

# Infectious waste for transporters

## What is infectious waste?

**Infectious waste**, sometimes incorrectly referred to as *biohazardous waste*, *hospital waste*, *medical waste*, or *red bag waste* is waste that poses a human health and environmental risk due to its biological characteristics. Infectious waste in Minnesota is regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

For more information on identifying infectious waste and the infectious waste-related terminology used in this fact sheet, see MPCA fact sheet #w-sw4-30, Infectious waste for generators, at: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/w-sw4-30.pdf>

## Who is a regulated infectious waste transporter?

**Commercial transporters:** Business or government agencies that transport, for profit, regulated infectious waste that they did not generate, unless exempt. Commercial transporters must be *registered* with the MPCA. Commercial transporters may also be subject to the [other regulations](#) discussed below.

**Exempt transporters:** Though exempt from MPCA commercial transporter requirements, these transporters may still be regulated under the [other regulations](#) discussed below.

- U.S. Postal Service
- Infectious waste generators that transport only infectious waste that they generated, including businesses that generate infectious waste at off-site locations, such as licensed ambulance services, home health agencies, and trauma cleanup services
- Businesses or government agencies that transport regulated infectious waste at-cost or less. To minimize potential confusion, the MPCA recommends that these transporters voluntarily also register with the MPCA.
- Businesses or government agencies transporting only household infectious waste

## What other regulations may apply to infectious waste?

In addition to the requirements in this fact sheet, transported infectious waste may also simultaneously be regulated as:

- *Regulated waste*, also commonly but incorrectly referred to as *biohazardous waste*, under the Federal Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (BBP) administered by the U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) and the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, Occupational Safety and Health Administration division (MNOSHA). For questions on regulated waste requirements, contact MNOSHA. See [More information](#) on page 3.
- *Regulated medical waste (RMW)*, under the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). For questions on regulated medical waste requirements, contact MnDOT. See [More information](#) on page 3.

## How do I register as a commercial infectious waste transporter?

To register as a commercial infectious waste transporter with the MPCA, submit an *infectious waste management plan* with all of the information below to the MPCA via e-mail to: [hw-licensing.pca@state.mn.us](mailto:hw-licensing.pca@state.mn.us)

There is no standard form, and the MPCA is not currently collecting an application fee. Clearly and in detail describe the specific procedures that you will use and how you will meet applicable requirements. Do not restate generic regulatory requirements or copy and paste text from the Minnesota Rules, Minnesota Statutes, or this fact sheet. Specify:

- Corporate identity of the transporter that is registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State to do business in Minnesota
- Address(es) of the principal place(s) of business from which the transport in Minnesota will be operated. These places are where transport vehicles operating in Minnesota will be based, such as transfer facilities or garages. These places do not need to be located in Minnesota.
- Types of infectious waste intended to be transported
- Method of receiving waste that ensures that infectious wastes are properly identified and packaged and not comingled with other wastes, including hazardous waste, such as waste acceptance criteria for customers and contract terms requiring compliance with those criteria.
- Description of how infectious waste will be packaged and labeled in transport
- Description of how shipments of infectious waste will be documented in compliance with the HMR. Include exemplar shipping papers.
- BBP exposure control plan or its equivalent
- Methods used to disinfect reusable containers, if any will be used
- Methods to prevent putrefaction of infectious waste, such as refrigeration or same-day delivery to a certified infectious waste storage or decontamination facility. These methods must be in addition to the procedures to prevent holding infectious waste at a location for more than 48 hours referenced below.
- Planned employee training, including instruction in the infectious waste management plan and applicable HMR provisions
- Spill response procedures and equipment to be carried. Spill procedures must include immediate report of any release to the Minnesota Duty Officer and submission of a written report to the DOT within 30 days of the discovery of any RMW incidents.
- Procedures to ensure you do not hold infectious waste at any location for more than 48 hours (72 hours over a weekend) except in the necessary course of transportation. Holding waste for longer is storage requiring certification as an infectious waste storage facility by the MPCA. See MPCA fact sheet #w-sw4-32, Infectious waste for storage and decontamination facilities, at: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/w-sw4-32.pdf>
- Identity and location of all infectious waste storage, decontamination, and disposal facilities to which you will transport infectious waste.
- Documentation that each of the facilities identified above have agreed to accept infectious waste from your business or government agency
- Name of the individual responsible for implementing the infectious waste management plan
- Version date of the infectious waste management plan

Currently, the MPCA is issuing commercial transporter registrations which are valid until revoked by the MPCA. However, you must comply with your registered infectious waste management plan. Therefore, prior to making any substantive changes to your transportation operations described in your registered plan, you must first submit a revised plan to the MPCA.

## What operational requirements must I meet?

You must comply with your registered infectious waste management plan. In addition, transportation of RMW in commerce must comply with applicable HMR packaging, marking, shipping paper, and other requirements.

The MPCA no longer requires external marking of infectious waste transport vehicles nor assigns individual vehicle numbers. Transporters must continue to comply with applicable required DOT vehicle markings.

Note: Though still referenced in the Minnesota Rules, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) no longer issues management plan acknowledgement cards to infectious waste generators. Registered commercial infectious waste transporters may accept properly packaged and marked infectious waste from any generator.

## Where can I transport regulated infectious waste to?

Registered commercial infectious waste transporters may only transport and transfer regulated infectious waste to:

- Other sites operated by the original generator of the infectious waste
- Other transporters registered with the MPCA, if the transfer will take place in Minnesota.  
Find a list of registered infectious waste transporters in MPCA fact sheet #w-sw4-34, at: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/w-sw4-34.pdf>
- Other transporters authorized to operate in another state where the transfer will take place
- Infectious waste storage, decontamination, or disposal facilities in Minnesota certified by the MPCA.  
Find a list of certified infectious waste facilities in MPCA fact sheet #w-sw4-34, at: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/w-sw4-34.pdf>
- Infectious waste storage, decontamination, or disposal facilities in another state that are authorized to operate in that state

## More information

Guidance and requirements in this fact sheet were compiled from Minnesota Statutes, Chapter § 116, and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7035. To review statutes and rules, visit the Office of the Revisor of Statutes at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/>

The MPCA's Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) offers free, confidential regulatory compliance assistance. The Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) can help reduce your waste.

### Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Toll free..... 800-657-3864

Statewide..... 651-296-6300

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/>

### Small Business Environmental Assistance Program

Toll free..... 800-657-3938

Statewide..... 651-282-6143

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/>

### Minnesota Technical Assistance Program

Toll free..... 800-247-0015

Statewide..... 612-624-1300

<http://www.mntap.umn.edu>

### Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry

Toll free .....877-470-6742

Statewide .....651-284-5050

<https://www.dli.mn.gov/>

### Minnesota Department of Transportation

Toll free .....800-657-3774

Hazardous materials .....651-215-6330

<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/>