



WASTE CONNECTIONS OF TEXAS  
*Connect with the Future\**

## Continuity of Operations in Face of Covid-19

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March 19, 2020

Dear Community Partners:

Over the past several days, our organization has planned for continuity of operations in the face of Covid-19. Implementations for Phase II and communications to our community leaders began this week.

Currently, we remain fully operational with minimal impact on our personnel and their ability to report to work. All services continue to be online with collections occurring as regularly scheduled.

Given recent events around closures of businesses and schools, and the increased number of cases of Covid-19 infections, we feel it's necessary to preempt an impact on the health of our personnel by moving to Phase IV, effective Monday, March 23, 2020.

Phase IV of our planning involves the temporary suspension of Residential Bulk & Brush services, along with limiting Residential Recycle and Trash services to collection of only contents within carts. Bags and bundles that are placed outside of carts will be excluded from collection during this time, in order to minimize the risk of exposure through manual collection or "pickup by hand". The change to go "cart only" on our Residential Routes will be in effect for the ensuing six weeks, through April, 2020.

### **Covid-19 Service Restriction: Effective March 23, 2020**

All residential services are reduced to collection of "cart contents only" in order to reduce chance of exposure of personnel with solid waste that may occur if handling by hand. Contents placed outside the cart will not be collected.



We understand that limiting collection services to cart contents only warrants some discretion among our residents for what they dispose of and when. Household trash, bags from kitchens and restrooms, should remain a top priority for those waste streams that go into the carts. That's to say, if there is only enough room in the cart remaining for one bag from the kitchen or one bag of yard trimmings, we urge residents to use the space for the bag from the kitchen for health and sanitation purposes.

Now is also a good time to educate our customers to bag and tie their household trash, a commonly overlooked best practice. Household trash that is not properly bagged and tied is susceptible to spills and further increases the risk of exposure for our personnel to potentially infectious waste. We appreciate any assistance from our partnered communities in furthering this message to residents.

We appreciate your understanding as we take precautions to protect the health and well-being of our employees, our customers, and our communities. Please trust that we recognize our essential role in maintaining health and sanitation in our communities. Supporting our municipal partners remains one of our highest priorities, right after the safety of our people, and we hope that is evident in our phased approach to plans for continuity of our operations.

As our communities recover from the Covid-19 situation, our plan is to scale back to lower Phases, eventually all the way to Phase I. For more detail on our plans for maintaining continuity of operations, please refer to the following:

- **Phase I:** Total operational coverage and no immediate threat.
  - Precautionary measures are taken to increase hygiene and social distancing. No impact on service capacity while all personnel continue reporting for regular duty.
- **Phase II:** Total operational coverage or with minimal impact as local cases of Covid-19 arise in our communities.
  - Ramp up precautions including remote work mandated for non-essential personnel, and stagger start times of operational personnel to increase social distancing.
- **Phase III:** Partial impact to operational coverage as local cases begin to impact availability of operational-essential personnel in the form of prolonged school closures and/or some cases of our own personnel being quarantined.
  - We begin operational triage to prioritize coverage of services most essential to the health and safety of our community partners. Lower priority services are more susceptible to delays or temporary suspension. Prioritization (from low to high) of collections services are deemed as follows:
    - Industrial/Construction Recycle (Lowest Priority)
    - Industrial/Construction Trash
    - Commercial (Non-Residential) Recycle
    - Commercial (Non-Residential) Trash
    - Residential Bulk & Brush
    - Residential Recycle
    - Residential Trash (Highest Priority)
- **Phase IV:** Limited operational coverage necessitates further suspension and prioritization of services as frequency of Covid-19 cases increase results prompts broadened quarantining.
  - All Residential collection services are reduced to “cart only” in order to reduce chance of contact of our personnel with solid waste via manual pickup. Additionally, Residential collection services are impacted accordingly:
    - Residential Bulk & Brush – collection services are suspended
    - Residential Recycle – reduced to cart contents only. To maximize operational efficiency, recycle contents will be comingled along with Residential Waste collection and will not be recycled
    - Residential Trash – reduced to cart contents only. Contents outside of container will not be collected to reduce risk of exposure of operational personnel and maximize operational efficiencies.
- **Phase V:** No operational coverage as frequency of Covid-19 cases prompts a lockdown or full quarantine for our communities.
  - All collection services are suspended until lockdown is lifted. When the lockdown is lifted, we will revert to Phase IV, then work our way upward to and through Phase I approach.

Sincerely,



**Jesse Wilson**

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Waste Connections – McGregor

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