



2021 BC Floods Response

DRYWALL COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

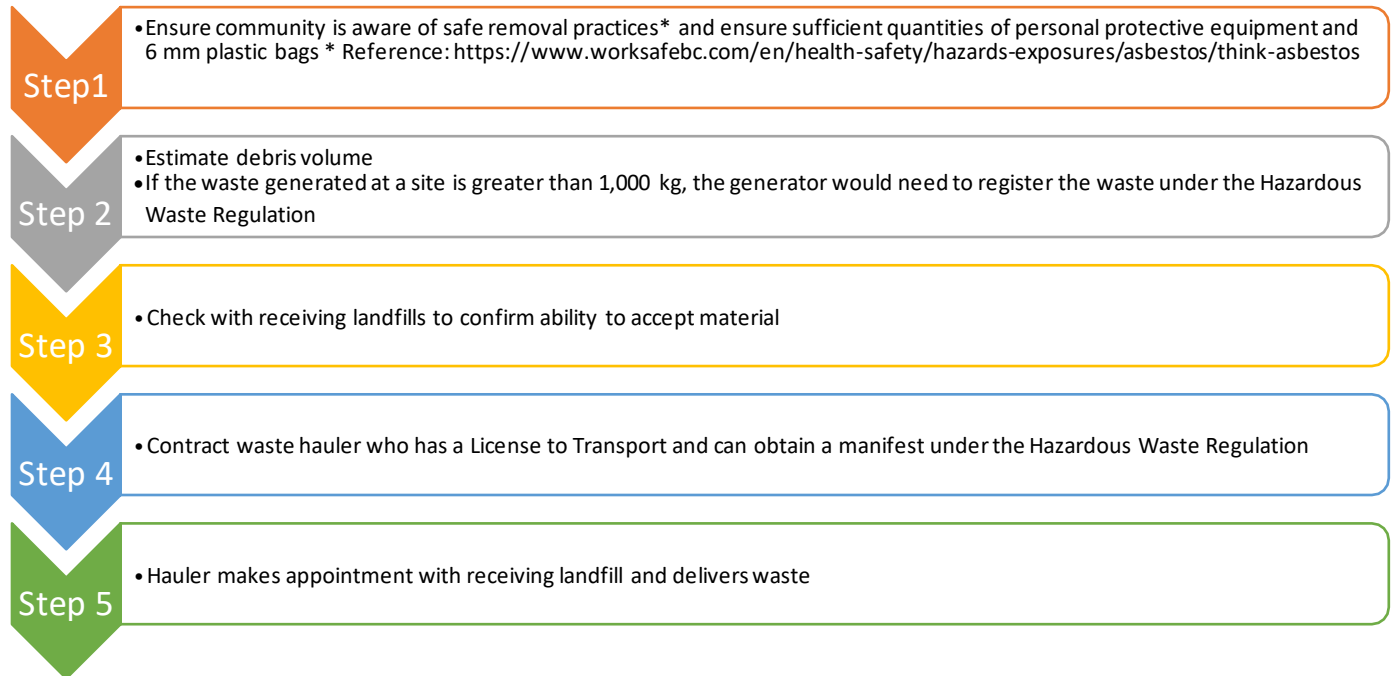
December 9, 2021

Disclaimer

This guidance is available and should only be used in association with the BC State of Emergency for the 2021 floods. The guidance provided in this document helps to clarify ministry policy and the provisions of the Environmental Management Act (the Act) and the Hazardous Waste Regulation (HWR). This is not a legal document and the information in it does not constitute legal advice or impose any legally binding requirements. Guidance provided in this document does not replace the Act, the HWR or any other applicable law. Any amendments to the Act, the HWR and other legislation referred to in this document may affect provisions of the guidance; in the event of an inconsistency, the Act, HWR or other applicable legislation will prevail.

This guidance may be updated after consultation with WorkSafeBC. Please refer to the WorkSafeBC website for detailed information about human health risks at <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/asbestos/think-asbestos>.

All waste drywall product being removed from flood damaged areas is presumed to contain asbestos. To be ready to manage the waste for collection, local governments are recommended to take the following steps:



Presumption of Waste Asbestos

- Waste asbestos is regulated under the BC Hazardous Waste Regulation (HWR).
- Asbestos risks are best mitigated at source by following WorkSafe procedures and using qualified professionals (Reference: [Safe Work Practices Handling Asbestos](#)). Containment of flood damaged drywall is intended to reduce exposure to both asbestos and mould to haulers and landfill workers.
- Assessment at site by a qualified person is recommended where practicable to confirm the presence of asbestos. Assessment can reduce the burden on local government to manage hazardous waste.

Asbestos Waste Containment Methods

- Waste asbestos must be handled, stored, and transported in a sealed container.
- The HWR requires waste asbestos be confined by airtight containment techniques such as:
 - packing in 6 mm plastic bags placed within a non-reusable drum and then sealed; or,
 - packing in a 6 mm plastic bag placed within a second 6 mm plastic bag and then sealed.
- WorkSafeBC requires a sealed container be used to contain waste asbestos and a sealed container is any container designed and made of a material which will contain all asbestos-containing waste and will prevent the release of asbestos waste and fibre during transport to and disposal at an approved disposal site. Procedures that use thinner plastic bags are not procedures acceptable to WorkSafeBC.

- The outside of the waste container must be labelled as asbestos-containing waste.
- Tight-fitting lids or other covers that seal the container must be used with rigid containers such as drums and bins.
- Waste asbestos can also be confined using wet containment techniques such as saturation with water and containment in non-leaking sealed drums or equivalent, or other containment techniques approved by a director under the *Environmental Management Act*.
- An alternative containment method could include the use of 6 mm polyethylene plastic, such as vapour barrier to form a sealed, leak-tight container as outlined in [Part G6.25 of the WorkSafe BC OHS Guidelines](#). The waste should be double wrapped in re-enforced 6 mm thick plastic to form a leak tight container. This method would require approval from a director to meet the HWR requirements.

Local Government Capacity Check for Landfill Readiness Conditions

Existing landfill authorizations held by local governments can be amended on request to include asbestos-containing wastes.

Landfill managers/operators will determine the volume of material and manner they are able to receive at any given time and prepare the appropriate locations for disposal. Landfill managers/operators may also assess for the risk hydrogen sulphide (H₂S) formation in the landfill environment and impacts on landfill gas management.

Best Practices for disposal of drywall, in addition to regular control of leachate and stormwater include:

- Placing loads of material containing drywall in areas of the active landfill face that are at a higher elevation, which would decrease the potential of moisture contact compared with placement in a low-lying area on the active face.
- Immediately placing additional waste or a cover (e.g., temporary tarp or soil cover) on top of newly-placed loads that contain gypsum drywall to reduce the likelihood of contact with stormwater.
- Segregating received drywall to distinct areas and making note in operations records of areas where larger amounts of drywall were placed. This practice would be expected to consolidate locations where H₂S may be formed and facilitate future H₂S mitigation, if needed.

Disposal at Dedicated Out of Province Facility

- Where logistically feasible given condition of highways, local governments may prefer to direct waste asbestos to a dedicated facility such as Swan Hills Treatment Centre (Alberta).