



APHIS Regulated Garbage: Procedures for Purging Stores and the 24-Hour Rule

Garbage is regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on conveyances arriving from foreign countries (**except** Canada), Hawaii, and U.S. territories or possessions to prevent the introduction and dissemination of pests and diseases of plants, livestock, and poultry.

APHIS regulated garbage is subject to the handling requirements under [7 CFR 330.400-330.401](#) and [9 CFR 94.5](#), as well as the surveillance and disposal methods authorized by the Plant Protection Act and the Animal Health Protection Act. Vessels may remove or “purge” their stores and garbage and then clean and disinfect, if required, to obtain “domestic status.”

If there are sufficient U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) or APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) personnel available, a vessel can be purged when in a U.S. port. However, a purge conducted in Hawaii or a U.S. territory or possession is **only** valid while in Hawaii or the U.S. territory or possession where the purge occurred.

Scheduling a Purge to Obtain “Domestic Status”

If the vessel has been in a foreign country (**other than** Canada) in the last 2 years, the vessel owner(s) **must** contact the [local CBP office](#).

If the vessel has **not** been to a foreign port in the last 2 years but has been to a non-continental U.S. port such as Hawaii or Puerto Rico, the vessel owner **must** contact the [local PPQ State Plant Health Director’s office](#). To purge U.S. military vessels, contact the [local CBP office](#).

By meeting **one** of the following requirements, the status of the vessel will be considered domestic and the garbage generated onboard after the purge may be disposed of without being incinerated or sterilized.

1. Vessel has **not** been in any port outside the continental United States and Canada within the previous 2 years **nor** has the vessel been to a non-continental U.S. port in the last year;

OR

2. Vessel has disposed of **all** items regulated by APHIS (refer to [Procedures for Purging](#)) and removed all garbage from the vessel. This option is known as “purging”. The process is monitored by CBP or PPQ and the vessel operator will receive a CBP Form AI-288 or a PPQ Form 288 indicating the vessel is considered to be in domestic status.

NOTICE

Once a vessel in domestic status travels to a port in a foreign country (**except** Canada) or to/from a port in Hawaii or a U.S. territory or possession, the vessel is **no** longer considered to have “domestic” status.

Procedures for Purging

To be recognized as a valid purge, CBP or PPQ must monitor the purging of the vessel's regulated stores and garbage and subsequent cleaning and disinfection, when required. If the vessel is a U.S. military vessel, refer to the [24-Hour Rule Specific to U.S. Military Vessels Only](#).

1. **All** regulated garbage is removed from the vessel by an APHIS-approved compliance agreement holder.
2. Purging of regulated¹ items: all regulated items **must** be removed from the vessel for incineration, sterilization, or transfer to another vessel.
3. Transfers **must** be done under the direct supervision of a CBP Agriculture Specialist.
4. The following **must** be purged or transferred if the vessel has been to a foreign port (**excluding** Canadian ports) in the last 2 years.¹
 - A. [APHIS Veterinary Services \(VS\)-regulated meat and meat products](#)^{2, 3}
 - B. Fresh and condensed milk and cream from [countries in which Foot-and-Mouth disease exists](#)
 - C. Fresh eggs
 - D. Fresh fruits and vegetables
5. Crew quarters and any other possible locations are also inspected for items that need to be purged.
6. The purged material (including garbage) is incinerated, sterilized, or transferred to another vessel.
7. Following disposal, **all** storerooms and locations which held the previously purged animal products and byproducts **must** be cleaned and disinfected or sanitized, as applicable, under direct supervision by a CBP Agriculture Specialist or PPQ personnel. Disinfection of the stores area is **not** required if the routings were solely between Canada and the continental U.S. and/or between Hawaii, U.S. possessions and/or U.S. territories.
8. The captain will be given a CBP Form AI-288 Ship Inspection Report or a PPQ Form 288 Ship Inspection Report with "Purged-now Domestic" written in the "Remarks Block". If the purge occurs in a U.S. territory, U.S. possession, or Hawaii, then the "domestic" status will **only** be valid in the U.S. territory, U.S. possession, or Hawaii where the purge occurred as stated in the "Remarks Block". The copy of the form is evidence of "domestic" status until the vessel enters a foreign port (**except** Canada) or obtains supplies from outside of the continental U.S. or Canada.

Disinfectants and sanitizers are provided by vessel personnel. Sanitizer used **must** be a product approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for use in food preparation or food storage area(s). APHIS-authorized disinfectants **must** be used on garbage containers and in nonfood preparation areas where garbage is stored or spilled.

¹ Only fresh fruits and vegetables and all garbage need to be disposed of in the routings between the continental U.S. (either directly or indirectly from Canada) and/or between Hawaii, U.S. possessions and/or U.S. territories. **No** disinfection of the store area is required.

² U.S.-origin meat and meat products provisioned in the U.S. are allowed to return to the U.S. as personal provisions for use on the vessel.

³ Meat, poultry and other edible animal products and byproducts in a vessel's stores may be transferred over water from one vessel to another when permission in writing listing the items to be transferred is approved by CBP. The vessel's agent will also request approval from PPQ Quarantine Policy, Analysis, and Support (QPAS) Animal Disease Exclusion (ADE) personnel to transfer these commodities. The transfer will be made under the direct CBP observation. Stores **must** be transferred from one vessel onto a barge or other floating carrier, over water to the receiving vessel.

24-Hour Rule Specific to U.S. Military Vessels Only

Because U.S. military vessels are typically equipped with U.S. origin stores, APHIS policy allows for a modified procedure, called the “24-hour rule” to obtain domestic status. Vessels under contract to the military, “NOAA” ships, or other nonmilitary, government ships are handled as commercial vessels.

U.S. Naval vessels with the designation “USS” followed by the name of the ship and Coast Guard vessels are handled according to APHIS and Department of Defense (DoD) requirements. Military Sealift Command (MSC) vessels are handled the same as U.S. Naval vessels **only** when the crew are U.S. military personnel.

To apply the 24-hour rule, the following requirements **must** be met:

- The vessel **must** arrange for removal of all garbage on the vessel by an APHIS-approved handler.
- The vessel agent **must** contact the local CBP office to arrange for an inspection.
- CBP will inspect the vessel and verify all the stores are U.S. origin in the galley, coolers, and freezers. If regulated foreign stores are still aboard the vessel, refer to [Foreign Regulated Stores on Military Vessels](#).
- Once the stores are verified, all garbage will be removed from the vessel, including all garbage produced in the first 24-hours. Vessel personnel will transfer custody of the garbage to an APHIS-approved regulated garbage handler for processing.
- CBP will document on the CBP Form AI-288 Ship Inspection Report, that the vessel has achieved “domestic” status through the 24-hour rule. Retain Form AI-288 until the vessel departs the mainland traveling to a foreign port (except Canada) or until arriving in a port in Hawaii or a U.S. territory or possession as proof of “domestic” status. Once the CBP Form AI-288 has been issued documenting the procedure is complete, any garbage produced on board is not regulated and no further action is required at subsequent ports (unless/until the vessel visits a foreign port or non-continental U.S. port and/or obtains foreign stores).

Foreign Regulated Stores on Military Vessels

If regulated foreign stores are still on the military vessel, the 24-hour rule **cannot** be applied. Once the foreign stores are used up or verified through CBP monitoring that the regulated foreign stores were offloaded or otherwise disposed of by an approved method, then the 24-hour rule can be applied. Until regulated stores are used up or disposed, garbage generated aboard the vessel is considered regulated while onboard the vessel or while being off-loaded as would occur for any other vessel arriving from foreign ports (**except** Canada.)

Alignment with DoD’s Requirements

Parallel garbage handling requirements exist for military vessel operators:

- U.S. Navy: Requirement per NAVSUP Publication 486 (Revision August 2016)
- Additional Statement: Requirement per DoD Defense Transportation Regulation- Part V, Chapter 505. (12 October 2021)