

Guideline for Preparing Solid Waste Management Plans

The *Environment Act* and the *Solid Waste Regulations* require all operators who dispose of waste generated by the public to prepare a Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP). Operators who handle waste generated by commercial activities, such as exploration projects, are not required to submit a Solid Waste Management Plan but their solid waste permit may require other types of plans.

Solid Waste Management Plans encourage long-term planning for the future of each disposal site so that environmental impacts can be minimized, space issues can be worked out in advance, and potential management options can be evaluated.

The first Solid Waste Management Plans were submitted for all solid waste disposal facilities in 2002 and 2003 and covered a 10-year period. Updated Solid Waste Management Plans must be submitted by the municipalities and the Department of Community Services to Environment Yukon at least one year before their current plans expire. Once a plan is approved by the Environmental Programs Branch, it can be put into effect and solid waste can then be disposed of in accordance with its provisions. However, Solid Waste Management Plans do not replace solid waste permits, which are still required.

Many Solid Waste Management Plans in Yukon expire in 2022 or 2023. Operators must submit their proposed new plan to Environment Yukon at least one year before their current plans expire. Preparation of the new plan is a good opportunity for operators to get community input on what they would like to see done – or not done – at the disposal site.

Mandatory Content

Solid Waste Management Plans must set out how and where waste will be dealt with for a ten-year period. It must comply with all current policies along with:

- section 96 of the *Environment Act* (e.g. describe a facility's design, construction, operation, upgrading, closure and post closure plan), and
- section 12 of the *Solid Waste Regulations* (e.g. strategies for protecting the natural environment).

Information sheets are also available from Environment Yukon on current siting, construction, closure and monitoring requirements operators must take into consideration when drafting Solid Waste Management Plans.

Environment Act Requirements

Requirement for waste management plan

98(1) The Minister may require a government authority to submit to the Minister a waste management plan in respect of the current and future management of solid waste or special waste within the jurisdiction or under the control of that government authority.

(2) If the Minister requires a waste management plan to be submitted, the Minister shall provide the government authority with a timeline for submission of the plan.

(3) A waste management plan shall include the prescribed requirements.

(4) If a plan is submitted to the Minister under this section, sections 29 to 31 apply to the plan as if it were a proposal. S.Y. 2014, c.6, s.12

Requirement for amendment to waste management plan

99 Upon review of a submitted waste management plan, the Minister may require the government authority to

- (a) amend the waste management plan in the manner and to the extent required by the Minister; and
- (b) submit, within a time period specified by the Minister, the amendment for the Minister's review. S.Y. 2014, c.6, s.12

Solid Waste Regulations requirements

12(1) In addition to the requirements stated in subsection 96(4) of the Act, solid waste management plans submitted in accordance with subsections 96(1) and 96(2) of the Act shall provide

(a) details regarding the capacity of existing waste disposal facilities within the municipality or specified waste management area;

(b) a description of the solid waste handling and disposal requirements for the municipality or specified waste management area for the planning period;

(c) a description of the locations within the municipality or specified waste management area where new waste disposal facilities may be located during the planning period and the rationale for selecting these locations;

(d) a description of the physical and natural environment of the locations referred to in paragraph (c), including surface and groundwater conditions, soil structure and stability, identification of special or unique fish, wildlife or vegetation populations in the area and any other environmentally sensitive attributes or characteristics of the area;

(e) a description of the strategies and initiatives that will be used to protect the physical and natural environment referred to in paragraph (d), including strategies to prevent wildlife from accessing solid waste;

(f) a description of the strategies and initiatives that will be used to address waste segregation and the reuse, reduction and recycling of waste, including composting, within the municipality or specified waste management area; and

(g) any other requirements as may be determined by the Minister.

(2) If a municipality or the Minister of Community Services intends to amend, add to or in any other manner change a solid waste management plan approved under section 96 of the Act, they shall apply to the Commissioner in Executive Council for an amendment of the plan and the Commissioner in Executive Council may approve or disapprove of the proposed amendment, addition or other change to the plan. (Subsection 12(2) amended by O.I.C. 2010/137)

(3) The Commissioner in Executive Council may suspend or cancel an approved solid waste management plan or reinstate a plan by

following the procedures described in section 91 of the Act for cancelling or suspending a permit.

(4) For the purposes of preparing a solid waste management plan, the planning period shall be ten years from the date the plan is to take effect.

(5) A municipality or the Minister of Community Services shall submit for approval a revised and updated solid waste management plan to the Commissioner in Executive Council at least one year before an approved plan expires. (Subsection 12(5) amended by O.I.C. 2010/137)

The Environment Act and regulations may be viewed online at www.yukon.ca, or at any Yukon Public Library, territorial agent, territorial representative or regional services office. You may purchase copies at the Inquiry Centre, Yukon Government Administration Building, 2071-2nd Avenue in Whitehorse, or by mail from the Subscriptions Clerk, Yukon Government Queen's Printer, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6 (phone (867) 667-5783 or toll free 1-800-661-0408 extension 5783).

Additional Environmental and Social Considerations

In addition to the legislated requirements, operators should consider the following in their plans:

Environmental:

- **ground pollution** – ensure the volume of solid waste stream is minimized through reuse, recycling, composting and recovery;
- **water quality** – review surface and ground water sampling and monitoring requirements;
- **air emissions** – most public solid waste disposal facilities have eliminated open burning; consider increasing composting activities to minimize methane accumulations from anaerobic decomposition in a landfill; and
- **wildlife** – minimize conflicts by preventing access by domestic and wild animals to strewn litter; prevent cumulative poisoning and danger to the public.

Social:

- **aesthetics** – control or minimize windblown litter;
- **adjacent land use** – consider noxious odours and an adequate buffer zone;
- **conflicting land uses** – consider potential conflicts with nearby land owners;
- **public input** – explain how public input was obtained and how it influenced the plan.

Legal:

- **compliance** – ensure necessary permits are in place as required by the *Public Health Act*, *Environment Act*, *Solid Waste Regulations*, *Special Waste Regulations* and *Air Emissions Regulations*.

Recommended Content

A good Solid Waste Management Plan takes time to prepare but is well worth the effort. Make sure you:

- Include a legal description of the site;
- Use maps for all plan requirements that relate to geography, such as current and future disposal areas (this information is also needed for the site's Solid Waste Permit);
- Consider the population served when determining the capacity of the existing facility, including industries, the types and approximate annual volume of waste, and the approximate volume of storage available;

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- Consider the soil conditions and topography when determining sites for new facilities, as well as the environmental, social and legal considerations set out above.
- Consider employing a qualified professional to help describe the physical and natural environment of potential new sites, to identify potential ecological impacts, and to develop strategies and actions to help protect that environment;
- Develop waste segregation strategies carefully, making sure to include descriptions of the types and quantities of solid waste accepted and banned; an estimate of the percentage of the solid waste stream managed through reuse, reduction, recycling and recovery, and the amount of residual waste; land, equipment and labour involved; operational problems; and environmental, social, and economic impacts.

For more information on the Environment Act, please contact:

Government of Yukon
Environmental Programs Branch (V-8)
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

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Toll Free:	1-800-661-0408, ext. 5683
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