



News Release

Issue Date: 22.08.2019

Permit system to be introduced at recycling centres to tackle illegal business waste

New measures are being put in place to increase recycling at Household Recycling Centres (HRCs), as part of the new waste strategy for Aberdeenshire.

The aim of the permit scheme is to move business waste away from recycling centres to create more space for new recyclable materials to improve services to householders.

Businesses will be asked to use the council's waste transfer stations where they can pay by weight for their recycling and non-recyclable waste.

While most businesses pay the necessary fees to dispose of their waste and recycling responsibly, the current open access to recycling centres means some business waste is being presented as household waste so that it can be processed free of charge.

To tackle this, a new permit scheme is one of the measures being introduced next year to prevent such abuse.

Currently, as much as 20% of the waste taken to recycling centres is thought to be business waste. Disposal of business waste by these means costs Aberdeenshire taxpayers around £500,000 a year – money which could be better spent improving recycling services for households.

Under the new scheme householders using commercial type vehicles (i.e. vans, pick-ups, minibuses or trailers) to take materials to recycling centres will require a permit to do so.

The permits will be free of charge and can be used at any of the 15 recycling centres operated by Aberdeenshire Council.

Households will be able to apply for the free permits in advance and a year's supply (24 permits) will be issued at one time to minimise inconvenience.

Permits can be applied for online or by post at any time of the year and will be valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

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The new scheme is not expected to have an impact on most householders as permits will not be required for cars, estate cars, people carriers, MPVs or 4x4s, unless they tow a trailer or a horse box. Permits can be obtained for trailers up to 6 x 8 ft in size.

Certain types of vehicle typically used by businesses will not be permitted at HRCs, specifically those over 3.5 tonnes gross weight, tippers, tractors, large trailers (over 6 x 8 ft) and vehicles with twin wheels or more than four wheels.

Aberdeenshire Council's Waste Manager, Ros Baxter, said: "The approval of the new permit system is very good news as it will allow us to make space for more recyclable materials at recycling centres and improve services for householders.

"Most households will not be affected by the permit system at all as cars, estate cars, people carriers, MPVs and 4x4s will continue to have unlimited access to recycling centres.

"We are keen to minimise inconvenience to those householders who use commercial type vehicles or trailers to take materials to recycling centres. Only one application is required to get a year's supply of permits and we have also increased the number of permits to 24 per year to make sure householders have enough permits to cover the grass cutting season.

"We will be communicating the details of the new permit scheme over the coming months, so there will be plenty of time to apply for the permits before the new scheme starts.

"Businesses will be provided an alternative service at waste transfer stations, and with a lower price for recycling, will be encouraged to segregate and recycle as much of their waste as possible.

"We will be monitoring closely how the new schemes settle in and can tweak them in future based on feedback received.

More information about the new recycling permit scheme is available on www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/recyclingcentrepermits

Locations and opening times for the network of Household Recycling Centres across the area are available at: <http://bit.ly/AbshireHWRCs>

Information on the trade waste collection service provided by the Council to businesses across Aberdeenshire is available at: <http://bit.ly/TradeRec>

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

Aberdeenshire Council's Infrastructure Services Committee took a decision on the new recycling centre policy at its meeting on Thursday, August 22.

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It is not possible to accurately quantify the extent and cost of unlawful disposal of trade waste through recycling centres. However, based on car counts and anecdotal evidence, business waste is estimated to be up to 20% (10,000 tonnes) of the waste handled at recycling centres annually and costing around £0.5 million to dispose of.

You can see the report to Infrastructure Services Committee by visiting <http://bit.ly/2P3TsD9>

Endsnotes