

Workplace Recycling - Let's get it sorted

Resources for the education sector

Introduction

The new Workplace Recycling Regulations came into force on the 6th April 2024, requiring all non-domestic premises in Wales to improve the way they recycle.

The new law requires all workplaces, including businesses, public bodies and third sector organisations, to separate the following recyclable household-like materials from their general waste:

- **Food** waste including leftovers or waste generated by food preparation
- **Paper and card** such as old newspapers and envelopes, delivery boxes and packaging
- **Metal, plastic, and cartons** and other similar packaging
- **Glass** such as drinks bottles and food jars
- **Unsold textiles** such as clothing and non-clothing
- **Unsold small waste electrical and electronic equipment** (sWEEE)

Why has this law been introduced?

Wales is currently second in the world when it comes to recycling waste from households. The current household recycling rate is just over 65% and helps save around 400,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year.

The aim is to build on the success of household recycling and ensure high recycling rates across workplaces too.

The new law will help improve the quality and quantity of materials collected for recycling.

What does this mean for education settings?

The regulations apply to all educational settings in Wales, including state and private schools, as well as further and higher educational establishments, such as colleges and universities.



As the regulator for this law, Natural Resources Wales wants to support workplaces in Wales to improve the quantity and quality of their recycling and reduce their risk of non-compliance.

Our initial focus is to raise awareness of the waste separation requirements and how it applies to your workplace and to provide help and advice on how to comply.

A wide range of guidance and resources have been developed to support those who need to separate their waste. We have produced this pack to bring those resources together and help education settings across Wales to be compliant with the Workplace Recycling Regulations.

The pack includes a range of suggested activities, which aim to engage learners as part of the process.

Activities to get it sorted

Guidance

Suggested activities:

- Read the Guidance for the education sector, prepared by WRAP Cymru.
- WRAP is a climate action NGO working around the globe to tackle the causes of the climate crisis and give the planet a sustainable future.
- Part of WRAP, WRAP Cymru delivers a Wales-specific package of work to support the Welsh Government's environmental goals.
- Covered in the guide:
 - Why you need to recycle
 - How to better understand your waste and recycling
 - Preventing waste in the first place
 - How to comply with the new Workplace Recycling law
 - How to arrange a new recycling service
 - Space for your bins?
 - Food waste and hygiene
 - Engaging with staff and pupils
 - Resources



Useful links:

- Guidance for the education sector | WRAP Cymru
<https://businessofrecycling.wrapcymru.org.uk/recycling-guide/education>

Webinar

Suggested activities:

- Watch the webinar held by WRAP Cymru for practical guidance specifically for the Education sector, with speakers including Meirion Edwards (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Georgina Taubman (Cardiff University) and Gareth Davies (Business Wales).

Useful links:

- Webinar recording | WRAP Cymru
https://videos.cfassets.net/n1zl2ighrxeq/2CZY7E1PdipQK8AteL1o15/b57f36ca7394d9dc1cfef88bb480164d/Education_Recording.mp4
- Webinar presentation slides | WRAP Cymru
https://assets.cfassets.net/n1zl2ighrxeq/6bzHGc8hRBOtY2JtXpZp0T/e1c9411a12ec51228d91b6ba01d6a169/Education_webinar_1_.pdf
- Webinar Q&A | WRAP Cymru
https://assets.cfassets.net/n1zl2ighrxeq/LLhTAJjdXL5Sk4S8aaDvn/c3893b37cdc70c4e2fa7aae1f0a38fc4/Education_Q_A.pdf



Overview

Suggested activities:

- Read the Communications Resources Pack for all the background information you'll need, including an overview of:
 - What the new law is and why it was introduced
 - Benefits of workplace recycling
 - Key facts
 - Support and resources

Useful links:

- Communications Resources Pack | WRAP Cymru
https://assets.ctfassets.net/n1zl2ighrxeq/6VaKfEyzrc8mcCLtUEn24k/2727728f2c68d29f1c4dec11108ba51d/Communications_Resources_Pack.pdf

Why recycle?

Suggested activities:

- Find out about recycling and why it's important.
- You could research:
 - Which materials can be recycled?
 - What environmental impact does recycling have?
 - How does recycling help tackle climate change?
 - Who is responsible for recycling?
 - What does reduce, reuse, recycle mean?
 - What do recycling symbols mean?
 - Is Wales good at recycling?
 - Interesting facts and fun figures
- Watch case studies on the Welsh Government YouTube channel to find out what other education settings have been doing to improve their recycling.



Useful links:

- Workplace Recycling: let's get it sorted | Welsh Government
<https://www.gov.wales/workplace-recycling>
- Recycling helps protect our planet, most people do it | Wales Recycles
www.walesrecycles.org.uk
- Where does your recycling go? | My Recycling Wales
<https://myrecyclingwales.org.uk/>
- Wales second in the world for recycling rates | BBC News
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c511344v959o>
- Workplace Recycling at Cardiff University | YouTube
<https://youtu.be/XD8SO5vkn30?si=QWblbdORJFaUGisb>
- Workplace Recycling at Ysgol Rhiw-Bechan Powys | YouTube
https://youtu.be/wxrdMT7qf4c?si=7PRCN-1CW6j0_Eld

Waste prevention

Suggested activities:

- Carry out a brain storming activity or a research task to consider how you can reduce your waste.
- Use your ideas to create a waste prevention plan.
- You could:
 - Donate surplus or unsold stock
 - Use less paper in lessons
 - Photocopy/print on both sides of paper
 - Use scrap paper for notes, drafts, spelling tests etc.
 - Use paperless marketing and communication methods, and online forms
 - Purchase recycled, refillable or reusable products wherever possible
 - Use packaging for art and craft projects
 - Provide water fountains for staff and students to use
 - Use reusable cups, crockery and utensils in the canteen
 - Make packed lunches as waste-free as possible by encouraging less packaging and reusable drinks bottles
 - For take-away drinks encourage staff and pupils to bring their own reusable cup by charging for single use cups
 - Ensure that packaging on your takeaway food and drink is minimised and what packaging is used, can be recycled or reused
 - Start a compost heap
 - If you supply Freshers' week goodie bags or Leavers' mementos, provide reusable gifts such as coffee cups, water bottles or reusable shopping bags



Useful links:

- Guidance for Education: Preventing waste in the first place | WRAP Cymru
<https://businessofrecycling.wrapcymru.org.uk/recycling-guide/education/preventing-waste-in-the-first-place-education>
- Comparing Milk Packaging Options for Monmouthshire Primary Schools | WRAP Cymru
<https://wrapcymru.org.uk/resources/case-study/comparing-milk-packaging-options-monmouthshire-primary-schools>

Waste audit

Suggested activities:

- Carry out a waste audit to find out the different types and quantities of waste that you produce.
- The areas most likely to generate waste at your site may include:
 - Canteens and kitchens - food and packaging waste
 - Staff rooms - paper and packaging waste;
 - General Offices – paper
 - Classrooms and workspaces – paper and food waste
 - External grounds such as school playgrounds, the college or university campuses - food waste and packaging
 - Educational establishments may also generate types of hazardous waste, such as paints, oils or chemicals that require a specialised waste collection service
- Show your results in a table, chart or graph.



Useful links:

- Waste audit guide | WRAP Cymru
https://assets.ctfassets.net/n1z12ighrxeq/7AbM2eeEnd7wwvsTdV81h7/73d8b69ec6df8fefb01b6aa2c8dc40d4/Waste_Audit_Guide.pdf

Make a plan

Suggested activities:

- Use your waste audit results to work out what bins you need, how many and where they would be best placed.
- Plan where to put recycling bins strategically around your school. Think paper recycling bins near the photocopier, and plastic and food waste bins in the canteen. The point is to make school recycling easy!
- Create a map of your site showing where your bins should go.



Get it sorted

Suggested activities:

- Set up your new recycling areas and bins.
- Ensure that waste storage areas are:
 - Safe and accessible for people, including users with disabilities, and your waste collector
 - Not in locations that cause an obstruction, a fire hazard or block escape routes
 - Not located near food preparation or storage areas for food safety and hygiene reasons
 - Close to where the waste and recycling is generated
 - Tidy, clean, and free from clutter or loose waste
- Ensure that bins are:
 - Of a sufficient capacity to cope with the types and amounts of waste and recyclables you produce and store between collections
 - Secure with close fitting lids and do not allow waste or recycling to escape
- Avoid placing general waste bins on their own – when people have the chance to recycle they usually do!



Useful links:

- Guidance for Education: Space for your bins | WRAP Cymru
<https://businessofrecycling.wrapcymru.org.uk/recycling-guide/education/space-for-your-bins-education>

Signs

Suggested activities:

- Print and display colour-coded labels for your bins and signs to show what waste goes where.
- A range of icons are available to download for free from WRAP Cymru.
- Print in A5 for bin labels and A4 for signs.
- You could make your own signs by attaching real examples (or photos) of the types of waste generated on site, to help everyone know what can be put in each bin.



Useful links:

- Workplace recycling: imagery for recycling signage and containers | WRAP Cymru <https://wrapcymru.org.uk/resources/campaign-assets/workplace-recycling-imagery-recycling-signage-and-containers>

Posters

Suggested activities:

- Print and display posters to promote recycling and ensure that everyone knows what can and can't go in each bin.
- WRAP Cymru provides a range of posters, which are free to download in PDF, InDesign and MS word formats, with the option of a 'low ink' poster which requires less ink to print.
- Make a display for your classroom or recycling area.
- Design your own poster.



Useful links:

- Posters to download in A5, A3 and A4 | WRAP Cymru <https://businessofrecycling.wrapcymru.org.uk/resources>

Presentation

Suggested activities:

- Use the PowerPoint template with the Business of Recycling Wales brand to design a presentation
- Give a presentation to your class or during assembly to introduce your new bins and signs to help others recycle correctly



Useful links:

- PowerPoint template | WRAP Cymru https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.ctfassets.net%2Fn1z12ighrxeq%2F6JAI2QhngkzLRpRMZqB1EC%2F1cbf2a28ed7a10f674ecf8d4275ca888%2FWRAP_BOR_Welsh_PP_TEMPLATE.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

Spread the word

Suggested activities:

- Make sure everyone knows about your new recycling scheme – write a letter, send an email, organise a meeting or include an article in your school newsletter
- You might need to contact:
 - Teaching staff
 - Eco-Schools Co-ordinators
 - Sustainability Officers
 - Caretaker
 - Cleaning staff
 - Catering staff
 - Grounds staff



Useful links:

- Guidance for Education: Engaging with staff and pupils | WRAP Cymru
<https://businessofrecycling.wrapcymru.org.uk/recycling-guide/education/engaging-with-staff-and-pupils>

Recycling champions

Suggested activities:

- Hold an election to nominate recycling champions for your class or setting
- Make a badge for your recycling champions from recycled materials
- Support your recycling champions to check the bins regularly to ensure that materials are being recycled correctly
- Share your progress and achievements to help keep everyone motivated to keep recycling



Eco-Schools

Suggested activities:

- Now that you've got your recycling sorted there is lots more you can do to make a positive difference to the environment.
- Check out the Eco-Schools website for a wide range of resources which are designed to introduce learners to some of the most important environmental issues facing Wales and the world.
- Related topics include waste minimisation and litter, with downloadable resources and case studies available.



Useful links:

- Primary resources | Eco-Schools, Keep Wales Tidy <https://keepwalestidy.cymru/eco-schools/primary-resources/>
- Secondary resources | Eco-Schools, Keep Wales Tidy <https://keepwalestidy.cymru/eco-schools/secondary-resources/>

Contact NRW

Suggested activities:

- Send an email to the Workplace Recycling Team at Natural Resources Wales WorkplaceRecycling@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk.
- Ask us a question or for some advice on how to improve your recycling.
- Or send us some photos of your work – we would love to see improvements you've made!
- Look out for a reply within 10 working days.



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Natural Resources Wales

Useful links:

- Website | Natural Resources Wales <https://naturalresources.wales/?lang=en>
- Workplace Recycling – NRW approaches to regulating | Natural Resources Wales <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-blogs/blogs/workplace-recycling-nrw-approaches-to-regulating/?lang=en>

Further support

We recognise the scale of this change and appreciate the efforts workplaces have already made to increase better quality recycling in Wales.

Where support is needed, we will do what we can to support you to comply with the regulations. Please contact the Workplace Recycling Team by emailing:

WorkplaceRecycling@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk.

For further information, please see our webpage:

Workplace recycling: separating your waste for collection | Natural Resources Wales
<https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/environmental-topics/waste-management/workplace-recycling-separating-your-waste-for-collection/>