COVID-19 Solid Waste Management for the General Public: Potentially Infectious Household Waste

- **Protect the Environment**
  - Discard disposable products by wrapping in tissue then **placing in a bin**
  - Avoid indiscriminate dumping and opening burning of solid waste - these actions add to **pollution of air, land and waterways**

- Avoid littering in the surroundings
- Protect beaches, oceans, rivers, and sea animals

- Store solid waste in a safe and secure location away from pests and scavengers
- Dispose of solid waste at the first opportunity to prevent the risk of the spread of the disease
- Contact the solid waste management (SWM) agency for proper disposal of potentially infectious waste or drop-off at central collection point

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**Reduce the risks**

If there is a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case in a household or people are in self-quarantine, then

- waste must be considered as potentially infectious and handled with care

Potentially infectious waste at the household includes:

- disposable face masks, gloves, tissues, disposable cloths, expired and discarded medicines, injection needles and other healthcare related waste

Any contaminated sheets, towels, pillows, mattresses, toys or other items that cannot be thoroughly cleaned after contact with body fluids should be considered infectious waste
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- **Protect the Household and Community**

Recommendations for a suspected COVID-19 case in a household or for people in self-isolation:

- Safely handle all waste by using protective gear (gloves, masks, aprons, etc.)
- Place waste in a covered and lined bin in the potentially ill person’s room
- Immediately wrap and dispose of face masks of a potentially ill person in bin
- Place any materials used by the caregiver and/or cleaner in another garbage bag, near the door to the potentially ill person’s room

- Seal garbage bag in potentially ill person’s room before it is 70 % filled
- Securely seal the garbage bag before removing from the potentially ill person’s room and replace frequently
- Double garbage bags for extra safety
- Wash hands thoroughly after handling waste, sealing and handling garbage bags

- Potentially infectious waste should be collected by specialist solid waste management (SWM) operators and not the regular SWM collectors
- Separate potentially infectious waste from the other household waste