

Solid Waste Management

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is the nation's primary law governing the disposal of solid and hazardous waste. Congress passed RCRA on October 21, 1976 to address the increasing problems the nation faced from the growing volume of municipal and industrial waste. RCRA has been amended and strengthened by additional legislative measures.

Solid waste management is simply the removal of waste from the project site during the construction and during the operational life of the facility. Most project sites will have access to private or public licensed disposal operators and this is generally acceptable for common waste management. This should be noted within the report if this is applicable.

Rural Development (RD) should be on the lookout for projects that generate waste that is outside of the normal.

During the construction, the contractor will be responsible to remove the construction waste. Most common material can be recycled or properly disposed in a landfill. In some cases, the existing site may be contaminated with petroleum products, lead, asbestos, or other hazardous products. This requires very specific removal requirements and this should be documented in the environmental report.

In rare circumstances, a project solid waste issue may require consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Texas Commission of Environmental Quality. These would be sites that contain underground storage tanks or contaminated soil issues. Products or by-products of some industries are highly regulated and compliance with a specific regulatory agency may need to be identified within the environmental report.

The plan that the facility has for removal of operational waste should be in the environmental report. Note items which will be recycled. Note any special requirements for hazardous waste. Each project will be different and specific. Provided more detail for the uncommon solid waste products.

Examples for potential solid waste management issues outside of the normal include:

1. Discarded tires from a trucking business.
2. Motor oil from an oil change business.
3. Used chemicals from factories.
4. Bio-hazardous from medical clinics.
5. Packing material from industries.
6. By-products from milling operations.
7. Damaged parts from an auto repair shop.
8. Radioactive material from hospitals.
9. Used batteries from auto stores.
10. Used fluorescent lighting from a building maintenance business.

Any project could have isolated solid waste management issues over the life of the project, but don't address every possible future impact. Address the obvious and most important solid waste issues. Consider the entire scope of work, but be reasonable in the scale of the impact.