

# Simpler Recycling Regulations

Where Are We Now?



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a world beyond waste.

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# Simpler Recycling:

A recap of the legislation



**Since 31 March 2025, 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
- 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

**Workplaces can decide on the size of containers and frequency of collections** based on the volume of waste produced. 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.

### **Exemption - Micro-firms until 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).





## Workplaces that must follow these rules:

- 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
- charities and those registered as charities
- places of worship
- premises used only or mainly for public meetings
- charity shops selling donated goods that are from a domestic property
- residential hostels providing accommodation to people with no other permanent address or who are unable to live at their permanent address only
- A full list of those who must comply can be found on the gov website



**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

*Reference: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/simpler-recycling-workplace-recycling-in-england>*





## 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.
- From April 2025, the **general public and other parties will be able to report workplaces** that do not follow these rules to the Environment Agency.



# Helpful resources:

- **WRAP's Business of Recycling Website**  
(funded by Defra for Simpler Recycling Regulations support)  
[businessofrecycling.wrap.ngo/](https://businessofrecycling.wrap.ngo/)
- **CIWM Waste Collection course**  
[ciwm.co.uk/sectorprogrammes](https://ciwm.co.uk/sectorprogrammes)

*Course overview:*

*Lesson 1 - Presenting waste for collection  
(segregation, cleaning, changes to regulations)  
Role of waste carrier, including changes*

*Lesson 2 - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR),  
Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), Waste tracking,  
Carriers, Brokers and Dealers (CBD)*







# **Compliance & Enforcement**

# How will the EA assess SR compliance?

Our compliance approach is intelligence led, risk based and proportionate based on the circumstances. This is in accordance with the Regulators' Code, our strategy for improving environmental performance and the Compliance & Enforcement Continuum:



Our process for identifying non-compliance includes:

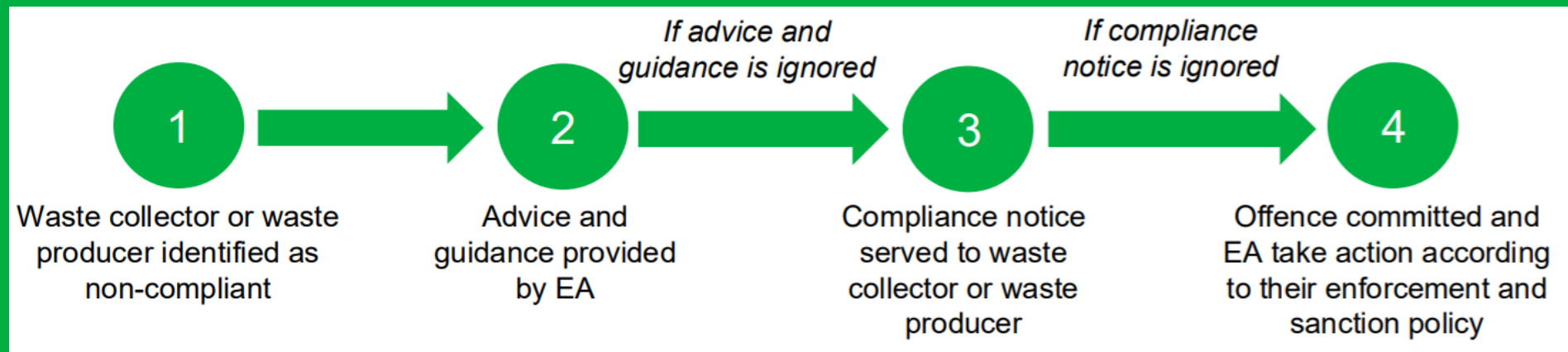
- Analysing the data & information available to us to proactively detect non-compliance.
- Receiving and reacting to reports of non-compliance from both public and professional sources.
- Sharing information/working together with our professional partners.



# What compliance action could the EA take?

We can issue a Compliance Notice against anyone who is party to arrangements for collection made under Section 45AZA or section 45AZB of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (such as waste collectors, producers and brokers). However, we cannot serve a Compliance Notice against Waste Collection Authorities.

Failure to comply with a compliance notice is an offence and we will consider our enforcement response in accordance with our Enforcement and Sanctions Policy.



# What enforcement action could the EA take?

- We aim to make sure our enforcement response is proportionate and appropriate to each situation. Our first response is usually to give advice and guidance or issue a warning to bring an offender into compliance where possible.
- We will normally consider all other options before considering criminal proceedings. Generally, prosecution is our last resort.
- If we decide to pursue a prosecution through the courts, then a person who commits an offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended), section 45AZF(4) is liable on summary conviction or conviction on indictment to a fine.
- The level of the fine is not specified. Therefore, it is at the discretion of the court, but the amount of any fine must reflect the seriousness of the offence and consider the financial circumstances of the offender.



# Environment Agency Compliance Approach

We are aware that some workplaces may find the introduction of the reforms more challenging than others. We will:

- take a pragmatic approach and prioritise helping workplaces understand new requirements
- support workplaces in overcoming any difficulties they might face
- help workplaces understand the actions they need to take and what they can prioritise on their journey to compliance.

# What the EA is doing...

We are delivering a range of engagement activities including...

- Attending targeted engagement events to actively engage with industry sectors
- Working with trade bodies for collectors/producers of waste to engage with their members.
- Working with Defra, WRAP and Local Authorities to reach those unlikely to be part of trade bodies e.g. SME's.
- Holding discussions with business leads
- Responding to enquires and providing advice and guidance
- Consulting on charging proposals to enable us to recover our costs for rectifying non-compliance



# Thanks!