

Guidance

Waste: environmental permits

Standard rules and bespoke permits for using, treating, storing and disposing of waste. Check if you need a permit and find out how to apply.

From: [Environment Agency \(/government/organisations/environment-agency\)](#)
and [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs \(/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs\)](#)

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Applies to England

[Guidance for Northern Ireland \(/https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/waste-management-licensing\)](#)

[Guidance for Scotland \(/https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/waste/\)](#)

Related content

[Change, transfer or cancel your environmental permit \(/guidance/change-transfer-or-cancel-your-](#)

[Guidance for Wales](https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/waste)

[\(/https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/waste\)](https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/waste)

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You may need to apply to the Environment Agency for an environmental permit if your business uses, recycles, treats, stores or disposes of waste or mining waste. This permit can be for activities at one site or for mobile plant that can be used at many sites.

If you are carrying out a waste activity, you can meet the permit requirement using one of the following:

- a ‘regulatory position statement’ – the

[environmental-permit\)](#)

[S2 waste exemption:](#)

[storing waste in a secure place](#)

[\(/guidance/s2-waste-exemption-storing-waste-in-a-secure-place\)](#)

[Treating waste: waste exemptions](#)

[\(/government/collections/waste-exemptions-treating-waste\)](#)

[Storing waste: waste exemptions](#)

[\(/government/collections/waste-exemptions-storing-waste\)](#)

[Application for an environmental permit](#)

[\(charges and declarations\): part F1 \(/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-f1-opra-charges-declarations\)](#)

Detailed guidance

[Request a resource framework to show when a material has ceased to be waste \(/guidance/request-a-](#)

Environment Agency does not currently require a permit for that activity

- an 'exemption' – you do not need a permit for the activity, but you must still register your exemption with the Environment Agency
- a 'standard rules permit' – a set of fixed rules for common activities
- a 'bespoke permit' – tailored to your business activities



You're breaking the law if you operate without a permit when you should have one.

There is separate guidance on how to [register as a waste carrier \(https://www.gov.uk/register-renew-waste-carrier-broker-dealer-england\)](https://www.gov.uk/register-renew-waste-carrier-broker-dealer-england) if you are a waste transporter, buyer, seller, broker or dealer.

Check if your activity is covered by a regulatory position statement

If your activity is covered by a [regulatory position statement \(RPS\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions>), the Environment Agency will not normally take enforcement action against you if you have not applied for a permit, provided:

- your activity meets the description set out in the RPS
- you comply with the conditions of the RPS
- your activity does not, and is not likely to, cause [environmental pollution](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/control-and-monitor-emissions-for-your-environmental-permit) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/control-and-monitor-emissions-for-your-environmental-permit>) or harm human health

[resource-framework-to-show-when-a-material-has-ceased-to-be-waste\)](#)

[Check if you need an environmental permit \(/guidance/check-if-you-need-an-environmental-permit\)](#)

[Carrying out research or trials with waste at sites without an environmental permit \(/guidance/carrying-out-research-or-trials-with-waste-at-sites-without-an-environmental-permit\)](#)

[T6 waste exemption: treating waste wood and waste plant matter by chipping, shredding, cutting or pulverising \(/guidance/waste-exemption-t6-treating-waste-wood-and-waste-plant-matter-by-chipping-shredding-cutting-or-pulverising\)](#)

[Waste operations and A1 installations: carrying out research or trials \(/guidance/waste-operations-and-a1-](#)

Each RPS has an expiry date. You should check with the Environment Agency before this expiry date to make sure they have not withdrawn the RPS. If they have, you may need to register an exemption or apply for a permit for your activity.

Check for an RPS if you are:

- [using waste](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#using-waste)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#using-waste>)
- [treating waste](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#treating-waste)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#treating-waste>)
- [disposing of waste](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#disposing-of-waste-)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#disposing-of-waste->)
- [storing waste](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#storing-waste)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/basic-rules-environmental-permitting-regulatory-positions#storing-waste>)

Check if there is an exemption for your activity

If your activity is covered by an exemption, and you register this exemption with the Environment Agency, you will not need an environmental permit.

It's free to register waste exemptions (besides the [T11 WEEE exemption](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-exemption-t11-repairing-or-refurbishing-waste-electrical-and-electronic-equipment-weee) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-exemption-t11-repairing-or-refurbishing-waste-electrical-and-electronic-equipment-weee>)) and registration lasts for 3 years.

[Find out if your activity is covered by an exemption and register it as exempt](#)

[installations-carrying-out-research-or-trials](#)

[Show 2 more](#)

Collection

[Environmental permit application form: standard rules, installations, mining waste or waste operation](#)
([government/collections/environmental-permit-application-forms-for-a-standard-permit-installations-mining-waste-or-waste-operation](#))

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-your-waste-exemptions-environmental-permits>).

If you do not follow the limits and conditions in your exemption, the Environment Agency can cancel or 'de-register' it.

Fees and charges for permits

You must [pay a fee to apply for a permit](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-charges-guidance) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-charges-guidance>).

The application charges are listed in tables 1.15 to 1.17 of the [environmental permits and abstraction licences: tables of charges](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permits-and-abstraction-licences-tables-of-charges) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permits-and-abstraction-licences-tables-of-charges>).

You must send payment with your application.

If your application is successful, the Environment Agency will charge you an annual 'subsistence' fee while you have a permit. This fee depends on your activity and the type of permit you have.

You can contact the Environment Agency if you need help working out how much to pay.

Check if you need a standard rules permit

You can apply for a standard rules permit if your operation meets the relevant description and rules, but:

- you cannot change (vary) the rules and you have no right of appeal against them
- if you want to change your operations and so will

not meet the criteria of the standard permit anymore, you will have to apply to make it a bespoke permit instead

- if there is a change in your local environment after your permit has been issued (for example a change in the definition of a [groundwater source protection zone](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spsz) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spsz>)) you may need to apply to change your permit

Read the standard rules if your activity involves:

- [anaerobic digestion, including the use of resultant gas and storing digestate](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#anaerobic-digestion-including-use-of-the-resultant-gas-and-storing-digestate) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#anaerobic-digestion-including-use-of-the-resultant-gas-and-storing-digestate>)
- [car and vehicle dismantling](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#car-and-vehicle-dismantling) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#car-and-vehicle-dismantling>)
- [composting, sewage or sludge treatment, biogas](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#composting,-sewage-or-sludge-treatment,-biogas) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#composting,-sewage-or-sludge-treatment,-biogas>)
- [deposit for recovery](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#deposit-for-recovery-) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#deposit-for-recovery->)
- [electrical insulating oil storage](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#electrical-insulating-oil-storage) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#electrical-insulating-oil-storage>)
- [metal recycling, scrap metal and WEEE - not cars or vehicles](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#metal-recycling,-scrap-metal-and-weee---not-cars-or-vehicles-) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#metal-recycling,-scrap-metal-and-weee---not-cars-or-vehicles->)
- [mining, oil and gas](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#mining,-oil-and-gas) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#mining,-oil-and-gas>)

- [rules-environmental-permitting#mining,-oil-and-gas](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#mining,-oil-and-gas))
- [mobile plant for land-spreading or treatment](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#mobile-plant-for-land-spreading-or-treatment)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#mobile-plant-for-land-spreading-or-treatment>)
- [storage or treatment of waste - recycling, dredging, clinical, soil, tyre shred or wood](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#storage-or-treatment-of-waste---recycling,-dredging,-clinical,-soil,-tyre-shred-or-wood-treatment)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#storage-or-treatment-of-waste---recycling,-dredging,-clinical,-soil,-tyre-shred-or-wood-treatment>)
- [waste transfer station or amenity site with or without treatment](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#waste-transfer-station-or-amenity-site-with-or-without-treatment)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting#waste-transfer-station-or-amenity-site-with-or-without-treatment>)

Applying for a standard rules permit is quicker and costs less than a bespoke permit. But if you do not meet the conditions for the standard rules permits you must apply for a bespoke permit.

If you need to apply for more than one standard rule at the same site or add a standard rule to a bespoke permit, you must confirm that each standard rule covers a self-contained and separate activity.

You should not apply for more than one standard rule to split a single operation.

How to apply for a standard rules environmental permit

You can apply online for most standard rules environmental permits.

Before you submit your permit application, you must check your site meets the standard rules location criteria. You can [contact the pre-application](#)

[advice service \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-advice-before-you-apply-for-an-environmental-permit\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-advice-before-you-apply-for-an-environmental-permit) to request a heritage and nature conservation screening.

[Apply for a standard rules environmental permit \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-standard-rules-environmental-permit\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-standard-rules-environmental-permit).

How to apply for a bespoke permit

You must apply for a bespoke permit if your operation does not fit the conditions of a standard rules permit.

Before you apply you must:

- check you meet the [legal operator and competency requirements \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/legal-operator-and-competence-requirements-environmental-permits\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/legal-operator-and-competence-requirements-environmental-permits) (including technical competency)
- develop a [management system \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/develop-a-management-system-environmental-permits\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/develop-a-management-system-environmental-permits) (a written set of procedures that identifies and minimises the risks of pollution)
- complete a [risk assessment \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/risk-assessments-for-your-environmental-permit\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/risk-assessments-for-your-environmental-permit)
- design your facility to [avoid and control emissions \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/control-and-monitor-emissions-for-your-environmental-permit\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/control-and-monitor-emissions-for-your-environmental-permit)
- check the [technical guidance \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/technical-guidance-for-regulated-industry-sectors-environmental-permitting\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/technical-guidance-for-regulated-industry-sectors-environmental-permitting)

If you are applying for a waste recovery permit to permanently deposit waste on land, you must also

read the guidance on [waste recovery plans and deposit for recovery permits](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/deposit-for-recovery-operators-environmental-permits/waste-recovery-plans-and-deposit-for-recovery-permits) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/deposit-for-recovery-operators-environmental-permits/waste-recovery-plans-and-deposit-for-recovery-permits>).

You can ask the Environment Agency if you can submit application information in stages if your proposal is either or both:

- complex
- a novel technology

Check if your application is suitable and how to request a staged application – see the guidance on how to [send environmental permit application information in stages](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/send-environmental-permit-application-information-in-stages) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/send-environmental-permit-application-information-in-stages>).

Bespoke permits: apply online

You can [apply online for a bespoke permit](https://apply-for-environmental-permit.service.gov.uk/) (<https://apply-for-environmental-permit.service.gov.uk/>) for most types of waste operation.

You cannot currently apply online for the following waste operations:

- onshore oil and gas
- mining waste
- inert landfill and deposit for recovery

For these, you need to download and fill in the application forms.

Bespoke permits: application forms

Download and fill in forms:

- [part A: about you](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-a-about-you>)

- [part B2: new bespoke permit](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-b2-new-bespoke)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-b2-new-bespoke>)
- [part B4: new bespoke waste operation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-b4-new-bespoke-waste-operation)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-b4-new-bespoke-waste-operation>) or [part B5: new bespoke mining waste operation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-b5-new-bespoke-mining-waste-operation)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-b5-new-bespoke-mining-waste-operation>)
- [part F1: charges and declarations](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-f1-opra-charges-declarations)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-an-environmental-permit-part-f1-opra-charges-declarations>)

When you send your application you will need to include:

- forms part A, part B2, part B4 or part B5, and part F1
- the summary of your management system
- your risk assessment
- any other supporting documents mentioned in the form guidance, for example site maps and plans
- [your payment](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permits-and-abstraction-licences-tables-of-charges)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permits-and-abstraction-licences-tables-of-charges>)

Send your application and payment to
PSC@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Or post them to:

Permitting and Support Centre
Environmental Permitting Team

Quadrant 2
99 Parkway Avenue
Parkway Business Park
Sheffield
S9 4WF

Consultations on permit applications

[The Environment Agency consults](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permits-when-and-how-we-consult)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permits-when-and-how-we-consult>) on:

- bespoke permit applications
- other permit applications where it's appropriate or in the public interest to do so

The Environment Agency will publish a notice of your application, instructions for how other people can comment on it and the application documents on the [public register](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/environmental-permitting-notice-of-applications-made)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/environmental-permitting-notice-of-applications-made>).

Members of the public and anyone interested in the application have 20 working days to comment.

The Environment Agency may also consult other public bodies, for example local authorities, Public Health England, water companies and Natural England.

If the Environment Agency considers your application to be of high public interest, they may:

- take longer to give you a decision
- carry out an extra consultation on the draft decision
- advertise the application more widely

Keeping sensitive information confidential

When the Environment Agency consults on your permit application they will let people see the information in your application.

You can ask the Environment Agency not to make public any information that is commercially sensitive for your business (such as financial information). You can do this by including a letter with your application that gives your reasons why you do not want this information made public.

The Environment Agency will email or write to you within 20 days if they agree to your request. They will let you know if they need more time to decide.

If they do not agree to your request they will tell you:

- how to appeal against the decision
- how to withdraw your application

After you apply

The Environment Agency may reject your application if, for example, you have:

- not used the right forms
- forgotten to include payment, or sent the wrong payment
- not provided important information

Examples of insufficient information include:

- the environmental risk assessment not identifying potential pollutants
- the management plan lacking enough detail

The information required is explained in the application form guidance. It depends on the type of application you are making.

Once the Environment Agency is satisfied they have the information and payment required to start assessing your application, they will contact you to tell you that your application is 'duly made'. This means they are starting the assessment process.

If the Environment Agency needs any more information from you before your application can be duly made, they will either:

- contact you to request it if it seems you could provide the information within 10 working days
- return your application with a list of missing information to help you reapply

If the Environment Agency cannot progress your application past the duly made stage, they will return it to you. They may keep part of your application charge if they have spent time reviewing your application. This is explained in the [environmental permitting charges guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-charges-guidance) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-charges-guidance>).

After an application is duly made, if the Environment Agency needs any more information from you, they will contact you to tell you what information you need to send.

Decisions about your permit

The Environment Agency will write to you to tell you their decision. The time this takes depends on:

- the complexity of the application
- whether they need to consult
- whether they need to ask you for more information so they can complete their assessment
- the number of applications they are dealing with

They usually make decisions on applications within:

- 4 months if you are applying for a new permit
- 3 months if you want to change a permit or cancel it
- 2 months if you want to transfer a permit

They will tell you if your application will take longer.

Appeal a decision

You can appeal if the Environment Agency refuses your application.

The decision letter will explain how you can appeal.

Examples of why they may refuse an application are:

- unacceptable environmental risk or damage to habitats or species
- insufficient evidence of operator competence
- inadequate management plans
- requests for information not being responded to
- the Environment Agency not agreeing that your application to permanently deposit waste is a recovery operation
- the site not being in a satisfactory condition, if the application is to surrender a permit

You can also appeal if you've applied for a bespoke permit and you're not happy with the conditions.

The Environment Agency will publish the decision on the [public register](https://www.gov.uk/access-the-public-register-for-environmental-information) (<https://www.gov.uk/access-the-public-register-for-environmental-information>).

When you get your permit

Find out [how the Environment Agency will regulate you](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-youll-be-regulated-environmental-permits) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-youll-be-regulated-environmental-permits>) when you start operating.

If you have been issued a mobile plant permit, the Environment Agency must agree to the deployment of the plant before you operate. Deployment forms for standard rules permits are available on the same page as the standard rules themselves. Apply to deploy mobile plant for bespoke activities using [form MPD1](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sr2010-number-11) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sr2010-number-11>).

Change, transfer or cancel your permit

When you have got your permit, you can:

- change (vary) the details on it
- transfer it to someone else
- cancel (surrender) it

Find out how to [change, transfer or cancel your permit](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/change-transfer-or-cancel-your-environmental-permit) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/change-transfer-or-cancel-your-environmental-permit>).

You may not have to make changes to your permit if you want to [carry out research or trials](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-operations-and-a1-installations-carrying-out-research-or-trials) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-operations-and-a1-installations-carrying-out-research-or-trials>).

Get help with your application

If you think you need a permit you can [ask the Environment Agency for advice before you apply](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-advice-before-you-apply-for-an-environmental-permit) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-advice-before-you-apply-for-an-environmental-permit>).

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