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## GENERAL NOTICE

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### NOTICE 1475 OF 2009

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: WASTE ACT, 2008 (Act No.  
59 of 2008)

NATIONAL DOMESTIC WASTE COLLECTION STANDARDS

I, Buyelwa Patricia Sonjica, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, hereby publish National Domestic Waste Collection Standards in accordance with section 7 (1)(b) of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act No. 59 of 2008) for public comment in the schedule attached hereto.

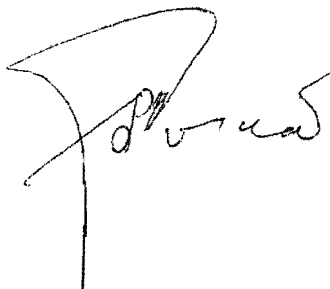
Interested and affected parties are invited to submit within 60 days of publication of this notice in the Gazette, written representations on or objections to the draft standards to the following address:

By post to: The Director-General  
Chief Directorate: Pollution and Waste Management  
Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism  
Private Bag X447  
Pretoria, 0001

Attention: Mr Obed Baloyi

E-mail any comments to [obaloyi@deat.gov.za](mailto:obaloyi@deat.gov.za)

Or hand deliver comments at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor reception, 315 Pretorius Street, Fedsure Forum Building, North Tower, Pretoria, 0001 or by fax to (012) 322 5515. Comments received after the closing date may not be considered.



BUYELWA SONJICA  
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

## SCHEDULE

### ADDRESSING CHALLENGES WITH WASTE SERVICE PROVISION IN SOUTH AFRICA

### NATIONAL DOMESTIC WASTE COLLECTION STANDARDS



**environmental affairs**

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### Definitions

In this document the following definitions apply unless the context indicates otherwise:

“**Basic Refuse Removal Service**” means a baseline service level as established under Section 9.1 of the National Policy on Free Basic Refuse Removal.

“**Collection**” means the act of collecting domestic waste at the place of waste generation or storage by an approved service provider.

“**Collection vehicle or equipment**” means any vehicle or equipment used in the collection of domestic waste.

“**Domestic waste**” means waste, excluding hazardous waste, that emanates from premises that are wholly or mainly for residential, educational, health care, sport or recreational purposes. Domestic waste can be classified into recyclable and reusable, compostable and other non-recyclable or non-usable waste. Domestic waste for the purposes of the standards does not include commercial and industrial waste, building rubble and ‘hard’ or non-compostable garden waste.

“**Domestic Health Care waste**” means waste generated in a household for medical purposes and includes waste such as syringes, unused medicines and pills, used bandages, etc. that could cause a health hazard when not appropriately disposed of.

“**Hazardous waste**” means any waste that contains organic or inorganic elements or compounds that may, owing to the inherent physical, chemical or toxicological characteristics of that waste, have a detrimental impact on health and the environment.

“**Household**” means a collection of individuals staying on a distinctive property and/or premises regardless of their relationships.

“**Municipality**” means a municipality as defined by the Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32 of 2000).

“**Receptacle**” is the designated container solely for the purpose of temporary storage of household waste at the household, either provided by the municipality or the household, until such time of collection by the service provider.

“**Service provider**” means the providers of the domestic waste collection service, be it the municipality, contractors to the municipality or community contractors or volunteers.

“**Standard**” for the purposes of this document is a list of specifications and procedures established to ensure that domestic waste collection services is fit for its purpose and performed in the manner it was intended for. The standards further define quality and establish safety criteria.

Addressing Waste Service Delivery in South Africa -- Domestic Waste Collection Standards

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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Background and purpose .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Principles .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Level of Service.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Collection .....</b>	<b>2</b>
	4.1 Separation at source .....	2
	4.2 Collection of recyclable waste .....	2
	4.3 Receptacles .....	2
	4.4 Bulk Containers .....	3
	4.5 Communal collection points .....	4
	4.6 Frequency of collection .....	4
<b>5</b>	<b>Drop-off centres for Recyclables.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Collection vehicles .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Health and Safety .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Communication, awareness creation and complaints.....</b>	<b>6</b>
	8.1 Waste information officer .....	6
	8.2 Awareness creation and guidelines to inform the households .....	6
<b>9</b>	<b>Waste Collection customer service standards for Kerbside collection.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>General.....</b>	<b>8</b>

## 1 Background and purpose

To redress past imbalances in waste collection service provision, it is imperative that acceptable, affordable and sustainable waste services be provided to all South Africans. The provision of waste collection services improves the quality of life of the entire community and provides a clean and more acceptable place to live and work. Poor quality waste collection services can however result in a number of environmental and health problems.

The National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act No. 59 of 2008) stipulates that standards are required to “give effect to the right to an environment that is not harmful to health and well-being,” and that this right have to be applied “uniformly throughout the Republic”. It is recognised that South Africa is a developing country and the purpose of the setting of standards is to ensure a service to all while complying with health and safety regulations without unnecessarily changing current creative collection processes as long as they function well and delivers a service of acceptable standard to all households. These National Domestic Waste Collection Standards are therefore applicable to all domestic waste collection services throughout the country.

The setting of National Domestic Waste Collection Standards, was informed by various documents including the Constitution of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996); National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act No. 59 of 2008); Draft General Waste Collection Standards of Gauteng province; a report on current international waste management standards and good practices in both developed and developing countries; a survey report of current waste collection practices in South African municipalities; as well as stakeholder consultations in three locations during June 2009 on invitation from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (Department of Water and Environmental Affairs as from 10 May 2009).

## 2 Principles

The standards are set based on the following principles agreed during the consultation process:

- Equity
- Affordability and availability of resources within municipalities
- Clarity and ease at which the standards can be implemented
- Practicality
- Community participation in design applicable and appropriate collection systems

## 3 Level of Service

It is recognised that service levels may differ between areas depending on the practicality and cost efficiency of delivering the service. However, the standards for domestic waste collection as outlined below will be equally relevant to all different levels of domestic waste collection services.

Service levels may vary between:

- a) On-site appropriate and regularly supervised disposal (applicable mainly to remote rural areas with low density settlements and farms supervised by the waste management officer)
- b) Community transfer to central collection point (medium density settlements)

- c) Organised transfer to central collection points and/or Kerbside collection (high density settlements)
- d) Mixture of 'b' and 'c' above for the medium to high density settlements

#### 4 Collection

Equitable waste collection services shall be provided to all households within the jurisdiction of the municipality unless both the household and the municipality agree that, due to travelling distances and the resulting costs, alternative ways of waste handling such as on-site disposal, would be more feasible.

##### 4.1 Separation at source

- a. All domestic waste should be sorted at source (at the households).
- b. The service provider must provide clear guidelines to households regarding types of waste, the sorting of the waste, appropriate containers, and removal schedules.
- c. Where the municipality does not provide for collection of source separated waste, it must provide facilities where source separated waste can be dropped-off for collection.
- d. Community involvement in recycling shall be encouraged

##### 4.2 Collection of recyclable waste

It must be easier for households to recycle than not to recycle, e.g. kerbside collection, drop-off centres within easy reach and well kept. Mainstream recyclables (paper including cardboard, newspapers and magazines, plastic, glass, metal – cans and tins) should therefore be collected at households or communal collection points. Other less frequent recyclables (electronic waste, scrap metal, batteries, fluorescent lights, used oil etc) need clearly marked drop-off centres at well advertised locations.

##### 4.3 Receptacles

The following should be taken into account when deciding on the type of receptacles to provide:

*Cost* – While bins and wheelie bins are more costly than plastic bags, the bins have long life duration;

*Size* – The bulk (volume) of non-recyclable and recyclable waste generated by an average household in a certain area. The frequency of collection should be considered, as frequencies of less than once a week become a health hazard in South African climatic conditions;

*Pollution* – plastic bags create an additional source of pollution if not re-used and/or recycled;

*Compatibility* – the receptacles should be compatible with the type of collection vehicles in use;

*Handling* – the receptacles should be easy to handle by both the household and the service provider and should be easy to clean and have no sharp edges. However, some high density areas on steep slopes (although there are proper roads for trucks), might need another type of receptacle than areas on flat ground;

*Vermin and vector control* – the receptacles should be impermeable to vermin and flies,. This implies that receptacles should not allow moisture or rain water to enter and should not discharge any leachate;

*Durability* – the receptacles should be fairly resistant to mechanical damage as well as be 'animal proof'. Various domestic and other problem animals may damage receptacles in search of food;

*Availability* – the receptacles should be freely available in the market at competitive prices (both the municipality and consumers as the case may be).

*Number of receptacles* – the size of the household will determine the number of receptacles required. A fixed number can be provided per household and additional receptacles on request and possibly at a cost to the household. The Policy on Free Basic Refuse Removal sets the number at eight (8) individuals per receptacle.

The following specifications and procedures are applicable to all receptacles for domestic waste collection:

- a. Receptacles for the storage of non-reusable and recyclable waste shall be easily distinguishable
- b. Receptacles for the storage of non-recyclable waste at households shall be:
  - (i) fit for the safe storage of waste
  - (ii) such that pollution of the environment and harm to health are prevented
  - (iii) rigid and durable to within reason prevent accidental tipping, accidental spillage and leaking
  - (iv) intact and not corroded or worn out
  - (v) covered to ensure that animals and insects cannot enter and that the waste cannot be blown away
- c. Where applicable, and in areas where the use of wheelie bins will be feasible, wheelie bins shall be phased in as transport vehicles that are not currently compatible are replaced. Compactor trucks may however, not be the best method of collection for mixed recyclables nor for the collection of non-recyclable waste with low compaction potential.
- d. Each household supplied with a bin or wheelie bin takes responsibility for the hygiene as well as safe keeping of the bin, and shall not purposely damage it or use it for any other purpose than for keeping waste until collection day.
- e. The service provider shall take care to return the emptied receptacle to the same household from where it was collected for emptying.
- f. Households will be required to mark their bins to assist the service provider in returning the bins to the same household from where it was collected.
- g. Elderly and disabled households should have the choice to use smaller bins or bins that handle more easily than the standard provided by the municipality

#### 4.4 Bulk Containers

Where bulk containers are the most appropriate receptacles, the same standards should apply as for receptacles as stipulated above. In addition, bulk containers should be fitted with reflectors.

It should be noted that skips are designed for collection of bulky waste such as building rubble or 'hard' garden waste which will not become windblown during transport. And therefore not appropriate for domestic waste collection.

#### 4.5 Communal collection points

Communal collection points should be clearly demarcated areas with appropriate receptacles where household waste can be deposited for collection by the service provider. The receptacles should be covered so as to prevent wind blown litter and user friendly to allow even children to safely deposit waste into the receptacles. The collection points must further be easily accessible for waste collection vehicles and encourage waste separation at source.

The municipality must ensure that communal collection points are kept tidy at all times.

#### 4.6 Frequency of collection

Acknowledging that waste minimisation is encouraged, the frequency of waste collection shall not encourage illegal dumping or cause a nuisance in terms of odours and volumes of waste being stored.

Non-recyclable waste shall be removed once a week [also see health issues]

Recyclable waste shall be removed at least once every two weeks and should be coordinated with industry (the users of the recyclables) to minimise costs, including space at transfer stations and depots.

Waste deposited at communal collection points must be collected within 24 hours of receptacles being reported as full or at regularly intervals so as not to attract vermin and cause health impacts.

Bulk containers should be collected once filled up or within 24 hours of being reported as full.

Frequency of collection of recyclable and non-recyclable waste might differ depending on –

- a. The size of the bins provided and the volumes of waste generated;
- b. The area of collection including:
  - (i) Type of service provided including types of vehicles and equipment used; and
  - (ii) Distances between collection points and disposal sites to minimise transport costs.
- c. Climatic conditions -
  - (i) In South Africa's hot weather conditions the collection of non-recyclable waste less than once a week becomes a health hazard.

## 5 Drop-off centres for Recyclables

Drop-off centres for recyclables not collected at the households shall be easy accessible to households and within walking distance of households. Such centres shall also be conducive



to reinforcing recycling behaviour – clean, user friendly. Drive-through options should be considered. Collection from drop-off centres must be at regular intervals so as not to cause a nuisance.

## 6 Collection vehicles

- a. Collection vehicles that are the most appropriate for the specific task will be used. Consideration shall be given to the following:
  - (i) type of waste to be removed – recyclable or non-recyclable
  - (ii) the geographical area of collection
  - (iii) the method of collection – e.g. whether the receptacles in use need specialised equipment to be lifted or not.
- b. Collection vehicles used for the collection of non-recyclable waste might not be appropriate for the collection of recyclable waste. In choosing the type of vehicle for the collection of non-recyclable and recyclable waste the following shall be taken into consideration:
  - (i) How much each type of waste can be compacted
  - (ii) Any leachate forming when compacting the waste
  - (iii) Whether different types of recyclables are collected in one receptacle at the households
- c. Collection vehicles used for the collection and transportation of waste shall not be used for any other purpose –
  - (i) While collecting and transporting waste
  - (ii) When not in use
- d. Health issues [regular cleaning of the vehicles are required]
- e. Waste must be collected and transported in closed vehicles to prevent littering during transportation
- f. Maintenance schedules must be adhered to and roadworthiness of vehicles ensured.

Box:

Image of donkey cart transporting school children and waste with a big red cross indicating that it is wrong.

Image of truck marked 'garbage' soiling peoples clothes and vegetables while they are transported to the market square ??, also marked with a cross

## 7 Health and Safety

- a. In addressing the general health of the Waste Collection Personnel it is advised that all waste collection personnel receive: -
  - (i) Regular medical check-ups to ensure their health and well-being.
  - (ii) Appropriate personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves, masks, overalls and raincoats, gumboots
  - (iii) Ongoing training on health and safety issues

- b. Existing Occupational Health and Safety regulations should be adhered to

## 8 Communication, awareness creation and complaints

### 8.1 Waste information officer

A Waste Information Officer will be designated to deal with general communications and awareness creation regarding waste. This officer will also be responsible for:

- a. Handling of all complaints and resolving such complaints within a set period.
- (i) The complaint handling mechanisms will be in line with the type of municipality and availability of infrastructure to handle such a complaint mechanism
- b. A recommended period of no longer than 24 hours is advised for addressing complaints.
- c. Complaints from both the households and from the waste collectors will be dealt with.
- d. Where complaints arise from negligence or lack of awareness on the part of the households, communication and general awareness creation need to be improved
- e. An efficient and effective register shall be kept of all complaints

**Box: Ideas on how to handle complaints**

Image of person with telephone on head listening to complaint and filling in spreadsheet (words to be in image: Waste Call Centre; Customer Care Hotline; complaints;

Image of bin for recyclables filled with general waste – waste collector knock on door and hand over guideline document on how to separate waste

If trucks have built in GIS equipment and loggers, problem areas can be easily recorded, the type of problem entered, such a complaint immediately registered and dealt with.

### 8.2 Awareness creation and guidelines to inform the households

- a. The service provider will create awareness amongst households about the following:
- (i) The types of waste collection services provided
- (ii) Separation at source – the removal of recyclables and re-usable waste from the general household waste
- (iii) The potential of composting some of the household waste and the benefit to the household
- (iv) The unacceptability of illegal dumping
- (v) Measures to be taken against individuals dumping waste illegally

- (vi) The cost of cleaning up illegal dumping and the implications on household waste collection rates
- b. The service provider will provide clear guidelines to households about the following:
  - (i) The different types of waste generated in households
  - (ii) separation of the non-recyclable and non-reusable household waste from compostable waste and recyclable waste
  - (iii) appropriate containers for each type of waste
  - (iv) removal schedules for each type of waste
  - (v) what to do with waste other than those waste forming part of the service provider's regular schedule of waste collection
- c. Awareness creation and guideline communications shall be conducted at regular intervals to ensure that all households are well informed about (b) (i) to (v) above.

## **9 Waste Collection customer service standards for Kerbside collection**

- a. Weekly waste collection will be done on the same day every week according to the municipality's schedule.
- b. When collection has been missed the waste will be removed on the next collection.
- c. The collection team will make every effort to return the same bin to the household from where the waste is collected if bins are used as receptacles.
- d. A charge will be set for replacement of waste bins reported as:
  - (i) Lost or stolen;
  - (ii) Vandalized;
  - (iii) Damaged (other than by the service provider or equipment).
- e. Revised collection arrangements during the December holidays will be widely publicized if applicable.
  - (i) Residents will be informed of revised collection arrangements in advance by one or more appropriate method
- f. A charge does not apply in the following circumstances:
  - (i) Bins damaged by the service providers or equipment;
  - (ii) Bins provided to indigent households qualifying for Free Basic refuse Removal;
  - (iii) Additional bins to households with more than eight (8) occupants;
  - (iv) First bins allocated as part of the extension of a service (i.e. for waste separation purposes).
- g. The municipality will stipulate the time at which the waste receptacle must be put out for collection on the collection day.
- h. If the waste receptacle contains unacceptable material as specified in the By-laws (such as builders rubble) the waste will not be removed.
- i. All complaints about the service will be addressed:

Addressing Waste Service Delivery in South Africa – Domestic Waste Collection Standards

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- (i) Promptly (within the time frame specified by the municipality)
- (ii) Appropriately and realistically
- (iii) Efficiently and effectively

**10 General**

- a. All communication to household residents will be through the waste information officer.
  - (i) Waste collectors will not enter into debate with household residents.
  - (ii) Waste collectors will not intimidate household residents.
  - (iii) Household residents will not intimidate or force waste collectors to collect waste which is not separated according to the guidelines.