

Keeping critical waste and recycling facilities operating

The NSW Government is working closely with the waste and recycling industry and councils to ensure critical waste services for the community continue.

This is a developing situation and the response taken by the NSW Government to COVID-19 may change over time.

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 when handling waste is low. Waste handling should continue using safe routine procedures.

Critical waste services continue

Public health orders have been issued to protect the community and reduce the spread of COVID-19 infection. Although these orders restrict some business activities, the waste and recycling industry should remain open and continue to provide its important services to the community and businesses.

Keeping facilities open also helps to reduce the potential for illegal dumping of waste that costs millions of dollars to clean up.

Keeping critical waste and recycling facilities open

Authorised workers can still go to work in the waste and recycling industry if they cannot work from home. Workers can continue to travel for the purposes of work. They may wish to carry identification or wear a uniform to assist with COVID-19 compliance checks.

Please ensure that you regularly review the list of public health orders at <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/information/covid19-legislation>. The public health orders are subject to change.

Worker health and safety

Under WHS law, all employers or businesses are required to manage the risk of COVID-19 to authorised workers and others in the work environment.

Businesses and authorised workers must:

- comply with national and state public health directions, including testing requirements for declared areas
- promote the simple but effective physical distancing and hygiene measures
- raise any concerns about the risk of contracting COVID-19 immediately with the employer and work with them to identify solutions.
- monitor the extent of COVID-19 in your community and share any updates and advice from state and federal authorities regularly with workers.

Measures to reduce risk include providing workers with appropriate personal protective equipment such as face masks, gloves and eye protection, and the use of QR codes to register site attendance.

Further information on worker health and safety can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/safe-workplaces/workers>.

Required testing

If you live in or are staying in a declared local government area but you work outside this area, you must have a COVID-19 test once every 72 hours (3 days) in order to be allowed to go to work as an authorised worker. Further information on testing requirements can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/rules/greater-sydney-workers>.

Keeping waste and recycling facilities open to the public

It is important that the waste and recycling industry and councils continue to provide critical waste services to the public. This includes keeping waste and recycling centres open so that people can easily dispose of their waste.

Further information on what people can and can't do under the current rules is at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/rules>.

How to protect yourself and others

These simple steps can help to keep people COVID-safe at your facility:

- Practise good hygiene by regularly washing your hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a mask.
- Stay at least 1.5 metres away from others.
- Stay home if you are sick or feel unwell.
- Limit gatherings in a public place to two people.
- Display a QR code. Information on which businesses this applies to can be found at [nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe/customer-record-keeping/mandatory-electronic-check-in](https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe/customer-record-keeping/mandatory-electronic-check-in).

If you need to set up electronic check-in and QR codes, see <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe/customer-record-keeping/setting-up-electronic-check-and-qr-codes#sns>.

Household problem waste

The aim of the Public Health Orders is to stop the movement of people in Greater Sydney (which includes the Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Wollongong and Shellharbour Local Government Areas).

Visiting a community recycling centres in the Greater Sydney is not a reason for any member of the public to leave their home. Councils can help their community to stay at home by closing their community recycling centre during this lockdown.

Most community recycling centres outside the Greater Sydney Region (with the exception of Orange, Blayney and Cabonne local government areas) remain open. Before leaving home, check for opening hours at [cleanout.com.au](https://www.cleanout.com.au).

A few Chemical CleanOut events have been cancelled and some that are still scheduled may be cancelled at short notice. The Chemical CleanOut events schedule is at [cleanout.com.au](https://www.cleanout.com.au). Check with your local council for the latest information.

If you can't access a community recycling centre, store any household problem waste safely at home until your local community recycling centre reopens, or a Chemical CleanOut event is scheduled for your area. If you need urgent advice on what to do with household problem waste, call the Environment Line on 131 555.

Key contacts

Service NSW: For information and advice for NSW businesses go to [service.nsw.gov.au](https://www.service.nsw.gov.au).

Health: Follow the COVID-19 health advice at NSW Health at [health.nsw.gov.au](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au).

Worker health and safety: Follow SafeWork NSW advice at [safework.nsw.gov.au](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au).

Waste: For information about transport and disposal of waste visit [epa.nsw.gov.au](https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au) or call the Environment Line on 131 555.

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