

## Regulated Medical Waste Management Regulations, Amendment 3

### Summary of Significant Changes

*This document provides a summary of Amendment 3 to the [Virginia Regulated Medical Waste Management Regulations \(9VAC20-121\)](#). The new regulations are effective March 15, 2023, and background information on Amendment 3 to the regulations is available on the [Virginia Regulatory Town Hall webpage](#).*

#### Purpose of Amendment

This amendment repeals Chapter 120 and replaces it with Chapter 121 to clarify requirements for generators and transporters, modernize operational standards for transfer stations and treatment facilities based on industry best practices, improve permitting procedures, and address the management of highly infectious Category A waste.

Regulatory Outline	Summary of Significant Changes
<b>Definitions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adds definitions for waste types (e.g., Category A Waste, household sharps), facility types (e.g., captive, non-captive), and procedures for validation and challenge testing of treatment units</li> </ul>
<b>General Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides existing permitted RMW Transfer Stations and RMW Treatment Facilities until September 15, 2024, to submit updated permit application documents to address new regulatory requirements (revalidation of treatment units is required upon DEQ approval of treatment plans)</li> <li>Prohibits certain RMW activities (e.g., operating without a permit, unpermitted discharges)</li> <li>Adds more RMW examples and exemptions to clarify what is and is not managed as RMW</li> </ul>
<b>Standards for Management of All RMW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates general handling, packaging, labeling, storage, reusable container, spill cleanup, and transport requirements applicable to all generators and all handlers of RMW</li> <li>Revises storage conditions and time limits for generators and permitted facilities:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generators of less than 250 gal/month – remove stored RMW monthly, max 45-day hold</li> <li>Generators of 250 gal/month or more – remove stored RMW weekly, max 10-day hold</li> <li>Treatment Facilities – treat or remove RMW on a weekly basis, max 10-day hold</li> <li>Transfer Stations – store up to 7 days unrefrigerated, max 15-day hold</li> </ul> </li> <li>Updates standards for reusable container cleaning and provides new options for disinfection</li> <li>Incorporates 2022 federal standards for management of highly infectious Category A waste</li> </ul>
<b>Standards for RMW Transfer Stations and Treatment Facilities</b>	<p><b>For both RMW Transfer Stations and RMW Treatment Facilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates siting, design and construction, operations, and closure standards for greater consistency with solid waste management (non-disposal) facilities</li> <li>Requires that facilities maintain and operate in accordance with a new RMW Management Plan</li> <li>Adds new requirements for unauthorized waste control, fixed radiation detectors to screen for radioactive waste, housekeeping, monthly self-inspections, and initial and annual training</li> </ul> <p><b>For RMW Treatment Facilities (only):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminates previous requirement to shred RMW, as it is no longer an industry best practice</li> <li>Establishes new minimum performance standards for each treatment method</li> <li>Updates spore inactivation requirement to 6 log<sub>10</sub> reduction or greater for effective treatment</li> <li>Requires initial and periodic validation testing to establish site-specific operating parameters</li> <li>Updates challenge testing protocols (e.g., number, type, and placement of biological indicators)</li> <li>Requires new Treated Waste Disposal Plans to be distributed to all receiving facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Permitting of RMW Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More clearly exempts generators and transporters from permit requirements</li> <li>Addresses other activities exempt from permitting (e.g., sharps drop boxes, pre-treatment)</li> <li>Eliminates previous “on-site” and “off-site” permits and identifies single new permit-by-rule process (and new PBR application form) for RMW Transfer Stations and Treatment Facilities</li> <li>Eliminates permit expirations and renewals – permits are now valid for the life of the facility</li> <li>Establishes new process for emergency permits to be issued if necessary</li> <li>Updates recordkeeping and establishes 24-hr/5-day reporting of unusual conditions</li> </ul>