



## Waste Management for Shelters

Waste management in emergency shelters involves the handling of different types of waste, some of which is generated during normal operations of the facility and may already be regulated by the City of Houston Bureau of Consumer Health Services (BCHS) or the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Anticipate a massive volume of liquid and solid waste during shelter operations and plan accordingly.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

***Establish a location that provides adequate storage space for additional dumpsters and gray water tanks and allows easy accessibility to service trucks.***

#### Solid Waste – Dumpsters and Compactors

- ☐ Store medical/infectious waste and general refuse separately in easily cleanable, labeled containers and discard separately.
- ☐ Arrange for multiple dumpsters or a “roll-off” dumpster and/or more frequent pickups.
- ☐ Keep dumpsters and compactors covered with tight-fitting lids.
- ☐ Inspect units and drain plugs routinely to ensure that there are no leaks and the plugs are intact.
- ☐ Clean dumpsters, compactors, and the surrounding areas at frequent intervals to avoid attracting flies and rodents.
- ☐ Avoid overloading compactors as it can lead to leakage.

#### Wastewater

***Ensure all wastewater lines are maintained to avoid leakage.***

- ☐ For very large shelter operations, obtain a large gray water tank for collecting wastewater and fats, oils and grease from portable showers, hand sinks, laundry facilities, and kitchen sinks.
- ☐ Contact the Houston Permitting Center (HPC) Plan Review at (832) 394-8810/8820 for pre-approval to connect outdoor sinks or other plumbing connections to the sanitary sewer, a gray water tank, or an approved containment unit and for an onsite inspection at (832) 394-8870 after installation.
- ☐ Arrange for more frequent removal of wastewater and fats, oils and grease (FOG).
- ☐ Ensure transporters of toilet waste and FOG and their vehicles have current Transporter Permits with the Houston HealthDepartment. Refer to Transporters.

### SHELTER LAYOUT AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE

#### Portable Toilets

***1 toilet (portable and/or fixed) should be provided per 20 persons.***

- ☐ Locate toilets in an area easily accessible to toilet service trucks.

#### Portable Hand Sinks and Showers

***1 hand sink and 1 shower (portable and/or fixed) should be provided per 15 persons.***

- ☐ Connect sinks and showers to a gray water tank or obtain pre-approval to connect to the sanitary sewer.
- OR**
- Use portable facilities with individual wastewater tanks that can be easily replaced.

## **Laundry Facilities Including Laundry Trailers**

- ☐ Connect to a gray water tank or obtain pre-approval to connect to the sanitary sewer.
- ☐ Provide a backup plan for laundry service in the event the existing machines leak.

***Washing machines may not be connected to or leak into a storm drain.***

## **Outdoor Cooking Operations**

***Water from handwashing, cooking, and dishwashing must be disposed of properly.***

- ☐ Connect food preparation and dishwashing sinks and other plumbing connections (except toilets) to a gray water tank.
- ☐ Contact the Houston Permitting Center (HPC) Plan Review at (832) 394-8810/8820 for pre-approval to connect outdoor sinks or other plumbing connections to the sanitary sewer, a gray water tank, or an approved containment unit and for an onsite inspection at (832) 394-8870 after installation.
- ☐ If portable sinks are not used, haul all water from the containers used in outside booths or tents for handwashing, cooking, and dishwashing to sinks connected to either a gray water tank, containment unit, or grease trap.
- ☐ Inspect the grease trap routinely to ensure it is not overflowing.
- ☐ Store used cooking grease in:
  - o A rendering grease bin**OR**  
Containers with properly fitted lids and store in a designated area ready for disposal
- ☐ Arrange for the rendering oil bin or containers to be removed by a rendering grease/used cooking oil hauler.
- ☐ Clean any grease spills immediately to avoid slippery surfaces.
  - o If spills occur outside the facility, use an absorbent material and discard in the trash bin.

***Do not dump wastewater, grease, or other material or wash kitchen floor mats, pots, or utensils onto the ground, waterways, or storm drains.***

- For questions or concerns regarding wastewater and grease disposal, contact the Bureau of Consumer Health Services at (832) 393-5740/5674/5675.
- For questions regarding pre-approval for connections to the sanitary sewer or containment units, contact the Houston Permitting Center (HPC) at (832) 394-8810/8820.
- To request an onsite inspection after installation contact (832) 394-8870.

## Transporters

Transporters hauling city-regulated waste, which includes portable toilet waste and fats, oil, and grease (FOG), need a current transporter permit from HHD.

Three ways to confirm that a transporter is permitted with HHD:

- ☐ A current transporter decal is affixed to both doors of the truck and on back of the truck.
  - o The decal displays the company permit number and truck number and has a colored decal in the center for the permit year
  - o If the company has a temporary permit, their trucks will not have decals
- ☐ Ask for their current transporter permit vehicle registration. This form must remain in the truck at all times.
- ☐ Ask for the driver's city-issued identification card for further verification.
  - o Verify the company is on the permitted list for service companies City of Houston Permitted Transporters
  - o Refer unpermitted transporters to the Transporter Section of the Bureau of Consumer Health Services at (832) 393-5704

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