

Pierce County launches post-flood cleanup and continues damage assessment

Pierce County's Solid Waste division has launched two programs to assist county residents and businesses outside Tacoma city limits who were impacted by last week's flood.

Working together, the Solid Waste division and local private waste collection companies are placing debris collection containers in neighborhoods that have a high concentration of debris. Placements began Saturday, January 10.

Where homes and damage are less centralized, Solid Waste will provide vouchers entitling the bearer to dispose of flood damaged household goods free of charge.

Damage assessment reports made to the Pierce County Damage Assessment Center will determine the disposal options made available to specific properties and neighborhoods. Solid Waste crews will be in the field all week with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, inspecting debris and issuing vouchers to residents and businesses who called in damage reports.

Pierce County Public Works & Utilities reminds all county residents and businesses impacted by last week's flood to report their damages to the Department of Emergency Management's Damage Assessment Center at 1-866-798-6363 (toll-free) between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. through Friday, January 16. If you have already called once, you do not have to call again to be eligible for assistance from Solid Waste.

Disposal and Recycling Centers

The following facilities are open seven days a week for disposal and recycling needs:

- Hidden Valley Transfer Station, at 17925 Meridian East on Puyallup's South Hill (8 am to 5:45 pm)
- Prairie Ridge Transfer Station, at 11710 Prairie Ridge Drive E. at South Prairie Road E. between Bonney Lake and South Prairie (9 am to 4:45 pm)
- Purdy Transfer Station, at 144th Street NW at 54th Ave. NW near Gig Harbor (9am to 4:45 pm)

These facilities can handle most of the debris created by flooding, including: spoiled food; damaged clothing and household goods; furniture and appliances; refrigerators and freezers; flood-soaked carpet, sheetrock, and wood.

If you choose to haul waste or recyclables, secure the load on the vehicle to protect yourself and others on the road. If you dispose or recycle before you receive a voucher, bring cash to pay the disposal fee, as facilities do not accept other forms of payment at this time. The Solid Waste division cannot reimburse disposal costs incurred before placement of waste containers or issuing vouchers.

Free Electronics Recycling

Electronic waste is recyclable free of charge at more than thirty Pierce County locations through the E-cycle Washington program. Visit www.ecyclewashington.org or call 1-800-RECYCLE for locations.

Free Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

- Pierce County and the City of Tacoma accept household hazardous waste for free seven days a week at the Tacoma Landfill, located at 3510 South Mullen, just off Center Street in Tacoma. Hours of operation are 8am to 6pm.
- Pierce County and its contractor at the Hidden Valley Transfer Station accept household hazardous waste for free 8am to Noon and 1pm to 5pm Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Yardwaste

Residents of Pierce County outside the City of Tacoma can recycle their first cubic yard of yard waste free of charge at any of the transfer stations listed above. Additional cubic yards are accepted at \$7 per yard.

Stay Safe

To protect personal health and safety while assessing flood damage and clean up, observe these guidelines.

- Do not burn flood debris or yardwaste. It is illegal everywhere in urban Pierce County and the fine particles in debris smoke can cause health problems.
- Make sure any contractor you hire to help clean up is fully licensed, bonded, and insured, and that any waste materials are taken to a legal disposal site. Require disposal receipts/dump tickets from the contractor before paying for services.

For more information, contact the Solid Waste division at 253-798-2179, email pcsolidwaste@co.pierce.wa.us, visit www.piercecountywa.org/solidwaste, or call the recorded information line at 253-798-4115.