

Special waste regulations fact sheet

Introduction

What is special waste?

Special waste is classed as hazardous and/or toxic waste, and therefore has stringent regulations on how it can be stored, handled, treated and disposed.

How do you know if waste is special?

Special waste is broadly defined as any waste on the European hazardous waste list that has one or more of fourteen hazardous properties. Examples of special wastes are solvents, paints, waste oils and chemicals.

The Environment Agency produces information that can be used to determine if a waste is special. The classification of a waste type depends on the presence of a number of hazardous properties.

What about packaging?

Packaging from hazardous products may also have to be consigned as special waste. This would depend on whether the product itself is deemed to be special waste when it is disposed. Although packaging may be “empty”, it can often contain residual amounts of the product.

The quantity of product left in the container determines if it is special waste. If the residual product constitutes 1% or more by weight, then the packaging must be treated as special waste. This threshold is lowered to 0.1% or more if the residual product is “carcinogenic, category 1 or 2” or “very toxic”.

What are the special waste regulations?

The special waste regulations (1996) are used to implement the European hazardous waste directive 91/689/EEC. These regulations are used to provide an effective system of control for wastes that are dangerous and have special requirements placed on their handling. The regulations are in place to ensure sound management from production to final disposal or recovery. ➤

Complying with the special waste regulations

What should I do?

- Ensure waste is stored safely and securely to prevent escape, in line with the duty of care regulations (refer to the duty of care fact sheet for further information).
- It is advised that special wastes are stored in a locked area, eg. a cupboard.
- A consignment note should accompany any movement of special waste (see below for details), and be retained for three years.
- Never mix special waste with different special wastes, or with non-special waste.
- Ensure that special wastes are transported by registered waste carriers with suitable licenses for the type of special waste you possess.
- Make sure suitable management procedures are in place for the storage and disposal of each type of special waste produced on site, and that all staff are aware of these procedures.
- Comply with the duty of care regulations, for the storage, disposal, and transportation of waste as your obligations are still relevant.

Consignment note

A consignment note is similar to a waste transfer note, in that it must detail the waste, provide details of its transfer and accompany every movement of special waste. The Environment Agency can then issue the holder of the waste with a special code that must be on the consignment note. (It may also be true that the consignment note is pre-printed with the code).

1. Prior to the movement of special waste

The Environment Agency must be notified before the movement of special waste. The pre-notification copy (white), must be received by the agency at least three working days, and no more than one month before, the movement of the waste.

The consignor (the person who causes the waste to be removed from where it is held), must retain the green copy of the consignment note for a minimum of three years.

2. Movement of special waste:

The carrier of the waste must make sure the consignment note is carried with the waste.

3. Delivery of special waste:

On delivery of the waste, the carrier must give the three remaining documents to the person to whom the waste is delivered. They must then fill out the carriers copy (gold) and send the deposit copy to the appropriate agency. They retain the pink consignee copy until the permit on their premises expires.



Further information

- For further help and advice contact commercialwaste@lewisham.gov.uk

Environment Agency:

Helpline: 0370 850 6506

Website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

- Her Majesty's Stationery Office:

A full copy of the special waste regulations, further amendments and

other legislation relating to special waste can be found on Her Majesty's

Stationery Office website: www.legislation.gov.uk