

## COVID-19 UPDATE # 25 - Queensland Health waste management advice

Queensland Health has provided the following advice related to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) waste management:

- PPE can be managed as general waste unless visibly contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids (this includes when the PPE has been used in the care of patients with COVID-19).
- Waste from RATs:
  - The components of the test kits that are used to collect, contain, or test a sample must be disposed of as clinical waste.
  - Other components such as packaging can be disposed of as general waste.
- The above advice applies to both healthcare and residential care settings, and can also be applied to other residential institutional non-health care settings (such as correctional centres).
- The above is in line with the advice found in the "[Clinical and related waste](#)" guideline published by the Department of Environment and Science (DES), and with current [infection prevention and control advice](#).
- In relation to the home environment - the "Clinical and related waste" guideline provides advice for *Domestic premises* that *"the only category of clinical and related wastes requiring special treatment is sharps or other devices (hypodermic needles) used to penetrate the skin of humans or animals. All other clinical and related wastes can be disposed of through the domestic waste stream."*

Further information on waste management for health facilities and waste contractors can be found [here](#).

DES has also released [information](#) about temporary authorities as a mechanism to rapidly amend EAs to authorise certain functions. It is encouraging industry to contact the department at [waste.assessment@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:waste.assessment@des.qld.gov.au) early to advise of any issues.

To apply to the department to issue a temporary authority under Chapter 11A of the Act, please email [waste.assessment@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:waste.assessment@des.qld.gov.au) and clearly demonstrate that you meet the following requirements of the provision:

- your request is in relation to a relevant ERA;



- issuing the temporary authority is a necessary and reasonable response to the effect of the COVID-19 emergency on the intensity or scale of the relevant ERA; and
- detailed information regarding the circumstances that are causing the issue and the attempts made so far to resolve the issue.

The department will work with individual operators to issue temporary authorities if it is satisfied that the requirements for the issue of a temporary authority have been met.