Waste and Mortalities Management

SMALL FLOCKS COLLABORATIVE

Steps to Take

Five simple steps to manage waste and dead birds. Make sure to **always check local rules first**, like HOA and zoning regulations, health codes, and how waste is stored or handled.

1 Wear Protection While Cleaning

- ☐ Always wear gloves and a mask
- ☐ Wash hands, equipment, and boots after cleaning
- ☐ If disease is suspected, wear coveralls or eye protection
- ☐ No eating, drinking, or touching your face while cleaning

2 Keep Your Coop Clean

- ☐ Deep clean every few months with poultry-safe disinfectants
- ☐ Remove soiled bedding and droppings regularly

3 Manage Normal Coop Waste

- ☐ Decide between composting or landfill disposal
- ☐ Have a plan for bedding and manure, different options may work better in different areas

4 Have a Plan for Mortalities

- ☐ Remove dead birds promptly to reduce spread of disease and risk of maggots
- ☐ If you have multiple deaths or suspect Avian Influenza, contact your state animal health official immediately

5 Extra Steps For Concern of Disease

- ☐ Double-bag the bird and spray outer bag with disinfectant
- ☐ Use a lidded bin for disposal
- ☐ Don't leave carcasses where animals can reach them
- ☐ Disinfect all tools, boots, and surfaces after handling

Disposal Options

Some cities and HOAs limit how waste is stored or handled. Always review local **zoning, permitting, ordinances, and health codes**. Many places don't allow burial or open burning.

Trash Disposal

- Most backyard birds can go in your normal household waste
- Double-bag carcasses; spray the outer bag with disinfectant if disease is suspected
- Place in a secure outdoor bin
- Wash your hands after handling waste
- Always check local rules before disposal

Composting

- Difficult for carcasses in small flocks
- Animal waste (meat, bones, whole birds) causes odors and attracts pests

Disease Testing

- You can request a necropsy from a veterinarian or vet lab. This is an exam of an animal that died to learn the cause of death.

Composting

Keep piles away from the coop and water sources

Secure waste from rodents, pets, and wild birds

Composting varies by climate make sure to follow local guidance

Landfill Disposal

Bag and place waste in a secure, lidded bin

A good option in cold weather or where composting isn't practical

Wash hands and tools afterward

Find more at
www.healthybirds.info