

Disposal of Animal Carcasses

Animal carcasses originate from a variety of sources, including veterinary facilities, animal shelters, homes and farms. Carcasses can pose a threat to the health and safety of humans and wildlife unless disposed of properly. Some of the risks posed by animal carcasses include: wildlife ingesting chemical residues from a euthanized animal, wildlife becoming habituated to scavenging wastes, infection of humans or wildlife through contact with carcasses, and impacts to groundwater quality. The [Yukon Mobile Abattoir Procedures Manual \(2020\)](#) outlines waste disposal procedures for animal slaughter wastes generated by a mobile abattoir. This info sheet outlines acceptable disposal methods for dead livestock (“deadstock”) as well as small animal/pet carcasses.

Specific Risk Materials

Federal regulations govern the disposal of tissues from cattle known as Specified Risk Materials (SRM). In cattle less than 30 months of age, SRM is a portion of the small intestines. In cattle over 30 months of age, SRM includes the skull, brain, associated nerves, spinal cord, eyes, tonsils and a portion of the small intestine.

SRM should never be consumed or used as bait or animal feed. SRM can be buried on the farm where it was produced. SRM must not leave the farm of origin without a transport permit from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The Yukon mobile abattoir is permitted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to transport SRM for disposal.

Acceptable Disposal Methods: Livestock

Livestock are animals that are traditionally raised on a farm for the production of food or fibre including, but not limited to, cattle, horses, sheep, goats, swine, and fowl. While some livestock (e.g. horses or pigs) may be kept as pets, in order to safely dispose of their remains, one of the following methods should be used.

- 1. Burial:** Animal carcasses or waste may be buried in designated pits at permitted solid waste disposal facilities (SWDFs). In this case, the deadstock owner must obtain permission from the operator of the solid waste disposal site to dispose of the animal carcass. Deadstock owners should confirm with a solid waste disposal facility operator that the facility will accept your animal carcass prior to arriving at the SWDF. SWDFs may have specific rules about how and when deadstock can be disposed.

Alternatively, the deadstock owner can apply for a commercial dump permit to bury deadstock on their property. When burying carcasses, precautions must be taken to discourage scavenging by wildlife. A commercial dump permit for burying deadstock will require that:

- carcasses are buried beneath a minimum of two metres of compacted soil;
- the burial site is enclosed by an electric fence in situations where the depth of soil cover is less than three metres;
- the site has at least one metre of soil between the bottom of the buried carcass/waste and the water table or bedrock formations; and
- the burial site is:
 - at least 300 metres (1,000 feet) from any building used for human occupancy or for the storage of food;
 - at least 100 metres away from any water body; and
 - at least 300 metres away from any drinking water well.

2. Composting: Composting is an ecologically sound option for carcass disposal and when properly managed it can reduce an animal carcass to a soil-like product. This method requires that the operator ensure the correct mixture of organic material and moisture to achieve optimal composting conditions. It is not accepted for carcasses that are known to contain chemical residues, specifically from animals that were euthanized. Furthermore, extra precautions must be taken to prevent access by wildlife to compost containing animal carcasses/waste. Waste management permits are required for on-farm composting of livestock carcasses or wastes. The permit conditions will require that:

- the composting site is enclosed by an electric fence;
- the compost pile that will be used to compost animal wastes must be:
 - at least 300 metres (1000 feet) from any building used for human occupancy or for the storage of food;
 - at least 300 metres (1000 feet) from any drinking water well; and
 - at least 100 metres (330 feet) from the high water mark of any waterway.

SRM wastes may be composted separately from non-SRM animal waste on-farm. The composting of SRM must be followed by on-farm burial.

3. Incineration / burning: Burning or incineration may be allowed if required for health and safety reasons (such as dealing with carcasses that condemned, diseased, or contaminated.)

Incineration in an approved incinerator which has both temperature and air intake controls can be used to dispose of animal carcasses. The incinerator must be approved for the disposal of animal carcasses.

Waste from the butchering process that does not include SRM can be burned on farm in special circumstances.

Disposal by burning or incineration requires a waste management permit and air emissions permit. Please contact Environmental Protection and Assessment Branch if you are considering incineration or burning options.

Acceptable Disposal Methods: Pets

Pets are animals that are tame in nature and that are traditionally kept by and live with people.

1. **Cremation (incineration):** There are currently two permitted facilities in the Yukon that offer cremation services for pets. This is the preferred method of disposal; however, there is a cost associated with it.
2. **Burial at a solid waste disposal facility:** A pet carcass may be taken to a permitted solid waste disposal facility for burial.
3. **Backyard burial:** Some owners might prefer to bury the deceased pet in their backyard. The following precautions should be adhered to for backyard burials.
 - Ensure the burial site is properly constructed to avoid attracting wildlife and creating a public nuisance. The hole should be as deep as possible below the original ground level, to allow for a cover of as much soil as possible over the carcass. At least 0.3 metres packed soil above the original ground surface level will help shed water.
 - The burial site should be located at a minimum of 30 meters away from any water body or water source (e.g., a drinking water well).

For more information on the Environment Act, please contact:

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

Phone: 867-667-5683
Toll Free: 1-800-661-0408, ext. 5683
Fax: 867-393-6205
Email: envprot@gov.yk.ca
Web: Yukon.ca

The Environment Act and Regulations may be viewed online at legislation.yukon.ca/env.html, or at any Yukon Public Library, territorial agent, territorial representative or regional services office. You may purchase copies at the Inquiry Centre, Government of Yukon Administration Building, 2071-2nd Avenue in Whitehorse, request by email queens.printer@gov.yk.ca or mail: Government of Yukon Queen's Printer, Box 2703 (W-4), Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6 (phone 867-667-5146 or toll free 1-800-661-0408, extension 5146).