

# Disaster Waste Management

## How does the JEU support management of disaster waste?

Disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards, or a combination of them, can generate large quantities of waste, including building debris, fallen trees, and hazardous waste.

Disaster waste is a threat to health, safety, and the environment. However, it is often managed in an ad hoc manner and can be a major impediment to emergency relief operations, hampering humanitarian efforts by blocking access to affected populations.

### Key Issues



Uncollected building rubble from damaged buildings impede access and hampers rehabilitation and reconstruction. Further issues can arise from for example exposed asbestos in collapsed structures.



Inappropriate and scattered dump sites is increasing health and injury risks, especially from hazardous materials. It destroys valuable land, impacts drinking water supplies and fisheries. Increases risk of disease vectors such as mosquitoes and rats.



Collapse of waste management services, including possible loss of experienced waste managers leads to further uncontrolled dumping sites.



Uncontrolled dumping of healthcare waste poses serious risks to local populations, including further spread of disease and infections.

The UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit (JEU) supports Member States and international and regional organizations in addressing disaster waste through a broad range of services, guidance materials and tools:



### Emergency deployments of Disaster Waste Managers

As part of an integrated humanitarian response to large-scale disasters, Disaster Waste Managers can be deployed to provide support to authorities and UN agencies in any affected country requesting international assistance. Emergency support from the JEU can be requested by the government or the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator and is provided with support from our partners.



### Disaster Waste Management Guidelines

The Disaster Waste Management Guidelines were developed by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and the JEU. They are designed for non-experts and experts alike, and provide practical advice to help manage disaster waste and reduce its negative impacts.

## Disaster Waste Management Guideline specific to Asia-Pacific contexts

The Disaster Waste Management Guideline for Asia and the Pacific, published in 2018, was developed by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and the Japanese Society of Material Cycles and Waste Management, with support from the JEU and a broad range of partners. The document is designed to address context-specific disaster waste management needs and capacities in the region, struck by increasingly intense and frequent disasters.



### To find out more



Download the **Disaster Waste Management Guidelines**

**Global:** <http://www.eecentre.org/resources/disaster-waste-management-guidelines/>

**Asia-Pacific:** <https://www.env.go.jp/press/files/jp/110165.pdf>



Visit the dedicated **EHA Connect page on Debris and Waste**

(<https://ehaconnect.org/themes/debris-waste/>)



Take the **Disaster Waste Management Best Practices and Tools e-learning module** available on the Environmental Emergencies Centre (<https://learning.eecentre.org>)



### Joint Environment Unit:

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) respond as one UN to the environmental dimensions of emergencies. The partnership assists countries affected by disasters and crises and works to enhance the sustainability of humanitarian action.

### Contact information

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