Municipal waste management and COVID-19
Summary of observed trends (March 2020)

General adaptations to municipal waste system:
- Civic amenity sites, reuse/repair centres
  - Closure or service reduction
- On-demand services (bulky, garden...
  - Interrupted or reduced
- Household waste
- Street and containers cleaning
  - Specific instructions and procedures
- Staff
  - PPE and other safety & health measures
  - Fringe benefits (e.g. children services)
- Relations with citizens
  - Communication actions, offices closed, available by email/phone

Sorting rules at home:
- Masks, gloves, tissues, and disposable cloths collected with mixed waste (in some cases, tissues and handkerchiefs were before collected with bio-waste)
- Household with COVID-19 positive people or with people in mandatory quarantine
- Mixed waste
  - Bin with pedal, 2 or more sealed bags, recyclables and biowaste with mixed waste
- Recyclables, bio-waste
  - No source separation, households might be asked to keep at home for a certain amount of time WEEE, batteries, and other hazardous waste

Waste collection:
- Frequency collection modulated according to specific needs (staff shortages, health & safety measures reducing efficiency, mixed waste and biowaste prioritization)
- In some cases, 72 hours to wait before waste disposal
- Possibility of ad hoc services, keeping the waste separated from the municipal stream (specific containers)
- Frequency of collection may need to be increased

Waste treatment:
- Derogation to the mandatory preliminary mixed waste treatment before its disposal may be needed (e.g. by way of incineration or controlled landfill)
- Treatment plant must rely as much as possible on automated systems
- Review of storage permits may be needed (to safely treat waste without infectious load)
- Mixed waste
  - Incineration prioritised; MBIs continue with business as usual when they are highly automated (minimum involvement of operators, or controlled landfill)

This graphic does not include recommendations or an exhaustive list but a reflection in terms of trends of what has been observed in the practices shared with ACR+.

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