

Simpler Recycling Regulations Guidance

New legislation comes into effect on 31st March 2025.

In order to comply with these new laws, from this date, any business with more than 10 full time employees (FTEs) across all sites will need to ensure that they are recycling:

Cans
Cardboard
Food Waste
Glass
Paper
Plastics

Paper, Cardboard, Plastics & Cans can normally be collected together as Mixed Recycling subject to us completing a Technically, Environmentally, Economically Practicable (TEEP) assessment.

Glass will generally need to be collected separately (at some locations we may be able to accept it as part of Dry Mixed Recycling, where the local recycling facility allows it).

Food Waste will have to be collected separately. If you produce very little, we recommend using 7L caddies, to be emptied a minimum of fortnightly (or weekly during the warm months).

Food Waste is used to generate renewable energy, fertiliser and soil improver and separating it improves the quality of recyclable materials by reducing contamination.

We share responsibility for ensuring compliance so will be requesting confirmation that necessary arrangements are in place if not through us.

As the name suggests, this new legislation is designed to clarify how we move forward in terms of managing waste more effectively, efficiently and sustainably.

We can supply a full range of suitable containers if required.

See our Simpler Recycling overview below for more detailed information.

Please contact us for further information.

Thank you for your support.

Dominic Burgess
Director

From 31 March 2025 (or 31 March 2027 for micro-firms), all workplaces (businesses and non-domestic premises) in England have a legal duty to present the following wastes separated in accordance with the arrangements with their waste collector:

- dry recyclable materials - plastic, metal, glass, paper and card (more information on separating recyclable material is in the 'Separating recyclable waste' section)
- food waste
- black bin waste (residual waste)

Workplaces that generate garden waste have a legal duty to manage it in accordance with the waste hierarchy and arrange for it to be recycled or composted if it delivers the best environmental outcome. Workplaces can decide on the size of containers and frequency of collections based on the volume of waste they produce. You do not need to provide bins for your customers, however, if you provide bins, you will need to separate dry recyclable waste, food waste and black bin waste.

Workplaces that must follow these rules

Any business or workplace premises that generates waste that is similar in nature and composition to household waste must follow these rules across their operations (including for example, staff kitchens). This includes all relevant non-domestic premises, such as:

- offices
- retail and wholesale
- transport and storage
- hospitality, such as cafes, restaurants, and hotels
- places of education, such as schools, colleges, and universities
- healthcare places, such as GP surgeries and hospitals
- care homes
- charities and those registered as charities
- places of worship
- penal institutes
- charity shops selling donated goods that came from a domestic property
- residential hostels that provide accommodation to people with no other permanent address or who are unable to live at their permanent address only
- premises used only or mainly for public meetings

Separating recyclable waste

You need to separate paper and card from other dry recyclables (plastic, metal and glass), unless your waste collector collects them together. Waste collectors may also choose to collect other dry recyclable materials separately, like glass. You should discuss how your dry recyclable waste will be collected with your chosen waste collector.

You must always separate dry recyclable waste, food waste and black bin waste from each other.

Dry recyclable waste is:

- glass - such as drinks bottles and rinsed empty food jars
- metal - such as drinks cans and rinsed empty food tins, empty aerosols, aluminium foil, aluminium food trays and tubes
- plastic - such as rinsed empty food containers and bottles
- paper and cardboard - such as old newspapers, envelopes, delivery boxes and packaging

Food waste is:

- food leftovers
- waste generated by preparing food (of any volume, including if the workplace does not serve food or have a canteen)

Black bin waste or residual waste is:

- absorbent hygiene products such as nappies
- highly contaminated materials like food packaging that cannot be washed

Micro-firm exemption until 31 March 2027

Micro-firms need to comply by 31 March 2027.

Micro-firms are workplaces with less than 10 full-time employees in total. This relates to the total number of full time or full-time equivalent employees in a business, rather than in a certain business location. For example, if a business has 3 locations with 5 employees in each location, they have a total of 15 employees. For counting part-time employees, add a fraction based on their pro-rated hours. Volunteers are not included in determining the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employee count for a business or non-domestic premise. This includes organisations that have volunteers across multiple premises.

Legal requirement for workplaces

Businesses and non-domestic premises have a legal duty to take all reasonable steps to apply the waste hierarchy and the duty of care in line with Simpler Recycling. If your landlord employs a waste company for you, or you have a waste management contractor, this company has a legal obligation to make sure any separately collected dry recyclables are sent for recycling and that any residual waste is correctly managed.

If you do not comply with these requirements by 31 March 2025 (or 31 March 2027 for micro firms), you are at risk of receiving a compliance notice from the Environment Agency.

Compliance notices can also be issued against anyone who is not separating waste in agreement with their waste collector. This will often be the waste producers, for example the business, but this may also be the landlords or facilities management companies that are presenting waste on behalf of the waste producer.

It is an offence to fail to comply with a compliance notice and enforcement action may be taken against you in line with the Environment Agency Enforcement and Sanctions Policy.



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Legal requirement for waste collectors

Waste collectors have a legal duty to make sure that dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal, glass, paper and card) and food waste are collected separately from residual waste.

Paper and card must be collected separately from plastic, metal and glass. However, if this is not technically or economically practicable, or has no significant environmental benefit, the waste collector can complete a written co-collection assessment.

Compliance notices can also be issued against a waste collector (excluding a Waste Collection Authority) that is not complying with the rules.

Once collected, waste that has been separated for recycling cannot be mixed with other materials of different properties after. Waste separated for recycling cannot be disposed to landfill or incineration.

Support for workplaces and waste collectors

Businesses will continue to pay for their own waste management services. However, Defra will be providing advice and guidance for workplaces as they move to these new recycling rules.

