Regulated Garbage

Last Modified:

To protect agriculture and natural resources from the introduction and spread of plant and animal pests and diseases, APHIS regulates garbage generated onboard conveyances (ocean vessels and aircraft) arriving from any place outside of the continental United States, except Canada.

Specifically, APHIS regulates garbage generated onboard conveyances that have:

- Been at any port outside the U.S. and Canada within the previous 2-year period; or
- Moved to or from Hawaii, U.S. territories, or possessions within the previous 1-year period.

Regulated garbage includes all waste material derived whole or in part from fruits, vegetables, meats or other plant or animal (including poultry) material, and other refuse of any character that has been associated with any such material.

For more information, contact your State or local Regulated Garbage Lead (230.32 KB) or State Plant Health Director.

Handling Regulated Garbage

Conveyances arriving in the United States must follow APHIS-approved regulated garbage handling activities to offload, transport, store, and process regulated garbage for disposal. APHIS provides technical advice and assistance in evaluating entities that express interest in handling regulated garbage. APHIS also helps U.S. based companies that have demonstrated compliance with APHIS regulated garbage regulations obtain compliance agreements. Regardless of the activities performed, all regulated garbage compliance agreement holders must meet the same basic requirements for operating procedures, marking garbage, recyclable materials, and handling regulated garbage spills.

APHIS works with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to ensure appropriate and consistent handling of regulated garbage at U.S. ports of entry and elsewhere.

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Compliance Agreements for Handling or Processing Regulated Garbage

A compliance agreement is a signed, written, legal agreement issued by CBP or APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) personnel to facilities that APHIS has approved to handle regulated garbage. A compliance agreement consists of PPQ Form 519 Compliance Agreement and all the required addenda, including the company operating procedure. Compliance agreements and addenda are used to formalize agreements with caterers, garbage haulers, garbage processors, and other entities responsible for handling or processing regulated garbage. The compliance agreement indicates the facility understands the methods, conditions, and procedures necessary to comply with APHIS regulations.

Important: Applicants must also contact local, State, and federal agencies for their requirements to handle garbage.

Requesting APHIS Approval to Handle or Process Regulated Garbage

Establishments/companies should use the APHIS Regulated Garbage Compliance Agreement for Approval Template (709.78 KB) to apply for APHIS approval to handle regulated garbage under a compliance agreement. The following documents are linked in the template and provided below for quick reference:

- Procedure to Request Approval to Handle Regulated Garbage (30.92 KB)
- Guidelines for Writing Operating Procedures for APHIS Regulated Garbage (41.17 KB)
- APHIS Authorized Disinfectants for Use When Handling APHIS Regulated Garbage (67.6 KB)
- Guidelines for Regulated Garbage Record-Keeping (30.55 KB)
- Guidelines for Regulated Garbage Written Training Program (35.37 KB)
- No Free Ride Video (English video, Spanish video, Mandarin Chinese video)
- Procedures for Companies Requesting Approval to Transport Regulated Garbage Interstate (41.18 KB)

Applicants should also review the following policy and guidance documents:

- Airlines
  - Foodstuffs Onboard Aircraft Exempted from Removal as Regulated Garbage (39.43 KB)
  - Back-Catering Frequently Asked Questions
- Maritime vessels
  - Procedures for Purging Stores, 24 Hour Rule and APHIS Regulated Garbage (52.02 KB)
- Regulated garbage processors
  - Requesting Approval to Use New Technology for Handling Regulated Garbage (34.48 KB)
- Requesting changes to compliance agreement
  - Procedures for Informing APHIS of a Company Name Change/Change in Ownership (35.88 KB)
  - Requesting Approval to Store Regulated Garbage More than 120 Hours (34.53 KB)
  - Voluntary Relinquishment of a Regulated Garbage Compliance Agreement (40.43 KB)

- Recycling exemption
    - USDA APHIS Recycling Material Exemption (35.62 KB)

Send requests to apply to handle regulated garbage to ppq.ops.regulated.garbage@usda.gov.

Compliance Agreement Monitoring

Compliance agreements covering regulated garbage handling are valid from the date of agreement (box 10 on PPQ Form 519 (203.24 KB)). Once your agreement is valid, APHIS or CBP officials may:

- Monitor newly approved compliance agreement handlers for the first year from the time of approval and every six months after that depending on the results of the monitoring.
- Monitor existing compliance agreement holders every six months.
- Conduct unscheduled monitoring compliance visits as they deem necessary, which may result in written reports and photographic documentation.

Questions?

If you have questions or need more information about handling regulated garbage, contact your State or local Regulated Garbage Lead (230.32 KB) or State Plant Health Director.

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