

# **Safer waste cleaner world**

## **An introduction to moving waste between countries**



# About the Environment Agency, SEPA and NIEHS

The Environment Agency, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) are responsible for protecting and improving the environment in the United Kingdom.

It's our job to look after the environment and make it a better place – for you, and for future generations. Working with business, Government and society as a whole, we are making your environment cleaner and healthier.



**Published by:**

Environment Agency  
Rio House  
Waterside Drive, Aztec West  
Almondsbury, Bristol BS32 4UD  
Tel: 0870 8506506  
Email: [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk)  
[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

© Environment Agency  
June 2007

All rights reserved. This document may be reproduced with prior permission of the Environment Agency.

# An introduction to moving waste between countries

## **1. If you import or export waste to and from the UK**

You need to be aware that imports and exports of waste to and from the UK are subject to a range of different regulatory controls. If you do not follow the proper procedures, you could risk being prosecuted.

## **2. Prohibited activities**

If you are looking to import or export waste to be disposed of, or export hazardous waste to developing countries, even if this is to be recovered, then apart for some very restricted exceptions, these activities are prohibited.

## **3. Controls applying to exporting or importing waste**

This guide provides an overview of the different controls that apply to moving waste between countries. The controls are generally referred to as 'green list' and 'notification' controls. For the purposes of this note, imports and exports include shipments to and from other EU member states. You can find further guidance on the controls that apply to imports in 'Moving waste between countries: determining the controls on waste imports' and for exports in 'Moving waste between countries: determining the controls on waste exports'. Both are available at:

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments).

Whichever controls apply, anyone involved must make sure that they take all necessary steps to ensure the waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner while it is being moved, recovered or disposed of.

Within the EU, waste must only be recovered or disposed of at an appropriately permitted facility. Within the UK, this normally means the facility receiving the waste must have a waste management licence, an exemption from the waste management licensing regime or a pollution prevention and control permit.

If you are involved in sending waste to places outside the EU, the recovery facility must be operated according to human health and environmental protection standards that are broadly equivalent to those within the EU. If the UK regulators believe that the waste will not be dealt with in an environmentally sound manner, they will not allow it to be exported.

You can find a copy of the legislation applying to the majority of these controls at:

<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/L190/L19020060712en00010098.pdf>

## **4. Green list controls**

Green list controls are the lowest level of control that can apply to waste imports and exports. Green list controls only ever apply to some (but not all) imports or exports of non-hazardous wastes for recovery. All other imports or exports of waste are either subject to notification controls or are prohibited.

You can find guidance on the procedures that must be followed when exporting waste under green list controls to non-OECD countries in 'Exporting recyclable waste for recovery in non-OECD countries' at:

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments).

The guide also contains useful general information on the green list procedures for those importing or exporting waste under green list controls from other countries. See the green list checklist below.

#### 5. Notification controls

Notification controls are a much higher level of control than green list controls. They apply to all permitted imports and exports of:

- hazardous waste being moved for recovery;
- any type of waste being moved for disposal;
- and some imports and exports of non-hazardous wastes for recovery.

See the notification checklist below if you are exporting any of the waste mentioned above from the UK.

Overseas businesses sending waste to the UK will need to apply to the relevant regulatory authorities in the country where the waste is moving from and make sure that the relevant documentation (see notification checklist below) is in place before the waste is imported.

If you are receiving waste within the UK, you must make sure that the proper procedures have been followed. You will also have to complete specified documents when you receive the waste and when the waste has been fully recovered or disposed of. You must then send copies of those documents to the person who sent the waste and to the relevant regulatory authorities.

The application process to obtain the necessary permissions will take at least a month to complete and, in some cases, much longer. You can find detailed information on how to make an application in 'Moving notified waste between countries – a guide' at: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments).

#### Summary of the controls for importing and exporting waste

##### 'Green list' checklist

- The waste must be dealt with in an environmentally sound manner while it is being moved and recovered.
- The waste can be moved legally without obtaining permission from the regulators.
- The waste must be accompanied by a completed and signed Annex VII form specified in the rules.
- If the shipment of waste is from Northern Ireland or Scotland you must submit a copy of the completed form that must accompany the waste to the competent authority before the waste is shipped.
- Specified contracts for recovering the waste between the person sending the waste and the person receiving the waste must be in place.
- When the person receives the waste, he must sign the accompanying form.
- Copies of the form relating to the waste movement must be kept for three years.
- The regulatory authorities can ask for copies of the documents relating to the movements already made or ask for information from those documents.

##### 'Notification' checklist

- An application accompanied by the relevant fee must be made to the appropriate UK authority before attempting to export the waste.
- A financial guarantee must be in place to ensure funds are available to deal with the waste if things go wrong, including the cost of returning the waste to the UK.
- A contract for recovering the waste must be drawn up, including specific terms, with the person receiving the waste in the destination country.
- Insurance against liability for damage to third parties must be in place.
- All the necessary permissions from the regulatory authorities ('competent authorities') in all countries concerned with moving the waste must be in place before the waste is exported.

**Would you like to find out more about us,  
or about your environment?**

**Then call us on**

08708 506 506 (Mon-Fri 8-6)

**email**

enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

**or visit our website**

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

**incident hotline** 0800 80 70 60 (24hrs)

**floodline** 0845 988 1188