



GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment
Pollution Prevention Division
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GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Title: Disposal of Dead Animals

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Approved By:

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**Dead Animal Disposal
GD-PPD-005.3**

1. Introduction and application

Wild animals (beached marine mammal carcasses, road kill (moose, caribou, snowshoe hare, coyote etc.), oiled birds), improperly harvested animals, and pets that have died from natural causes may pose health and environmental concerns unless properly disposed in an appropriate location. Problems associated may include noxious odour, flies and insects, and the threat of developing into breeding substrate for vectors that can spread disease.

These guidelines do not apply to disposal of mass mortalities for any reason including environmental impacts due to an oil or hazardous material spill or a major storm; or for preventive measures such as herd culls, or to prevent the spread of disease e.g. in the case of a potential rabies or avian flu outbreak. Where and when an incident of mass mortality must be addressed, a lead agency will be identified and will work in collaboration with other concerned government departments, agencies and entities to safely and effectively address the tasks.

2. Legislation

Legislation applicable to disposal of dead animals/carcasses includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Provincial legislation

- *Environmental Protection Act and Regulations*
- *Water Resources Act and Regulations*
- *Wildlife Act*
- *Highway Traffic Act*

Federal legislation

- *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*
- *Ocean Dumping Control Regulations*
- *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act and Regulations*
- *Fisheries Act*
- National Fire Code
- *Species at Risk Act*
- *Migratory Birds Convention Act*
- *Food and Drugs Act*
- *Health of Animals Act*

3. Responsibilities

Domestic animals: The owner is responsible for disposal of carcasses of domesticated animals such as pets and individual farm animals. If the owner is not available or cannot be identified, the municipality will be held responsible for carcass disposal, and costs may be recoverable from the owner. Service NL would take the lead to advise of proper disposal methods.

Non-Domestic animals: The municipality is responsible for taking lead action in the collection, transport and disposal of non-domestic animal carcasses within municipal boundaries. Environmental Protection Officers with Service NL would take the lead in unincorporated areas. Wildlife Conservation Officers from the Department of Fisheries, Lands and Resources, and Environmental Health Officers with the regional Service NL office may also be consulted, particularly if animals are suspected to be diseased. The Department of Fisheries, Lands and Resources operates an approved incinerator at the Brookfield Road Agriculture Station, and may be consulted and involved with final disposal in some cases.

Marine mammals: Upon receipt of a complaint regarding dead marine mammals washed ashore, an Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) from Service NL would normally conduct a site visit and assessment. If the carcass (s) is/are confirmed to be located within a municipal boundary, the municipality would be responsible for taking the lead for managing any disposal actions. The EPO would also assess the potential for adverse environmental impacts (e.g. odour and runoff) to local resources and land use e.g. nearby water wells, recreational

or residential areas; and whether the carcass(es) can be disposed on or near the site, or would have to be removed for disposal elsewhere.

Federal jurisdiction: Federal Agencies such as Environment Canada (EC), the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS); Fisheries and Oceans and or the Canadian Coast Guard; the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and possibly the Public Health Agency of Canada may also be contacted where there may be Federal jurisdiction. Federal jurisdiction may relate to endangered species, migratory birds, marine mammals or suspected contagious or transmissible disease agents such as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (very low likelihood of occurrence), bovine tuberculosis (brucellosis – also low likelihood), rabies, bird flu or swine flu.

4. Public Water Supply Areas

Areas within 2.5 km of a water supply intake shall be considered a priority. In all cases where an animal carcass is discovered within a water supply area, Service NL will contact the Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment Water Resources Management Division (WRMD) for consultation. If the WRMD is notified first, contact will be made with the appropriate Regional Service NL office. GSC staff will respond to confirm the presence of an animal carcass in a public water supply at the earliest opportunity. Where there is a potential threat to human health, the WRMD will coordinate sampling and liaise with Provincial Department of Health and Community Services officials. Municipal officials may be required to take action if drinking water safety is a concern. A Boil Water Advisory may be considered for a public water supply, if gross bacteriological contamination exacerbates disinfection levels.

5. Disposal Options

Disposal of a single animal carcass to a local waste disposal site remains possible where a local site is still operating. In most cases, disposal would be to the regional waste management facility engineered lined landfill, with the exception of Robin Hood Bay landfill. Advance permission of the owner/operator of the landfill is required and the Regional GSC should also be advised.

For disposal to a local operating landfill or when burying a single animal (e.g. a horse or a sheep) on private property or a farm, the disposal area shall be located a minimum of 150 metres from a well water supply, and at least 30 metres from any watercourse or water body. The carcass must be placed in a prepared excavation, with a separation distance of at least 0.3 metres (vertical) from the bottom of the excavation to the groundwater table. The carcass shall be treated with hydrate of lime to assist with disinfection and decomposition, and to suppress odour, flies and rodent infestation; and then backfilled with a minimum of 0.6 metres of fill material.

Farmers who hold a valid Waste Management Certificate of Approval are permitted to dispose of limited numbers of animal mortalities and specified risk materials (as defined by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency) on their own property, provided it does not adversely affect the environment and is done in the manner described above. Disposal of designated *specified risk material* must be in accordance with the guidance of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. *Specified risk material* (SRM) includes the skull, brain, trigeminal ganglia (nerves attached to the brain), eyes, tonsils, spinal cord, and dorsal root ganglia (nerves attached to the spinal cord) of cattle aged 30 months or older, and the distal ileum (portion of the small intestine) of cattle of all ages. These cattle tissues, if infected are capable of transmitting bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease if added to animal feed, pet food or fertilizer.

Composting is also possible where a facility is equipped to handle carcasses; or in association with established agricultural composting operations e.g. some mink farms dispose of carcasses by composting. The composting process may be an effective disposal option for some, but not all disease causing pathogens.

Moose and caribou road kill may be salvaged for feed and distributed to fox or mink farmers in the local area.

Road kill in isolated areas is not to be disposed within 650 metres of recreational cottages or residential property.

Deceased pets may also be cremated where such facilities are available (some veterinary clinics) and/or remains buried in an approved pet cemetery.

High temperature incineration (850°C, and retention time of 1 second) at an approved incinerator, is recommended for oiled birds, oiled mammals or diseased animals.

A permit is required from Environment Canada under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* which protects many seabirds and raptor species for the collection and disposal of migratory birds. Should large numbers of oiled birds wash ashore consultation with Environment Canada (CWS) is required to ensure samples are obtained, and an investigation into the source of the oil is undertaken. The occurrence of oiled seabirds should be reported to the 24-hour Environmental Emergencies phone number 772-2083 (St. John's) or 1-800-563-9089 (outlying areas). All appropriate agencies including Environment Canada and Canadian Wildlife Service will be notified as required for incident response.

In the case of a dead beached whale(s) or other large marine mammals or large numbers of dead marine mammals, options for disposal are as follows:

1. Where there are no nearby environmental receptors, onsite or nearby burial in an excavated trench, with the addition of adequate hydrate of lime to reduce odour and speed decomposition, and covering with at least .6 m of soil could be an option.
2. In a remote location where there are no nearby environmental receptors, in situ disposal and natural decomposition may be allowable; or if possible towing to a more secluded, suitable beach or nearby island where the carcass can be moored in place to decompose naturally.
3. In some cases, an ocean dumping permit may be obtained from Environment Canada under the *Ocean Dumping Control Regulations* , and a large whale may be towed off-shore and sunk.
4. Removal and transport (whole or in parts) in a leak-proof truck, to an approved waste disposal site for burial as described above.
5. In some cases whale skeletons have been destined for display at a museum or exhibit in which case the process of removing the flesh would be accomplished by a specialized team of workers. The waste from this process would be disposed of by burial or transport in a leak-proof truck, to an approved waste disposal site, and would be buried as described above.

6. Collection and Transport

Where possible, animal carcasses are to be collected in puncture proof (6mm) polyethylene bags. Transportation shall be in enclosed, leak-proof containers. Spillage enroute would constitute a release to the environment and is a contravention of provincial legislation: the *Environmental Protection Act* and the *Highway Traffic Act*. A penalty may be imposed and remedial action to clean the affected area would be required.

Useful Contact Information

Environmental Emergencies – 709-772-2083 (St. John's); 1-800-563-9089 (outlying areas)

City of St. John's – 311 for Humane Services – euthanasia and cremation

Government Service Centres

Address	Phone	Fax
Clarenville 8 Myers Avenue Suite 201 A5A 1T5	(709) 466-4060	(709) 466-4070
Corner Brook Mount Bernard Avenue	(709) 637-2204	(709) 637-2681

Sir Richard Squires Building
A2H 6J8

Gander

Fraser Mall
230 Airport Blvd. (709) 256-1420 (709) 256-1438
P O Box 2222 A1V 2N9

Grand Bank

Buffett Building (709) 832-2326 (709) 832-1792
Church Street

Grand Falls-Windsor

3 Cromer Avenue
Provincial Building (709) 292-4206 (709) 292-4149
A2A 1W9 (709) 292-4259

Harbour Grace

7-9 Roddick Crescent
PO BOX 512 A0A 2M0 (709) 945-3107 (709) 945-3114

Happy Valley-Goose Bay

2 Tenth Street
PO Box 3014 Station B A0P 1E0 (709) 896-5428 (709) 896-4340
(709) 896-5430

Labrador City

118 Humphrey Road
Bruno Plaza (709) 944-5282 (709) 944-5630
PO BOX 1079 A2V 2J8

Lewisporte

224 Main Street
Porte Building (709) 535-0262 (709) 535-0284
PO BOX 1136 A0G 3A0

Marystown

1 Harris Drive
Industrial Park (709) 279-0837
P.O. Box 698 A0E 2M0

Mount Pearl

Office Location: 149 Smallwood Drive (709) 729-3699 (709) 729-7400
Mailing Address: PO BOX 8700, St.
John's A1B 4J6

Port aux Basques

Main Street
Provincial Building
PO BOX 478 A0M 1C0

(709) 695-2835

(709) 695-2393

St. Anthony

6-8 North Street
PO BOX 28 A0K 4S0

(709) 454-8833

(709) 454-3206

Stephenville

35 Alabama Drive
A2N 3K9

(709) 643-8650

(709) 643-8654

Springdale

200 Main Street
A0J 1T0

(709) 673-4218

(709) 673-4232

Please Note: Business hours and counter service hours may vary at some locations.

Also note that all services are not available at every location.

It is advisable to call ahead to confirm the hours of operation and the availability of services.