

REGULATION

Businesses urged to review waste

By Steve Eminton

Businesses have been told by the Environment Agency to start thinking about how they manage their waste ahead of new pretreatment rules for the landfilling of non-hazardous waste, which come into force on October 30 2007.

And, while waste management industry experts have said that the legislation is one of the most important developments seen yet within the commercial and industrial sector, the industry has called for producers to be required to show they meet their new responsibilities for pretreatment.

The call for businesses producing waste to start thinking about how they will meet the new rules came from Liz Parkes, head of waste at the Environment Agency, following publication of Agency guidance. And, Ms Parkes confirmed that the Agency will not be taking a hard line at landfill sites over pretreatment from October, but instead will be concentrating its efforts at the waste producers end of the chain.

Ms Parkes said: "The rules mean waste must be treated before it is disposed of at a landfill site – at the same time, liquid waste will be banned from any landfill. Waste treatment is good for the environment, as it encourages the recycling of waste and reduces the impact of the waste we send to landfill. Much of the waste we send to landfill is already treated, however for some wastes more effort is needed. Treatment can simply be separating the waste on site, and recycling one or more of the separated components."

Ms Parkes added: "If you are a waste producer, now is a good time to review how you manage your waste, including whether it needs to be produced at all. If your waste does go to landfill, check to see if it is already being treated. If it isn't you will need to treat it or ensure that your waste management company does this for you."

Publication of the guidance was broadly welcomed by the waste management industry. Sam Corp, senior policy executive at the Environmental Services Association, said: "We're glad this guidance has finally been published as it is crucial to help waste producers and the waste management industry comply with the Landfill Directive. Non-hazardous waste will need to be pretreated before being landfilled and everyone must have a clear understanding of what is required."

"But guidance alone is not enough: it must be backed up by amending the Duty of Care Regulations to give waste producers a clear responsibility to demonstrate waste has been treated prior to landfill and must be reinforced by a comprehensive communications campaign to remind waste producers of their legal obligations."

Amongst the waste management sector there is keen interest in implementation of the new rules. Martin Bettington, chief executive of Biffa, has said that he expected even more business customers to make use of recycling services because of the need from October to pre-treat waste before sending it to landfill.

Gev Eduljee, technical director of SITA UK, said that the new regulations "will certainly impact on the commercial and industrial side which has no similar policy levers in place to the municipal sector. This really is the first legislation that directly impacts on the requirements to pretreat

although it is not specifically calling for recycling."

Mr Eduljee said that with increases in the landfill tax, "these regulations move the treatment of business waste more down the line coupled with the requirements to separate hazardous and non-hazardous waste."

MUNICIPAL

Recycling moves to the high street



Smart style: The new Node banks

Councils are signing up to use a new mini-recycling centre designed for use in town centres.

Waste and recycling container firm Taylor said the "Node" bring facilities could help boost public participation in recycling.

North Lincolnshire council, Northampton borough council, Veolia Sheffield, Cardiff city council, Walsall council and some London boroughs are all set to try out the system.

The system's modular wheeled design means up to four containers can be used locking

around a central post, which could then fit against walls, around corners or as a central feature in a public area. Each Node container detaches to become a wheeled bin capable of being emptied by a standard comb bar lifting mechanism.

Sue Daynes, waste reduction officer for North Lincolnshire council said: "In boosting local recycling it is crucial we secure residents buy-in and we believe Node can positively impact on recycling habits in North Lincolnshire."

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