



Procedures for cleaning bird droppings

The main threat to workers is exposure to avian influenza and exposure to spores of the fungus *Cryptococcus neoformans* and related species, although there are much lower risks of allergic sensitization to proteins in bird excreta, and of infection with *Histoplasma capsulatum*.

2. It is recommended that work begins with wetting the droppings with either water, or preferably with an alkaline-wash solution made of 500 gm hydrated lime and 18 gm sodium hydroxide, per each 12 liters of water. This should be delivered as a low-velocity mist to wet the droppings, and the droppings removed down to the dry layer, at which time more solution should be applied. The droppings should be placed in strong plastic bags (at least 3 mm thickness) and sent to the local landfill. It should be determined with the local landfill that this is an acceptable site.

3. Only workers with no pre-existing medical conditions should be used for the work. Simply asking the workers about such conditions should be sufficient.

4. Workers should wear a well-fitting dust mask at all times, along with heavy rubber gloves and preferably a disposable protective suit to keep clothes free of droppings. The worker should shower after removal of this suit and especially wash hands with anti-bacterial soap. Fine particle filter masks are not necessary as long as the workers are not working in a confined or indoor space, and droppings are wetted before they are disturbed.

Acknowledgment

This data sheet was revised by the Construction Division of the National Safety Council, 1121 Spring Lake Drive, Itasca, IL 60143.

Source of information

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, State Epidemiologist, in cleaning bird droppings, 2600 Bull St., Columbia, SC 29201.

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