

FECAL BACTERIA BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs)

► Trash Receptacles

OVERVIEW

Trash cans and dumpsters can be potential sources of fecal bacteria. Many trash receptacles contain sources of fecal bacteria, such as dog waste or raw meat scraps, which can be the perfect habitat for fecal bacteria to grow. Trash receptacles are particularly problematic when they are not watertight or replaced/repared when necessary. When left damaged, leachate from trash cans and dumpsters potentially containing fecal bacteria can make its way into nearby waterways.



Photo credit: Wisconsin DNR



Photo credit: Wisconsin DNR

Cleaning out trash receptacles is one way to reduce fecal bacteria accumulation. However, if not done properly, wash water contaminated with fecal bacteria and other pollutants, such as nutrients, can enter nearby storm water inlets and pollute surface water.

IMPLEMENTATION

Adopt Local Ordinances Regulating Privately-Owned Trash Receptacles

Enact an ordinance that requires trash receptacles to be watertight, covered or for trash receptacle placement (see example ordinances under “Additional Resources”). Compliance could be enforced through the local municipality’s Health Department, or during plan review of new building construction.

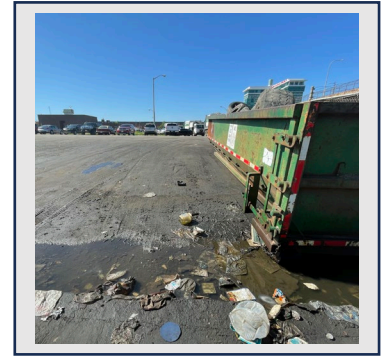


Photo credit: Wisconsin DNR.

- A new ordinance would require notifying private owners such as businesses. This could be done through letters or media releases.
- Would need staff to enforce ordinances (e.g., conducting health inspections at restaurants).

Place Trash Receptacles In Secondary Containment To Minimize Runoff

Placing trash cans and dumpsters in secondary containment can help prevent any leakage or contaminated runoff from reaching nearby storm water inlets. This could be one bin stacked inside another bin or a disposable liner.

- A second bin requires occasional cleaning but is more durable.
- Disposable liners reduce the need for frequent washing of the exterior bin. However, disposable liners can be prone to ripping.

Routine Maintenance And Washing Of Trash Receptacles

Over time, dumpsters and trash cans can build up with debris and their condition can wear down (e.g., cracks). Implementing a maintenance schedule can help keep the receptacle in good working condition. This would include replacing broken or leaking receptacles and cleaning dirty receptacles using dry or wet cleaning methods:

- Dry cleaning methods such as vacuuming do not create contaminated wash water but could be difficult to remove staining or solids that have accumulated over time.

- Wet cleaning methods like power washing with soap can remove bacteria but create contaminated wash water. Wash the receptacle in a secondary container that collects wash water, then dispose of the wash water to a sanitary sewer.
- In some situations, wet washing trash receptacles may be appropriate on pervious surfaces (e.g., turf grass) where wash water can infiltrate. For example, this method may be appropriate for residential trash receptacles which are cleaned infrequently (e.g., annual) compared to commercial dumpsters which may need to be cleaned often.
- Need a maintenance log to keep track of when receptacles need to be repaired or replaced.
- Would require staff time and resources to clean dirty receptacles and monitor for broken receptacles.

Implement A Program To Repair Or Replace Broken Residential Trash Receptacles

If a municipality provides trash cans to residents, setting up a reporting system for broken trash cans could help reduce potential garbage leachate-containing fecal bacteria. This reporting system could allow residents to easily request a repair or replacement of cracked or broken trash cans.

- Should be free or low cost, otherwise residents may be hesitant to report broken trash cans.

Encourage Residents Or Business Owners To Subscribe To Trash Can Cleaning Services

These services use special equipment to clean trash cans which kills 99% of bacteria. They collect the wash water and dispose of it via sanitary sewer so contaminated wash water does not enter the storm sewer system.

- Not all areas are serviced by a trash can cleaning company. Check to see if there is a company that can service your community.



- Need to explain to residents why this is more effective than them washing their trash cans themselves. These services provide a deeper clean and ensure that wash water doesn't run off into the environment.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Example Ordinances

- [Sanitation Division | Toms River Township, NJ](#)
- [21-07C.docx \(live.com\)](#)
- [CouncilOrder19-087.AnOrdinanceRelativetoTrashCollection.pdf \(branchcms.com\)](#)
- [1910.141 - Sanitation. | Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](#)

Broken Residential Trash Receptacle Program Example

- [Hillsborough County – Report a Broken Trash or Recycling Cart](#)

Examples Of Trash Can Cleaning Services

- [Milwaukee Clean Can](#)
- [HOME – Crystal Clean Cans](#)
- [Squeaky Clean Cans – Trash, Garbage and Recycling Bin Washing, Sanitizing and Deodorizing – Residential & Commercial – \(squeakycans.com\)](#)
- [Our Services – Tidy Trash Bins](#)
- [Badger Bins | Curbside Trash Bin Cleaning | Green Bay \(badgerbinsandpressurewashing.com\)](#)



SOURCES

Adamou, M., Djibril, T. M., Samake, F., Maiga, M. S. 2020. Proliferation Of Microorganisms In Household Waste: What Are The Potential Health Risks? International Journal of Recent Scientific Research 11, 39669-39675.

Think Blue San Diego. Trash Cans And Dumpsters. Retrieved from: [trash_cans_and_dumpsters_fact_sheet.pdf \(sandiego.gov\)](#).

San Diego County. Broken Garbage Cans. Retrieved from: [BrokenGarbageCansReport.pdf \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Everyday Cleaning. [When and How to Clean and Disinfect Your Home | CDC](#)

Disclaimer: This fact sheet is intended to be used for informational purposes only. These examples and references are not intended to be comprehensive and do not preclude the use of other technically sound practices.

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