

**WAC 246-203-121 Disposal of dead animals. (1) Definitions.** For the purpose of this regulation the following definitions apply:

(a) "Burial" means completely covering with soil in a manner and location not requiring a permit for a landfill under chapter 70A.205 RCW.

(b) "Composting" means a process of controlled aerobic decomposition in compliance with chapter 70A.205 RCW.

(c) "Dead animal" means the carcass or tissue from an animal, large or small, except part of an animal used for food or other beneficial purpose in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. "Dead animal" does not mean a fish or other primarily aquatic animal.

(d) "Incineration" means controlled and monitored combustion for the purposes of volume reduction and pathogen destruction in an enclosed device approved by the department of ecology or the local air pollution control authority under chapters 70A.15 and 70A.205 RCW.

(e) "Landfilling" means a process of disposal at a permitted facility where solid waste is permanently placed in or on land in compliance with rules adopted by the department of ecology under chapter 70A.205 RCW.

(f) "Livestock" means horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, ratites, poultry, waterfowl, game birds, or other species according to RCW 16.36.005.

(g) "Natural decomposition" means natural decay on the surface of the ground without cover material.

(h) "Rendering" means heat processing according to requirements under chapter 16.68 RCW, Disposal of dead animals.

**(2) Disposal methods.**

(a) Within 72 hours after death or discovery, the owner of a dead animal or, if the owner of the animal cannot be identified, the owner of the property on which the animal is found must properly dispose of the dead animal. A dead animal must be covered or otherwise removed from public view immediately upon discovery by the person responsible for disposing of the dead animal.

(b) The person responsible for disposal of a dead animal must dispose of it in a manner so as not to become a public or common nuisance or cause pollution of surface or groundwater.

(c) The person responsible for disposal of a dead animal must dispose of it by burial, landfilling, incineration, composting, rendering, or another method approved by the local health officer (such as natural decomposition) that is not otherwise prohibited by federal, state, or local law or regulation.

(d) A person disposing of a dead animal by burial must place it so that every part is covered by at least three feet of soil; at a location not less than 100 feet from any well, spring, stream or other surface waters; not in a low-lying area subject to seasonal flooding or within a 100-year flood plain; and not in a manner likely to contaminate groundwater.

(e) A person disposing of a dead animal must not bury or compost it within the sanitary control area of a public drinking water supply source as designated under chapter 246-290 WAC, Public water supplies, or chapter 246-291 WAC, Group B public water systems.

(f) The local health officer may specify the method of disposal for a dead animal if:

(i) The animal died with a communicable disease transmissible to humans; or

(ii) The local health officer considers a public health emergency to exist.

(g) The provisions of RCW 16.36.092 and chapter 16-25 WAC supersede the provisions of this regulation for the disposal of a livestock animal that has died because of disease or unknown cause.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040 and 2020 c 20. WSR 22-07-025, § 246-203-121, filed 3/9/22, effective 4/9/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050(2). WSR 07-14-149, § 246-203-121, filed 7/5/07, effective 8/5/07.]