

# Separated waste collections for workplaces

## Ecofficiency Guide



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government





The Welsh government is introducing new regulations that come into force on 6th April 2024. The regulations require all non-domestic premises (including businesses, charities and public sector bodies) to separate key recyclable materials in the way the majority of Wales householder already do.

**Julie James, Welsh Minister for Climate Change**

“These proposals will deliver significant carbon savings, increase consistency in the way recyclable materials are collected across Wales and bring significant positive benefits for the economy.

“During this cost of living crisis especially, ensuring high quality material can go back into the Welsh economy is a key way in which we can improve the resilience of our domestic supply chains.

“Quite simply, these reforms are a key part of how we can build a stronger, greener economy – creating a more prosperous Wales, now and for future generations.”



The regulations implement several actions to increase the quality and quantity of recycling which are included in the Welsh Government's Circular Economy Strategy for Wales 'Beyond Recycling, A strategy to make the circular economy in Wales a reality'. Wales aims to become a zero-waste nation by 2050 and as part of this journey it has set an ambitious target to recycle 70% of all waste generated by 2025.

Also, In October 2021 the Welsh Government set out its second carbon budget, Net Zero Wales, which confirmed the ambition of achieving a collective carbon neutral public sector by 2030.

**Occupiers of non-domestic premises must present specified recyclable materials for collection separately from each other and from residual (general) waste.**

The nine specified recyclable waste materials that need to be separated for collection, collected separately, and kept separate after collection, in six separate recyclable waste streams, as a minimum, are as follows:



**Food waste**  
produced by premises producing more than 5kg of food waste a week



**Paper & card**



**Glass**



**Metal, plastic, and cartons & other fibre-plastic composite packaging**  
of a similar composition



**Unsold small Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (sWEEE)**



**Unsold textiles**

# Key information

In addition to this regulation where your duties are collectively referred to as the 'separation requirement', there are complementary bans on the disposal of food waste to sewer from non-domestic premises, and bans on specified separate recyclable waste streams being disposed of at incineration plants and landfill sites.

Failure to comply with the separation requirements is an offence with no upper limit on the courts' power to fine. A civil sanction may be issued for failure to comply with the separation requirements, in place of prosecution.

## What are non-domestic premises?

Premises regarded as non-domestic premises for the purpose of the Regulations include, but are not limited to:

- Agricultural premises;
- Bars and public houses;
- Bed and breakfasts, hotels;
- Bus stations, railway stations, seaports, airports, heliports;
- Campsites and caravan parks (but not individual caravans);
- Care homes, residential care homes and nursing homes;
- Cinemas;
- Community centres and village halls;
- Construction sites;
- Educational establishments such as universities, colleges and schools;
- Entertainment and sports venues, including leisure centres;
- Factories;
- Film and television production sets;
- Garages for vehicle servicing and repair;
- Garden centres;
- Heritage buildings;
- Holiday parks and resorts;
- Hospitals;
- Libraries and museums;
- Offices;
- Outdoor markets
- Pharmacies, doctors' surgeries, dental surgeries, optometrists, opticians,
- Podiatrists and other primary care facilities;
- Places of worship;
- Prisons;
- Restaurants and cafes;
- Service stations and petrol stations;
- Shops, shopping centres and other retail premises;
- Showgrounds;
- Sports grounds and stadia;
- Take aways & mobile food vendors;
- Theatres and arts venues;
- Venues for temporary events such as festivals and shows, including outdoors
- Events;
- Warehouses; and
- Workshops.

Residential flats, even where the waste collection is managed by a management company (including student accommodation), are excluded from the separation requirements.

For mixed use premises, the separation requirements apply only to the wastes produced by the non-domestic component. Where flat complexes have communal integrated facilities such as gyms, laundries, and co-work spaces, the separation requirements apply only to the non-domestic components. Where an individual runs a business, or carries out some form of business activity (e.g. making items to sell online, or a childminder) from their home, this would not be considered as non-domestic premises and would not be caught by the separation requirements for non-domestic premises, provided that the primary use of the premises is as a domestic dwelling.

The following are examples of who would most likely be considered the occupier for the purposes of the occupier's separation requirements:

Scenario	Occupier
Business, retail or hospitality parks with multiple units and communal waste collection	Occupier of each individual unit
Events such as festivals, concerts and shows	Event organiser
Construction sites	Primary contractor
Non-residential caravan parks and campsites	Site owner/operator
Hotels	Owner/operator
Self-catering holiday accommodation	Owner/operator
Bus, coach, train stations	Owner/operator

For a site with multiple business occupancy (e.g. a business, retail or hospitality park or complex) where there is a single contract for waste collection managed by the owner or a facilities management agency, The Welsh Government would expect the tenancy agreement to include a requirement for the tenants to comply with the separation requirements. It will be the individual occupier who will have the legal obligation to comply with the occupier's separation requirements.

## Am I only responsible for waste produced by me and my employees?

**You are responsible for all of the waste on the premises that you are occupying**, including, but not limited to, wastes produced by your staff, visitors and contractors or vendors working on the premises.



## Can I still co-mingle my recyclable waste in a DMR bin?

Under the Welsh Waste Regulations, you will not be able to co-mingle recyclable materials from different sub-fractions. Where waste materials are collected 'dry mixed recycling' (DMR) streams, they can often cross contaminate each other, reducing the quality of the recyclates and the resulting, recycled end product.

Examples include the contents of food and drinks containers soiling wastepaper and cardboard, and glass fragments from bottles and jars being trapped in wastepaper and cardboard, damaging the equipment used to recycle the relevant materials. These would be examples of contamination.

From 6th April 2024 you must present the nine specified recyclable waste materials for separate collection. This means there must be, as a minimum, six separate containers (if all of the six recyclable waste streams are produced on a premises). **For the avoidance of doubt, all existing 'DMR' services will cease from the date that this regulation comes into force.**

## Do I need to segregate food waste if I'm not a restaurant, bar, or café?

Any premises producing more than 5kg of food waste in any week (as a consecutive seven-day period) must separate and present food waste for separate collection and recycling. **This obligation applies to all occupiers of non-domestic premises** (not just that of food businesses). This includes when staff or visitors bring their food into a premises and consume it there.

If you believe you produce less than 5kg of food waste each week, **you should periodically review the weight of material you generate.** This is especially relevant when there are significant changes to premises, e.g. increase in staffing levels, an increase in the use of a premises, and/or an increase in numbers of visitors.

**International catering waste is designated as a Category 1 Animal By-Product (ABP)** and therefore requires specialist management. As such, it does not fall within the scope of this duty.

For **surplus food** which isn't being sold to customers, if it's still safe for human consumption then opportunities for it to be redistributed should be taken.

## Do I need to remove packaging from my food waste?

For food waste in its packaging that cannot be redistributed, **the packaging should be separated from the food waste**, and each material put into its own specific waste stream container in accordance with the separation requirements.

## Can I use a macerator or dewatering machine to treat and dispose of food waste?

The occupier of non-domestic premises in Wales must not:

- Discharge food waste produced on or brought onto the premises, or
- Knowingly cause or knowingly permit food waste produced on or brought onto the premises to be discharged,

Into a public sewer or a sewer or drain communicating with a public sewer.

This means that **food waste disposers (i.e. macerators) or other forms of food waste treatment equipment (e.g. dewatering) cannot be used in non-domestic premises to discharge food waste or liquid from food waste to a drain or sewer.**

## Does this mean that more vehicles will need to attend site to collect my waste?

It is reasonable to assume that this regulation will require more waste collection vehicles to attend site. However, it should be noted that **the collector of the waste may use self-contained compartments on a multi-compartment vehicle** (e.g. a dustcart may have 2 compartments, with one being for the collection of paper/card, and the other for metals/plastics), or provide collections in separate vehicles. At no stage of the collection or treatment process will the material be co-mingled.

## Will I still have a general waste bin?

**Yes, you will still need to have a general waste bin** as is all likelihood, not all of the material you generate falls within the scope of this regulation.

If we collect your waste and we believe that the occupier is not appropriately segregating the specified recyclable waste streams or does so very poorly then the occupier will be deemed to be non-compliant. In this event, **we will reject the collection, notify you of our concerns and support you to rectify the situation.** In certain circumstances, a 'survival bag' could be used to separate materials that can be co-mingled where appropriate. If prompt action isn't taken to rectify compliance problems, we have the right to refuse to collect any waste containers that do not comply with the requirements as non-compliant waste will contaminate the already collected loads from other premises.

## What do I do with small waste electrical & electronic equipment (sWEEE) textiles that were not intended for sale?

From 6 April 2024 all textile waste separately collected for the purpose of preparing for re-use or recycling is banned from landfill. This means that any separately collected waste textiles (apart from unsold textiles) that cannot be reused or recycled would need to go to incineration, and not landfill, in accordance with the waste hierarchy.

Although the presentation duties set out in the separation requirements only apply to unsold sWEEE and unsold textiles, the landfill and incineration ban applies to all of the relevant materials where they have been separately collected (from any source) for the purpose of preparing for reuse or recycling, regardless of whether the separate presentation and collection was a legal requirement or carried out on a voluntary basis.





## How do I go about changing my service specifications to meet the regulations?

As the producer of the waste, it's your responsibility to ensure that you're compliant with this new legislation, and we recognise that this can cause businesses a lot of anxiety. **We can assure you that we will be on hand to guide you through any changes that you're required to make.**

Our service partners have been preparing for this legislation for some time now, meaning that we will be able to offer you a wide range of services designed to accommodate the needs of your sites. If space is a concern, **we can offer a selection of bin and bag collection services** to make sure that you are compliant with the regulations. We're also **working closely with our service partners to make sure that we're able to offer the best frequency of collections** to suit your waste volumes.

If you want to talk to us about changing your service specifications to meet the regulations, please feel free to get in touch with us

## What's the latest date I can agree new service specifications to meet the regulations?

**All services must be confirmed to us by no later than 29th February 2024.** This gives us a few weeks to arrange delivery of your bins in readiness for the regulations to go live. We strongly advise customers to implement the new service solution weeks in advance of the regulation coming into force. This gives you time to engage, energise and educate your staff about the importance of correctly segregating waste materials. **Our team will talk to you to agree specific delivery/off hire dates.**

## Here's what one of our key service partners in Wales have to say regarding preparing for the regulations

Debbie Caplin, Supply Chain Manager

"We will be removing all DMR bins in Wales in Feb/March 2024 so if we have no alternative instruction, sites might be left with nowhere to put waste or worse operating illegally and open to fines and or prosecution for persistent non-compliance.

We would encourage all waste producers to implement the required changes asap and prior to April 6th 2024. This will allow us to help educate your customer where contamination occurs and during this period, we would be able to apply a degree of tolerance and still empty bins that have small contamination in an effort to allow information to

be relayed to customers without disrupting service. Our team have been working on solutions for almost 12 months in readiness for these changes and we believe that as a result, we are in a fantastic position to be able to support you".



## Paper and card sub-fractions that should be separated into a single container

### The following sub-fractions should be placed into a paper/cardboard bin:

- ✓ Paper (clean printed/unprinted)
- ✓ Paperback books
- ✓ Newspapers
- ✓ Magazines
- ✓ Catalogues
- ✓ Envelopes
- ✓ Telephone directories
- ✓ Cardboard packaging
- ✓ Egg boxes

### The following sub-fractions should not be placed into a paper/cardboard bin:

- ✗ Hardback books.
- ✗ Padded polyethylene lined envelopes.
- ✗ Paper and card containing glitter or foil.
- ✗ Paper and card contaminated with food, paint, oil or grease.
- ✗ Paper and card that has been laminated.
- ✗ Paper towels, tissues, wet wipes, kitchen roll.
- ✗ Scratch cards.
- ✗ Shredded paper.
- ✗ Stickers and sticky notes.
- ✗ Till receipts.
- ✗ Wallpaper.
- ✗ Wax, silicone, greaseproof papers
- ✗ Fibre-based composite packaging, being packaging material which is made of paperboard or paper fibres, laminated with plastic, and which may also have layers of other materials, to form a single unit that cannot be separated by hand.



## The plastic, metal and carton sub-fractions that should be separated into a single container

### The following sub-fractions should be placed into a plastic/metal/carton bin:

- ✓ Clean plastic bottles and lids (e.g. milk, shampoo, sauce etc)
- ✓ Clean rigid plastic food containers (e.g. margarine tubs, yogurt pots, fruit trays, non-black food & meat trays)
- ✓ Disposable plastic cups (must be made from 100% plastic)
- ✓ Plastic lids from drinks cups
- ✓ Clean food & drinks cans (e.g. aluminium fizzy drinks cans or baked bean tin cans)
- ✓ Empty metal aerosol cans (e.g. deodorants)
- ✓ Clean aluminium foil with no food or chemical contamination
- ✓ Clean aluminium food trays
- ✓ Metal jar lids
- ✓ Metal bottle tops (e.g. bottled beer served in a pub or restaurant)
- ✓ Empty aluminium tubes (e.g. tomato puree tube)
- ✓ Cartons made predominantly made of fibre but including a metalised layer and a plastic neck and cap (e.g. juice cartons)
- ✓ Rigid paper containers (e.g. Pringles' tubes)
- ✓ Paper cups with a plastic inner liner that aren't made out of biodegradable/compostable plastic

### The following sub-fractions should not be placed into a plastic/metal/carton bin:

- ✗ Paper cups with a compostable, biodegradable inner waterproof plastic layer
- ✗ Black plastic food trays containing carbon black pigment so that it is not near infrared detectable
- ✗ Bubble wrap
- ✗ Bulk bags for the delivery of sand, gravel, seed, feed etc
- ✗ Compostable, biodegradable or oxydegradable plastic packaging
- ✗ Crisp packets
- ✗ Plastic bags (including carrier bags, bread bags, frozen food bags, compost bags, fertiliser bags, feed bags)
- ✗ Plastic coffee pods
- ✗ Plastic film (including cling film, food tray film, pallet wrap, shrink wrap, silage wrap, cover wrap)
- ✗ Plastic paint can
- ✗ Polystyrene, including drinks cup lids, and expandable foam packaging
- ✗ Pouches (including for pet food and liquid detergent)
- ✗ Rigid non packaging hard plastics (including toys, coat hangers, plant pots)
- ✗ Sachets
- ✗ Sweet and biscuit wrappers
- ✗ Gas canisters
- ✗ Scrap metal
- ✗ Metal coffee pods
- ✗ Paper cups with a compostable, biodegradable inner waterproof liner

## The glass sub-fractions that should be separated into a single container

### The following sub-fractions should be placed into a glass bin:

- ✓ Clean, empty glass jars of any colour
- ✓ Clean, empty glass bottles of any colour

### The following sub-fractions should not be placed into a glass bin:

- ✗ Metal lids from jars
- ✗ Metal bottle tops
- ✗ Sheet glass (e.g. windowpanes, picture frames, car windscreens)
- ✗ Mirrors
- ✗ Light bulbs
- ✗ Crockery (e.g. ceramic or china plates)
- ✗ Drinks glasses
- ✗ Glass and ceramic cookware (e.g. Pyrex jugs)



## The food waste sub-fractions that should be separated into a single container

### The following sub-fractions should be placed into a food bin:

- ✓ All waste items that have at any time been food intended for human or animal consumption
- ✓ Biodegradable waste arising from the processing or preparation of food and drink

### The following sub-fractions should not be placed into a food bin:

- ✗ Any packaging
- ✗ Items including packaging that are biodegradable, compostable, or oxy-degradable
- ✗ Large bones
- ✗ Kitchen paper
- ✗ Napkins, straws, or stirrers
- ✗ Oils
- ✗ Drinks (e.g. smoothies or milkshakes)

## The unsold textile sub-fractions that should be separated into a single container

### The following sub-fractions should be placed into a textiles bin:

- ✓ Clothing
- ✓ Mattresses
- ✓ Soft furnishings (e.g. curtains, bedding or towels)
- ✓ Carpets and carpet tiles
- ✓ Rugs
- ✓ Underlay
- ✓ Leisure textiles (e.g. tents or tarpaulins)

### The following sub-fractions should not be placed into a textiles bin:

- ✗ Soft furnishings that may contain POPs\* (e.g. sofas, chairs or cushions)
- ✗ Anything else not included above

#### \*note\*

Waste items containing persistent organic pollutants (POPs) cannot be recycled and must be destroyed.



## The unsold small\* WEEE sub-fractions that should be separated into a single container

### The following sub-fractions should be placed into a WEEE container:

- ✓ Small equipment (e.g. household appliances, consumer equipment, electric tools, and automatic dispensers)
- ✓ Small IT and telecommunication equipment (e.g. mobile phones, GPS, printers, telephones)

### The following sub-fractions should not be placed into a WEEE container:

- ✗ Anything else not included above

#### \*note\*

The list of waste electrical and electronic equipment is dependent on electric currents or electromagnetic fields. This ensures equipment works correctly and any equipment for generation, transfer, and measurement of such is designed fit for use. The voltage rating must also not exceed 1,000 volts for alternating current or 1,500 volts for direct current.

For more information on the Separate Collection of Waste Materials for Wales – A Code of Practice for Wales, please [click here](#)

For further help and support you contact the following:

[workplacerecycling@gov.wales](mailto:workplacerecycling@gov.wales)

[enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)

