



August 27, 2018

## Sandbag Disposal

### Disposal of clean sand that has been removed from bags

Section NR 500.08(2), Wis. Adm. Code, exempts clean soil from most solid waste disposal requirements. This means that once removed from the bag, the sand from sandbags may be placed in any location or used as clean fill material as long as the sand disposal is maintained in a manner which is nuisance free and aesthetic and the permanent placement is not in a [100 year] floodplain, will not cause a significant adverse impact on wetlands, a take of an endangered or threatened species, a detrimental effect on surface water, a detrimental effect on groundwater quality, the migration or concentration of explosives gases, or the emission of any hazardous air contaminant.

Caution should be used because sand that came in contact with flood waters may contain more bacteria than normal soil. Placement in playgrounds, sandboxes, or other areas of direct human contact soon after placement should be avoided. Bacteria will dissipate with time and exposure to the elements. Sand could be stockpiled and used for winter road sand, fill, concrete or mortar sand, or other uses.

### Disposal of clean full sandbags

Fully biodegradable (e.g. jute, burlap) sandbags also meet the disposal exemption under s. NR 500.08(2), Wis. Adm. Code, and can be disposed of as stated above under “disposal of sand that has been removed from bags.”

If the bags are non-degradable (e.g. plastic) the full bags should be disposed of at a municipal solid waste (MSW) landfill or a construction and demolition landfill. Please contact the landfill in advance to make sure they will accept the sandbags and to obtain cost estimates for disposal. Lists of MSW and construction and demolition landfills may be found here:

[https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/WisLic\\_SWLandfills\\_byCnty\\_withWaste.pdf](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/WisLic_SWLandfills_byCnty_withWaste.pdf)

[https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/CDLandfillsSmall\\_byFacName.pdf](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/CDLandfillsSmall_byFacName.pdf)

[https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/CDLandfillsIntermed\\_byFacName.pdf](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/CDLandfillsIntermed_byFacName.pdf)

### Reuse of clean full sandbags

Full sandbags of both biodegradable and non-biodegradable material may be reused for flood events. Sandbags used for flood control have the ability to transfer invasive species or fish diseases. It is best not to move sandbags from one body of water to another. For more information, see

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/disinfection.html> and

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/species.asp?filterBy=Aquatic&filterVal=Y>.

Used sand bags may also be reused to construct permanent earthen structures that are not unstable or erodible.

If the sandbags are being reused in a legitimate project within a reasonable time they are not considered a waste.

Disposal of contaminated sand and/or sandbags

Sand and/or sandbags that have been contaminated with petroleum products, transformer oil, or other contaminants are not considered clean and are not exempt under NR 500.08(2), Wis. Adm. Code. Sand and/or sandbags known or assumed to be contaminated should be disposed of in a MSW landfill.

[https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/WisLic\\_SWLandfills\\_byCnty\\_withWaste.pdf](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waste/documents/faclists/WisLic_SWLandfills_byCnty_withWaste.pdf)