Solid Waste Management Managers: Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 and SWM on Human Health and the Environment

Healthcare facilities and individuals are now producing more waste than usual, including masks, gloves, gowns and other protective equipment.

When waste is not managed correctly, e.g. uncontrolled dumping and open burning, it leads to negative impacts on the environment and human health.

- Collect accurate forecasts of the quantities of medical/infectious waste likely to be generated
- Assess the national waste management's capacity to optimise their utilisation and adopt solutions
- Use the Sustainability Assessment of Technologies (SAT) methodology to choose the Best Available Technology
- Maximise the use of existing facilities and available waste management solutions
- Identify travel routes, segregation points and hot spots for medical/infectious waste generation
- Reduce plastic debris from the environment by regular removal through clean-up campaigns and initiatives

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For SWM Managers

Safety Measures

- Ensure the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Enforce routine cleaning of the workplace
- Enforce the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Ensure that staff practice proper hygiene after work and launder work clothing appropriately
- Enforce physical distancing
- Provide hand sanitisers* onboard garbage trucks

6 ft/2m

*60-80% ethanol or isopropanol

Public Awareness Measures

- Create a public hotline number
- Promote best practices via mass media and social media
- Provide regular updates of changes

On-demand Services

- Suspend waste picking activities at waste disposal facilities
- Organise community COVID-19 clean-up campaigns with increased collection services and bins
- Sign up for the community clean-up!

Suspended

SWM Staff Health and Safety

- Use a shift system to ensure physical distancing
- Provide training for all staff
- Encourage staff to self-monitor their health

Treatment of Waste

- Treat infectious/potentially infectious waste as regular hazardous waste: autoclave, incinerate, bury

Measures for Cleaning Equipment

- Decontaminate the interior of trucks (using approved cleaning agents and methods)
- Increase the cleaning frequency of trucks, equipment and streets