

Sustainability



Hazardous waste regulations - compliance briefing note



University
of Exeter

Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005

Introduction

Waste is hazardous when it contains substances or properties that might make it harmful to human health or the environment. Waste is generally considered to be hazardous if (or the material it contains) is harmful to human health or the environment.

As an organisation that produces hazardous waste, we must comply with the legal obligations that control how we classify, store, transport, treat and dispose of it.

Examples of hazardous waste

Typical examples of hazardous waste include:

- asbestos
- chemicals, e.g. waste laboratory chemicals and printer toner
- waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)
- fluorescent light tubes and energy-saving light bulbs
- batteries
- oils (except edible oils), e.g. engine oil
- equipment containing ozone-depleting substances, e.g. fridges
- solvents, e.g. aerosols
- pesticides
- persistent organic pollutants (POPs)

Duties of the University

The University MUST (subject to emergency procedures):

- Correctly classify waste to check if it's hazardous
- Document all movements of hazardous waste using a hazardous waste consignment note (HWCN) a legally required document and maintain records for a minimum of three years
- Ensure hazardous waste is stored and managed correctly prior to collection
- HWCN declaration signed to show that the waste hierarchy has been applied
- Separate and store hazardous waste safely
- Use authorised businesses to collect, recycle and dispose of hazardous waste and check that the waste carriers are registered, and waste sites have environmental permits
- Fill in parts of the HWCN that apply to you, retain one copy and give two copies to the carrier collecting your waste
- Take care to ensure staff segregate and dispose of waste in the correct receptacles

Hazardous waste must be considered when assessing risks under general health and safety legislation, e.g. under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

What are the risks of non-compliance?

We have a duty of care under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and Hazardous Waste Regulations, to ensure correct storage, collection and treatment of any waste. A breach of EPA can lead to unlimited fines in the Magistrate's or Crown Courts. Imprisonment is also a potential risk in severe circumstances. The regulations include a fixed penalty notice for those contravening the regulations.



If you are unsure whether your waste is hazardous, or you are not sure how to dispose of your hazardous waste, please contact the Sustainability team for further advice sustainability@exeter.ac.uk

What is the University doing?

We have introduced the following measures to ensure compliance with the Hazardous Waste Regulations:

- Identify and monitor compliance obligations (e.g. Legislation). A compliance system has been established to enable the University to meet the required regulatory standards.
- The controls by which waste is managed by the University are set out in our Waste Management Operational Control Procedure and Waste Management Standard as part of our ISO14001 Environmental management System. Further advice can be found within the Waste A-Z and the University Health and Safety Hub (SharePoint site).
- Carry out regular Duty of Care checks for all University waste contractors to ensure that the company has the necessary environmental permits, valid insurances, and licenses to remove waste and are able to apply the waste hierarchy when processing the waste.
- Publish, review, and update as necessary, the hazardous waste guidance compliance briefing note.

What do staff need to do?

- Follow the waste hierarchy.
- Ensure the waste is stored safely and securely to prevent pollution.
- Ensure that hazardous wastes are not mixed with other hazardous waste and that non-hazardous and hazardous waste are not mixed on-site.
- As far as is practicable, the storage of waste should be kept to a minimum. This is both good housekeeping and, in the case of hazardous wastes, reduces the risks associated with storage.

- Be aware that items of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) may be hazardous waste.
- Ensure that you refer to the Waste A-Z for the disposal of hazardous materials.
- If you dispose of materials with a contractor, you MUST complete a hazardous waste consignment note in full and retain it for a period of 3 years.
- If you are unsure whether your waste is hazardous, or not sure how to dispose of your hazardous waste, please contact the Sustainability Team for advice.
- Observe safety precautions, e.g. as prescribed by COSHH, when storing and handling hazardous waste.
- Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in furniture – as the University is unable to define where pollutants may be present in furniture, all staff MUST take the default measure that they are. Any upholstered furniture must not be mixed with any other waste. They must be segregated and disposed of as 'domestic furniture that may contain persistent organic pollutants' and classified as such under EWC code 20 03 07 on the waste transfer note.

Contractors

Visiting contractors (producing hazardous waste) are responsible for notifying the relevant authority for the waste they produce while working on site. This is not the same as the University of Exeter premises codes.

Contractors SHOULD NOT dispose of waste materials using University disposal routes.

Regulations

[The Hazardous Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Legal overview and guidance

[Hazardous waste: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Reviewed August 2024 – Sustainability Manager (Circular Economy), Sustainability Team.