Field Guide: Non-Salvageable Disposal Authorization & Witness-Log Template

Canonical Web Version: https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-non-salvageable-disposal-authorization-witness-log/

Direct Answer: Never haul, crush, or landfill non-salvageable contents without written disposal authorization signed by the property owner (and carrier/adjuster clearance where required), paired with pre-disposal identity photos, rating plates, and a two-person witness dump log—except under documented emergency biohazard rules.

Field Benchmark & Decision Matrix

Total-Loss Item Class	Minimum Pre-Disposal Proof	Required Sign-Off Authority	Hold / Waiting Rule	Manifest & Disposal Record
1. Cat 3 / Biohazard / Spoiled Perishables	Wide zone photo + bagged/bin count + itemized spoilage log where feasible	Property Owner + Crew Lead health-hazard notation	Immediate removal permitted for active sewage/putrefaction safety	Double-bag log, photo of loaded bags, disposal date/time
2. Low-Value Household Goods (< $100/unit)	Spread-out table/floor photo showing count & visible damage	Property Owner signature on attached line list	Hold until adjuster walkthrough or written carrier waiver	Box/bin tally + witness initials + transfer station receipt
3. Mid-Tier Furniture & Decor ($100–$500)	4-angle photo + material/brand tag + close-up of swelling/char/odor proof	Property Owner + Adjuster / Carrier Desk Approval	Minimum 72-hour post-submission hold unless written waiver given	Line-ID list + two-tech witness sign-off + weight ticket
4. High-Value Appliances & Electronics (> $500)	Wide room shot + clear rating plate macro + damage detail	Property Owner + Written Adjuster Total-Loss Confirmation	Hold physical unit on site or vault hold rack until written release	Serial # log + adjuster email PDF + salvage/haul ticket
5. Subrogation / Origin-Zone Assemblies	As-found in-situ sequence ONLY (do not disassemble)	Carrier Subrogation Counsel / SIU / Origin Investigator	Indefinite spoliation freeze until formal written release	Tamper-evident tag # + chain-of-custody vault receipt
6. Regulated Hazmat (Lithium, Paint, Refrigerants)	Model/chemistry photo + exterior condition check	Owner auth + Certified Hazmat / EPA Disposal Manifest	Segregate outdoors immediately (never crush in compactor)	EPA/state manifest, recycler ticket, Freon recovery cert

Practitioner Operational Takeaways

• Confirm zero active subrogation, arson, or SIU spoliation holds before touching any suspected total-loss item.

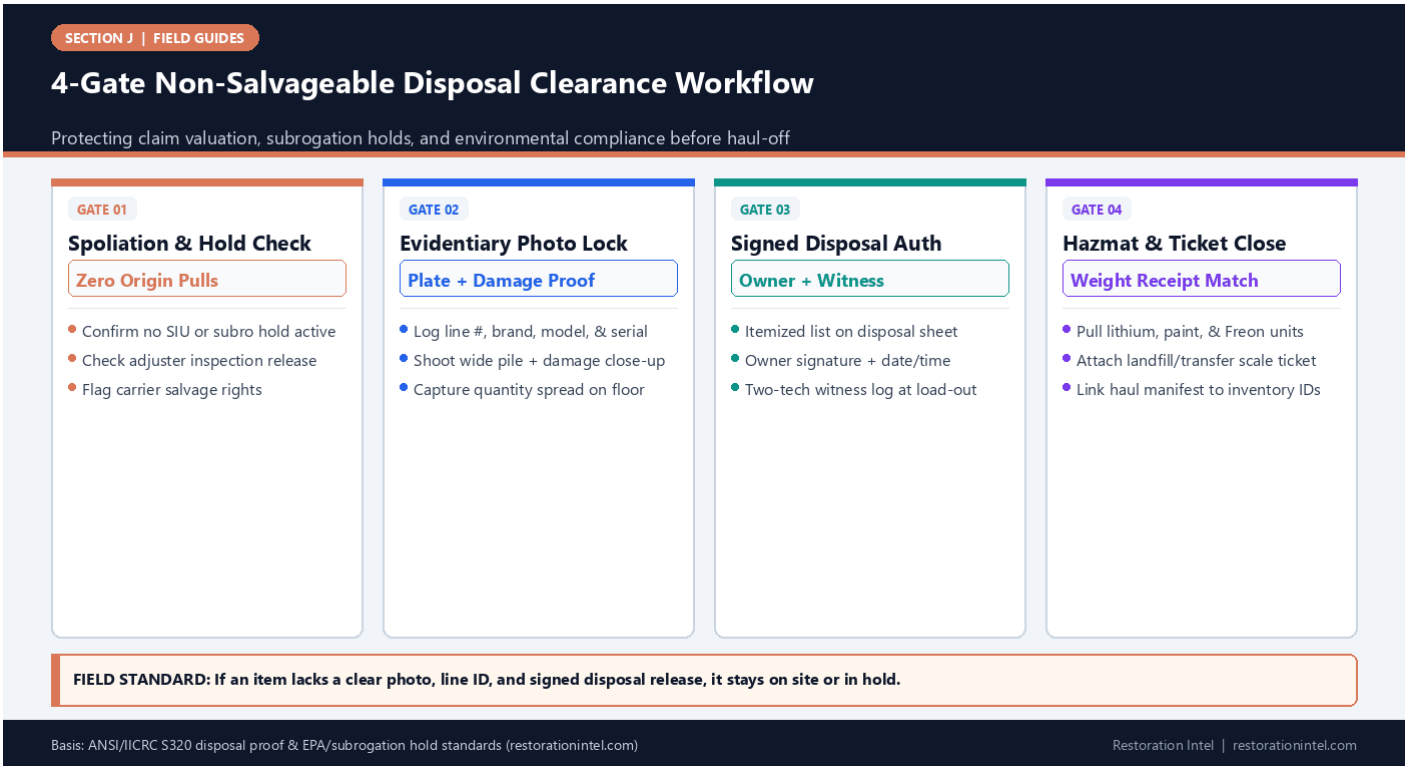
• Capture wide contextual photos, damage close-ups, and readable rating plates for every non-salvageable line prior to loading.

• Obtain the property owner's dated signature on an itemized Disposal Authorization listing specific technical failure reasons.

• Secure written carrier/adjuster release (or document emergency Category 3 health justification) before landfilling stable total-loss goods.

• Log two crew witness signatures at load-out, segregate regulated hazmat, and archive the landfill weight ticket in the job packet.

Visual Workflow & Benchmark Summary



Companion Endpoints & Verified Primary Sources

• **Markdown Twin (plain text):**
https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-non-salvageable-disposal-authorization-witness-log.md

• **ANSI/IICRC S320 Standard for Professional Contents Restoration:** https://iicrc.org/s320/

• **US EPA Hazardous Waste Framework:** https://www.epa.gov/hw

• **IRMI Insurance Glossary: Salvage:** https://www.irmi.com/term/insurance-definitions/salvage

• **Restoration Industry Association (RIA):** https://www.restorationindustry.org/