Environment Agency

hazardous waste – you can handle it

New rules on agricultural waste

Your guide to Hazardous Agricultural Waste

This is the first of two guidance notes giving farmers and growers practical advice on how to comply with the new rules on hazardous waste. This note is meant to be an introduction to the new hazardous waste rules. The second note will give you more information on what you have to do when you move hazardous waste off your farm.

What is hazardous agricultural waste?

Some wastes need special controls on their handling, transport and disposal. These are known as hazardous wastes. The new rules define hazardous waste by listing wastes that are "hazardous." We have applied this list to farm waste and produced the table in the centre of this guide. This table shows you whether a waste is hazardous, possibly hazardous or non-hazardous.

You must remember that other wastes not on the list can still harm human health or the environment. The ones in this list have just been identified as needing extra control.

If you have a waste that is not listed here, please contact us for advice (contact details are at the end of this note).

When do the new rules on hazardous agricultural waste apply?

Because of their potential to harm human health or the environment, there are stricter controls on the disposal/recovery/movement of hazardous waste. These stricter controls apply to agricultural waste from 15 May 2007.

What changes on 15 May 2007?

If you produce hazardous waste on your farm you will have to comply with the new rules on hazardous waste. You can use the table in the centre of this note to see which wastes are hazardous, possibly hazardous or are not hazardous. It is good practice to minimise the amount of hazardous waste that you do produce. If you do produce hazardous waste you must:

- Know what hazardous waste you are producing (use the table at the centre of this guide to help you);
- Give it to someone that is authorised to handle it and make sure it is disposed of at a properly authorised site; and,
- Use a consignment note every time you/someone else removes hazardous waste from your farm. A consignment note describes your hazardous waste so other people know what it is and it also helps to make sure that the waste gets to a site that can handle it. Our second guidance note will tell you where you can get a consignment note, how much it costs, how to fill it out, what happens to it and how long you need to keep a copy.

The new controls also mean that if you produce more than 500kg of hazardous waste a year you must register your farm with us. Registration lasts for a year. The 500kg limit only relates to registration: you will still have to use a consignment note when removing any hazardous waste from your farm. Details on how to register can be seen at the back of this note.

Packaging	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Oil containers	As these are impossible to clean properly the oil that they are contaminated with will make them hazardous waste		
Plastic and metal pesticide containers		These may be hazardous if they are not emptied and triple rinsed and drained	These are only non-hazardous if they are emptied and triple rinsed
Cardboard pesticide containers		These may be hazardous if they are not fully emptied	Non-hazardous when fully emptied
Animal health packaging		These may be hazardous if they are not emptied and rinsed and cleaned	These are non-hazardous when they are emptied and rinsed and cleaned
Fertiliser bags		These may be hazardous if they are not emptied, shaken and inspected for cleanliness	If these are emptied, shaken and inspected for cleanliness they will not be hazardous
Seed bags			Non-hazardous
Animal feed bags			Non-hazardous
Contaminated cardboard boxes		These may be hazardous depending on what they are contaminated with	
Cores			Non-hazardous
Smoke canisters and empty rabbit/mole poison containers (which contained phostoxin)	As these are impossible to clean out properly, their residual contents will make them hazardous		

Non-packaging plastics	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Silage films and wrap			Non-hazardous
Horticultural films			Non-hazardous
Bale twine and netwrap			Non-hazardous
Tree guards			Non-hazardous
Other plastics			Non-hazardous

Animal health waste	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Sheep dip	Concentrate is hazardous	This may be hazardous if it has not been diluted in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations	If the dip tank has been prepared by diluting the dip in accordance with manufacturer's instructions the used dip will not be hazardous
Pour on pesticide/ insecticide	Concentrate is hazardous	Washings may be hazardous waste depending on their concentration	
Discarded/damaged treatment guns		These could be hazardous depending on their contamination	
Unused and residual medicines used for the treatment of animals	Those medicines which are carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic or toxic to reproduction. For example, many hormonal and cancer drugs. Further guidance on these substances is being prepared		Medicines which do not have the properties identified in the 'hazardous' column. For example, many vaccines (except BCG which is hazardous)
Syringes & needles	These will be hazardous and clinical waste where contaminated with body fluids from an infected animal, or, where they may otherwise be considered to present a risk of infection to either humans or animals. Syringes contaminated with hazardous medicines are also hazardous waste		These would not be hazardous waste where there is no risk of infection. For example, if the syringe or needles is unused
Disposable gloves, dressings & swabs	These will be hazardous and clinical waste where contaminated with body fluids from an infected animal, or, where they may otherwise be considered to present a risk of infection to either humans or animals.		These would not be hazardous waste where there is no risk of infection. For example, if the items are unused or uncontaminated
Mastitis cream tubes			Non-hazardous

Animal health waste	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Worm treatments			Non-hazardous
Vaccines			Non-hazardous
Aerosols	Will be hazardous if the tin has an orange symbol e.g. Flammable		

Building waste	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
General C&D waste	Any building waste containing asbestos cement		Non-hazardous unless it is contaminated with something that might make it hazardous e.g. asbestos
Metal			Non hazardous

Batteries	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Lead acid	Hazardous		
Dry cell (containing mercury)	Hazardous		
NiCad rechargeable (nickel cadmium)	Hazardous		
Button (containing mercury)	Hazardous		
Dry cell (not containing mercury)			Non-hazardous
Alkaline			Non-hazardous
Zinc chloride			Non-hazardous
Button (not containing mercury)			Non-hazardous

Machinery waste	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Fuel oil	Hazardous		
Lubricating oil	Hazardous		
Brake fluid	Hazardous		
Brake pads	Brake pads containing asbestos are hazardous		Non-hazardous unless contaminated with asbestos
Machinery			Machinery that is not contaminated with something that might make it hazardous e.g. oil/asbestos/brake fluid
Tyres			Tyres are non-hazardous
Un-depolluted vehicles	Any scrap vehicles that still contain any substance that is hazardous (lead acid battery, oil, brake fluid, asbestos brake pads) will be hazardous		

Electronic or electrical waste	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
Fluorescent light tubes	Hazardous		
TVs or computer monitors that contain a cathode ray tube and also flat screen TVs or TFT monitor screens	Hazardous (the cathode ray tube is hazardous because of the coating on the activated glass, the flat screen TVs & monitors have a backlight that contains mercury)		
Fridges/freezers	Hazardous if they contain CFC, HCFC or HFC		
Capacitors (containing PCBs)	Hazardous		

Office waste	Hazardous	Possibly hazardous	Non-hazardous
General office paper			Non-hazardous
Cardboard			Non-hazardous
Printers and empty cartridges			Non-hazardous

Registration

If you produce more than 500kg/1100lbs or 500 litres/110 gallons of hazardous waste a year you will need to register with us. If you produce less than that, it doesn't mean that the waste isn't hazardous, just that you don't need to register as a hazardous waste producer. You will still need to use a consignment note.

You can register by phoning, using the internet, emailing, or sending a paper form. The cost for registering varies according to the method you use – internet or email is the cheapest, paper is the most expensive.

Phone us (using the contact details at the end of this note) if you want to know what the current fee is.

When you're working out whether you produce more than 500kg of hazardous waste ignore the weight of any scrap vehicles as these do not count towards the 500kg limit.

Packaging waste

Some packaging wastes have hazard warning labels about the package contents.

These labels do not automatically make the packaging hazardous waste. You should decide whether the packaging is hazardous by looking it up in the table in the centre of this note.

Examples of packaging wastes that have these types of labels, but are not hazardous, include:

- properly emptied, rinsed and drained pesticide containers
- non-contaminated pesticide cardboard outer boxes
- emptied and shaken ammonium nitrate fertiliser bags.

More information on hazardous waste

- You cannot mix hazardous waste with another waste or with material which is not waste (unless you have a waste permit that allows you to do this).
- If the waste is liquid, you may store up to 23,000 litres of it in a secure container for up to a year on your own farm.
- If the waste is solid you may store up to 80 cubic metres of it in a secure container or 50 cubic metres in a secure place for a year on your own farm.
- You may not store any one else's hazardous waste (unless you have a waste permit or waste management licence that allows you to do this).

Where to find out more

This guide is one in a series of 'changing practice' information sheets we have produced to help you understand the new rules.

For advice on hazardous waste or to find out how much it costs to register, phone 08708 502858.

To order some consignment notes (these are not free) phone 0845 603 1043.

For general advice on agricultural waste visit the Agricultural Waste Stakeholders' Forum by going to: **http://www.environment–agency.gov.uk/awsf** or by contacting our National Customer Contact Centre on 0845 603 3113, or log on to **www.environment-agency.gov.uk/agriculturalwaste**
Visit the Waste Recycling Directory: **http://www.wasterecycling.org.uk**

For a copy of our waste minimisation leaflet *"Agricultural waste – Opportunities to Save Money (version 2)"* contact our National Customer Contact Centre on **0845 603 3113**.

This information is also available bilingually at
http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/epages/eapublications.storefront

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