

APPENDIX 13: WASTES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Municipal wastes include a number of wastes for which there is specific legislation. There are current or proposed E C Directives or Regulations for a range of wastes and those of most immediate concern are considered in this section.

The National Waste Strategy for Wales promotes measures for the separate collection of household hazardous wastes, to improve the management of resources and reduce the hazardousness of residual municipal waste. The strategy advocates the improvement of household hazardous waste collection facilities, particularly at civic amenity sites.

13.2 WASTE TYPES

13.2.1 Automotive vehicles

The End of Life Vehicles Directive [2000/53/EC] was adopted on 20th October 2000 and will be implemented in the UK by 21st April 2002. The purpose of the Directive is to prevent and reduce the waste produced from end of life vehicles (ELV) and also to increase the re-use, recycling and recovery of ELVs and their components. In recent years the problem of abandoned vehicles has been getting worse, largely due to the low prices for automotive scrap.

13.2.2 Domestic refrigerators and freezers

From 1st January 2002, local authorities have had to ensure that all ozone depleting substances (ODS) are removed from domestic refrigerators and are collected for destruction. This is set out in the Ozone Depleting Substances Regulations [EC 2037/2000] and includes ODS used as blowing agents in the insulation foam as well as for refrigerant.

Article 11 of the Regulations controls the export of Ozone Depleting Substances or products containing them. The effect of this is to prevent the export of appliances containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and from 1st January 2004 to prevent the export of appliances containing hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) to any State not party to the Montreal Protocol.

Article 16 of the Regulations requires that from 1st January 2002 domestic fridges and freezers must be treated to recover, prior to destruction, all Ozone Depleting Substances (including CFCs and HCFCs) contained in the refrigerant or foam.

Article 17 of the Regulations requires that all 'precautionary measures practicable' be taken to prevent and minimise leakages of Ozone Depleting Substances to the environment. If local authorities intend degassing appliances as the first stage in their compliance with the Regulations, then they must ensure that all the ODS refrigerants are removed in a manner that prevents their leakage to the environment.

Storage facilities for waste fridges and freezers should:

- be secure, with adequate measures taken to prevent unauthorised access to appliances containing ODS;
- have flat, solid surfaces for the stacking of the fridges;
- have proper drainage and facilities for cleaning fridges.

It is also recommended that:

- The appliances must be managed to reduce the risk to those handling them from harmful or infectious materials, i.e. they should have food and shelving removed and should be washed out prior to storage. Fridge doors should either be removed or taped up.
- store fridges upright and not more than 2 units high;
- store the panels of dismantled fridges (they must be degassed prior to dismantling) to prevent damage to the insulation foam from sharp objects, abrasion or crushing.

Any facility for management of fridges may need to be licensed under the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994. The Council will need to consult the Environment Agency to ensure that proper licensing procedures are followed.

13.2.3 Electrical Equipment

There is a proposed EC Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) [COM(2000)0347]. This will, when finally adopted will set targets for the collection and recovery of WEEE.

In addition to this proposed measure on electrical and electronic wastes (and the previously discussed ODS Regulations) there is another important EC Directive applying to certain electrical goods. This is the Directive on the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polychlorinated terphenyls (PCTs) [96/59/EC].

A requirement of the Directive is that components containing less than 5 litres of PCBs be removed from electrical equipment and separately disposed of, where reasonably practicable. Components containing PCBs may be found in the following equipment: refrigerators, washing machines, cookers, microwave ovens, dishwashers and fluorescent light fittings.

Assessing whether or not electrical equipment may include capacitors containing PCBs is not easy. It is recommended that capacitors manufactured before 1986 be assumed to contain PCBs, unless there is information to the contrary.

13.2.4 Batteries

The Batteries and Accumulators Directive [91/157/EEC] was introduced to reduce the levels of specified heavy metals in batteries. The European Commission amended this with [98/101EC], which is implemented in Great Britain by The Batteries and Accumulators (Containing Dangerous Substances) (Amendment) Regulations 2000. These Regulations prohibit the marketing of batteries containing more than 0.0005% mercury by weight. Button cells are excluded from this requirement and may contain up to 2% mercury by weight.

There is a Batteries Directive proposed that would:

- ban all batteries containing mercury;
- require all member states to collect and recycle all batteries, with targets for 2008 of 75% collection of post consumer batteries and 95% of industrial batteries;
- require that a minimum of 55% of all the materials recovered from the collected batteries be recycled.

There is already very good provision for the collection of lead-acid automotive batteries. Provision for the collection of other batteries is currently poor, with most being disposed of in general municipal waste. The Assembly will advise local authorities at an early stage of any changes that will affect them.

13.2.5 Tyres

Local authorities usually collect used tyres either at civic amenity sites or during the removal of fly-tipped wastes. From July 2003 whole tyres may not be sent for disposal in landfill and from July 2006 neither may shredded tyres.

Advice to householders wishing to dispose of tyres should be that tyres are returned to the dealer providing their new tyres. There may be a nominal disposal charge added to the cost of the new tyre.

13.2.6 Asbestos

Whilst asbestos waste from the household is special waste, the Environment Agency does not normally take action over the householder's failure to consign it to a suitably licensed facility. However, householders should comply with the principles of the Duty of Care and should ensure that the asbestos is disposed of in a responsible manner.

13.2.7 Household Chemicals

A large number of household chemicals, mainly garden pesticides and herbicides have recently been withdrawn from sale and their use is now prohibited. Householders are required to dispose of any such chemicals in an appropriate manner and this will undoubtedly mean that these chemicals will be brought to HWRC sites for disposal.

13.3 ACTION PLAN FOR MANAGING WASTES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

To ensure that difficult wastes arising in Gwynedd are dealt with in a sustainable manner, the Council will:

1. Ensure that HWRC sites are equipped with adequate facilities for storage of difficult wastes.
2. Review current procedures for managing fridges to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for fridges to be stored and managed correctly.
3. Ensure that suitable facilities for consignment of asbestos waste are made available to householders.
4. In-line with the requirements of the Landfill Directive, ensure that adequate procedures for management of waste tyres are put in place to such that whole tyres are not sent to landfill.
5. Offer guidance to householders and businesses on suitable ways of managing and disposing of difficult wastes.
6. Consider alternative options for management of waste electronic equipment, for example;
 - Community based recycling/repair projects
 - Take-back schemes with commercial organizations
 - Separate collections of WEEE from households
 - Facilities for separate collection of WEEE waste at HWRC sites
7. Consider opportunities for separate collection of batteries for example battery bins in strategic buildings for use by staff and visitors
8. Ensure that all Council departments identify hazardous materials involved in service delivery and implement plans for appropriate management of these substances