid waste workers when handling municipal solid waste. Workers should observe all of the standard precautions and practices that are already in place to protect them from their routine job hazards.
- Workers should practice good hygiene, including:
 - Frequent hand washing with soap for at least 20 seconds or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Avoiding touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

This guidance will be updated if new or additional guidelines become available

