

# Hazardous Waste Fact Sheet

## What is hazardous waste?

- Hazardous waste is a waste that contains organic or inorganic elements or compounds that may, owing to the inherent physical, chemical or toxicological properties of that waste, have a detrimental impact on health or the environment.
- Hazardous waste may be generated from household, agricultural sector, mining, manufacturing processes, medical facilities, educational institutions, research institutions, and many other sectors.
- Hazardous waste must be handled with precaution and must be disposed at authorized hazardous waste management facilities.

## Characteristics or properties of hazardous waste

PHYSICAL HAZARDS	
	
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Oxidizing	Compressed gas
PHYSICAL HAZARDS	HEALTH HAZARDS
	
Corrosive	Toxic
HEALTH HAZARDS	HEALTH HAZARDS
	
Irritant	Health hazard
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS	
	
Environmentally damaging	

## What are the potential impacts of hazardous waste?

- When hazardous waste is released into the environment, it can spread and contaminate all environmental media (i.e. air, water, and land) and pose a threat to human health and the environment.
- The impacts of hazardous waste are determined by one or more of its properties or characteristics listed in the table above.

## Typical examples include:

- Paints
- Pesticides
- Electrical and electronic equipment
- Batteries
- Chemicals
- Health care risk waste
- Pharmaceuticals
- Aerosols
- Drums
- Glue
- Sludge
- Solvents
- Mercury containing waste
- Cleaning agents

## LEGISLATION

### National Environmental Management Waste Act (Act No. 59 of 2008)

### Government Gazette No 278, 10 March 2009

The Department of Environmental Affairs manages hazardous waste in South Africa through the National Environmental Management Waste Act.

The Act provides protection for public health and the environment by providing measures for:

- Minimising the consumption of natural resources
- Avoiding and minimising the generation of waste
- Reducing, reusing, recycling and recovering waste
- Treating and safely disposing of waste as a last resort
- Preventing pollution and ecological degradation
- Remediating land where contamination exists
- Securing ecologically sustainable development while promoting justifiable economic and social development

## ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS AND NORMS AND STANDARDS

### Waste Classification and Management Regulations

#### Government Notice No. R. 634, 23 August 2013

The WC&MR aim to regulate the classification and management of waste in a manner which supports the implementation of the provisions of the Act. The Regulations:

- Prescribe the general duties of waste generators, transporters and managers
- Prescribe the requirements for disposal of waste to landfill
- Provide a mechanism for the listing of waste management activities that do not require a waste management licence
- Prescribe timeframes for the management of certain wastes.

### List of Waste Management Activities that have, or are Likely to have a Detrimental Effect on the Environment

#### Government Notice No. 921, 29 November 2013

In terms of Part 4, section 19 of the Act the Minister may publish a list of waste management activities that indicates whether a waste management licence (WML) is required to conduct the activity or, if a WML is not required, the requirements or standards that must be adhered to when conducting the activity.

The list prescribes those activities that require a basic assessment process (Category A), those that require a scoping and environmental impact process (Category B) and those that must comply with the established Norms and Standards relevant to the undertaking of such activities (Category C).

### National Waste Information Regulations

#### Government Notice No. R. 625, 13 August 2012

The purpose of the WIR is to regulate the collection of data and information to fulfil the objectives of the national waste information system as set out in section 61 of the Act.

### National Norms and Standards for Assessment of Waste for Landfill Disposal

#### Government Notice No. R. 635, 23 August 2013

The Norms and Standards prescribe:

- the standard assessment methodology;
- total and leachable concentration analysis and limits; and
- waste types for landfill disposal.

### National Norms and Standards for Disposal of Waste to Landfill

#### Government Notice No. R. 636, 23 August 2013

The Norms and Standards prescribe:

- the landfill classification and containment barrier design;
- waste acceptance criteria for disposal to landfill; and
- waste disposal restrictions.

### National Norms and Standards for Storage of Waste

#### Government Notice No. 926, 29 November 2013

The Norms and Standards provide:

- a uniform approach to the management of waste storage facilities; and
- a minimum standard for the design and operation of new and existing waste storage facilities.

### National Norms and Standards for the Remediation of Contaminated Land and Soil Quality

#### Government Notice No. 331, 2 May 2014

The Norms and Standards provide:

- a national approach to determine the contamination status of an investigation area; and
- minimum standards for assessing necessary environmental protection measures for remediation activities.

### National Standards for Scrapping or Recovery of Motor Vehicles

#### Government Notice No. 925, 29 November 2013

The National Standards provide:

- the minimum requirements for the design, construction or upgrading of a vehicle scrapping or recovery facility.

### National Standards for Extraction, Flaring or Recovery of Landfill Gas

#### Government Notice No. 924, 29 November 2013

The National Standards provide:

- the minimum requirements for the construction and operation of a landfill gas extraction, flaring or recovery facility.

