



Regulation 3: Solid Waste Management

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- 1. Purpose.** The purpose of this rule is to establish standards for proper storage, handling and disposal of solid waste to protect public health, safety and the environment.

- 2. Authority.** Authority for this regulation is provided in 50-2-116, MCA, under which a local health board may propose rules for adoption by the local governing body that do not conflict with 50-50-126, MCA or rules adopted by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services for the removal of filth that might cause disease or adversely affect public health and to implement public health laws.

- 3. Definitions.** The following definitions shall apply in the interpretation and enforcement of this rule.
 - (A) "Bear resistant container" means a fully enclosed container with a lid and latching mechanism with sufficient design and strength to deter access of the contents by bears, as certified by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) or approved by a Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks bear management team biologist.

 - (B) "Bear resistant enclosure" means a fully enclosed structure or rack capable of reliably excluding a bear or a roofless enclosure that has a minimum of one hot wire and one ground wire that are electrified with an electric fence energizer with an output of 0.7 joules or better.

 - (C) "Class II landfill" means a facility licensed by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to accept group II and group III wastes.

 - (D) "Class III landfill" means a facility licensed by DEQ to accept group III wastes only.

 - (E) "Clean fill" means uncontaminated soil, dirt, rock, sand, gravel, and portland cement concrete free of reinforcing steel.

- (F) "Hazardous waste" means waste as defined by 75-10-403, MCA.
- (G) "Garbage" has the same meaning as "Group II wastes."
- (H) "Group II wastes" means decomposable household and commercial wastes, or mixed solid wastes, excluding hazardous wastes. Examples include but are not limited to the following:
- (a) Municipal and domestic waste such as garbage, and putrescible organic materials, paper, cardboard, cloth, glass, metal, plastics, street sweepings, yard and garden wastes, digested sewage treatment sludges, water treatment sludges, ashes, dead animals, offal, discarded appliances, vehicle parts, and properly sterilized medical wastes; and,
 - (b) commercial and industrial wastes such as packaging materials, containers, and any liquid or solid industrial wastes which are chemically or biologically decomposable and which are not classified or identified as hazardous waste in 40 CFR 250.1, crop residues, manure, and food waste.
- (I) "Group III wastes" means untreated wood wastes and non-water soluble solids, such as brick, rock, and portland cement concrete.
- (J) "Litter" means any quantity of paper, cardboard, metal, plastic, glass, or other miscellaneous solid waste which is not disposed of in a garbage container.
- (K) "Person" means any individual, firm, partnership, company, association, corporation, city, town, local governmental entity, or any other state, federal, or private entity, whether organized for profit or not.
- (L) "Recyclables" means those solid wastes that are separated from other solid waste for reuse or recycling, including but not limited to cardboard, paper, metals, glass and plastics.
- (M) "Solid waste" means all putrescible and nonputrescible wastes, including but not limited to garbage, rubbish, refuse, ashes, sludge from sewage treatment plants, water supply treatment plants or air pollution control facilities; construction and demolition wastes; dead animals, including offal; discarded home and industrial appliances; and wood products or wood byproducts and inert materials.

4. Storage and Collection.

- (A) Any person owning, controlling, or in possession of property from which any group II waste is generated shall maintain at all times in a place where it will not be offensive or a public nuisance, one or more residential or commercial garbage containers as defined in this rule.
- (1) The capacity of the containers must be adequate to hold all refuse generated between collections.
 - (2) All group II waste and litter accumulated on the premises must be placed in the garbage containers.
 - (3) All group II wastes must be either collected once a week by a commercial garbage collection company or taken weekly by the generator to a Class II landfill or transfer station.

- (4) Clean recyclables, with no food debris and separated from other trash, do not have to be collected or taken weekly to a recycling facility.
 - (a) Recyclables must be stored inside, in a closed container, or screened from public view.
 - (b) Recyclables may not be stored in a manner that causes a nuisance or community decay, is offensive to the senses, or constitutes a public health, environmental health or safety hazard.
- (5) In all areas of Missoula County that have available commercial garbage collection services, the owner of any rental dwelling, including apartments, rental manufactured homes, duplexes, or single-family rental units, shall subscribe to commercial garbage collection, transport, and disposal of all group II waste generated on the premises. Garbage collection must occur on an interval of not more than seven days.
- (6) Residential containers:
 - (a) must be designed and manufactured as garbage containers;
 - (b) unless designed for automated garbage collection, must have a capacity of not less than ten or more than thirty-two gallons or not weigh more than 50 pounds;
 - (c) may not be used to hold hot ashes or liquids;
 - (d) must have tight fitting lids and be kept covered;
 - (e) must be placed in an area easily accessed by the garbage collection service for collection.
 - (f) Residential containers may not be placed on a street or road more than 12 hours before or eight hours after the time of collection;
 - (g) may not be recessed into the ground;
 - (h) may consist of plastic bags when filled with solely grass clippings or leaves, provided that each bag is closed with a tie, does not exceed fifteen pounds, and the garbage collection service is able to pick it up on that route;
- (7) Commercial containers:
 - (a) must be constructed to be mechanically dumped by the garbage collector;
 - (b) must be kept covered at all times;
 - (c) must be placed on a hard level surface for emptying; and
 - (d) must have enough capacity to adequately hold all waste between collection.
- (8) Commercial and residential containers may not be stored or set out for collection in the public right-of-way so as to impede or block public access or use or constitute a hazard or nuisance.

(9) A solid waste container which has defects likely to hamper collection, cause a nuisance, or injure the person collecting the contents or the public generally, must be replaced promptly by the owner or user of the container.

(10) The owner, agent, occupant, or lessee of property shall keep garbage containers reasonably clean and free of offensive odors.

(B) The owner, agent or contractor in charge of any construction or demolition site may not cause, maintain, permit or allow to be caused, maintained or permitted the accumulation of any litter or other uncontainerized solid waste on site before, during or after completion of the construction or demolition project.

(1) The owner, agent, or contractor in charge of a demolition or construction project shall:

(a) have adequate containers for the disposal of litter and other solid waste generated on site;

(b) provide for disposal at a properly licensed solid waste facility at a frequency that maintains adequate capacity; and

(c) remove any litter and other solid waste which has not been containerized at the end of each working day, including litter that has blown off site.

(C) A person may not store or allow to be stored solid waste where it will create a nuisance, be offensive to the senses or where it may constitute a public health, environmental health or safety hazard.

(D) The owner, agent, occupant, or lessee of property shall keep premises free of litter and other solid waste.

(E) A person may not sweep or push litter or other solid waste from sidewalks and boulevards into streets.

5. Transportation.

(A) Solid waste must be covered, containerized, or tied to the vehicle during transportation.

(B) Solid waste must be loaded and transported in such a manner that none of it falls, drops or spills upon the roadway or ground.

6. Burning Solid Waste.

A person may not burn solid waste, unless the burning is permitted in accordance with the Missoula City-County Air Pollution Control Program regulations.

7. Burying Solid Waste.

(A) A person may not bury solid waste, unless:

(1) the solid waste is clean fill and permission has been granted by the property owner; or

(2) the solid waste is organic agricultural or silvicultural waste and originated on the property where it is to be buried, and the Department determines that the practice will not be offensive, cause a nuisance, or endanger public or environmental health; or

(3) the site is licensed as a landfill by the DEQ.

8. Illegal Dumping.

(A) A person may not dump, store, place or leave or cause to be dumped, placed or left any solid waste upon any public or private property within the county, unless the solid waste is clean fill and permission has been granted by the property owner or owners.

(B) A person may not dump, place or leave or cause to be dumped, placed or left any solid waste in residential or commercial containers maintained for the use of other residences or establishments without permission from the owner.

9. Hazardous Waste.

A person may not transport, store, or dispose of hazardous waste except as provided in ARM Title 50, Chapter 53.

10. Bear and Wildlife Mitigation Requirements.

(A) Within the Missoula Bear Buffer Zone, as shown in Appendix A, the following additional requirements apply:

- (1) A person may not accumulate, store, or cause to be accumulated or stored garbage in a manner that allows a bear or other animal to access it.
- (2) Effective April 30, 2024, in Phase 1 shown on Appendix A, all garbage must be stored in bear resistant containers or bear resistant enclosures.
- (3) Effective April 30, 2025, in Phase 2 shown on Appendix B, all garbage must be stored in bear resistant containers or bear resistant enclosures.
- (4) Until April 30, 2026, in areas where bear-resistant containers are not yet required, non-bear-resistant containers may not be put out for collection until 5 am on the day of service. Non-bear resistant containers must be restored to a bear resistant place by 9 pm on the day of service.
- (5) Effective April 30, 2026, in all areas of the Bear Buffer Zone shown in Appendix A:
 - (a) All garbage must be stored in bear resistant containers or bear resistant enclosures;
 - (b) All garbage containers must be bear resistant or be stored within a bear resistant enclosure that can be directly accessed by a commercial garbage collection service; and
 - (c) All garbage containers provided by commercial garbage collection services must be bear resistant, unless the containers will be stored within a bear resistant enclosure that will be accessed directly by the commercial garbage collection service.
- (6) Commercial, governmental, and institutional entities may develop a written waste management plan to prevent bears from accessing garbage in lieu of having a bear resistant container or bear resistant enclosure. The waste management plan and any amendments must be approved in writing by a Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Park bear management team biologist and the appropriate waste collection provider.

- (7) Outdoor trash compactors may be used within the Bear Buffer Zone provided that no waste is exposed and the compactor doors are bear resistant and kept closed except when loading or removing wastes. The area around the compactor must be free of garbage.
- (B) Within the Potomac Bear Mitigation Zone, as shown in Appendix B, the following additional requirements apply:
- (1) A person may not accumulate, store, or cause to be accumulated or stored garbage in a manner that allows a bear or other animals to access it.
 - (2) Effective September 1, 2024, all garbage must be stored in bear resistant containers or bear resistant enclosures.
 - (3) Effective September 1, 2024, all garbage containers provided by commercial garbage collection services must be bear resistant, unless the containers will be stored within a bear resistant enclosure that will be accessed directly by the commercial garbage collection service.
 - (4) Commercial, governmental, and institutional entities may develop a written waste management plan to prevent bears from accessing garbage in lieu of having a bear resistant container or bear resistant enclosure. The waste management plan and any amendments must be approved in writing by a Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Park bear management team biologist and the appropriate waste collection provider.