



The Bar Council

Sustainable Resource Guide: Waste

This guide is designed to support your business to use resources more efficiently, reducing waste and reducing costs.

Why waste?

Costs for waste disposal vary depending on quantity and type of waste. For example, the average annual cost for a weekly collection of a 1,100-litre wheelie bin of general waste (about 15-20 sacks) is £1250 including hire of the bin. Commercial waste is sorted at a Waste Transfer Station before being taken to the final disposal location (e.g., recycling, incineration, landfill, etc.) and a charge is made per tonne of waste (ranging, for example, from £12 per tonne of mixed glass to between £150 and £250 per tonne of mixed general waste). In addition, waste sent to landfill is subject to Landfill Tax (£94.15 per tonne from 1 April 2020). Waste disposal companies pass on these additional costs, so it is the business' interest to reduce the amount of waste needing to be disposed.

Water supply and waste treatment of any sort also requires energy with an associated carbon footprint and – in the case of waste sent to landfill – can release methane, a potent greenhouse gas. This footprint is attributed to the business as an indirect (Scope 3) emission.

The Business Case

1. **Cut overheads:** Cutting waste – particularly general waste that goes to landfill - can make a big difference to the business' waste disposal bill.
2. **Create business opportunities:** In some cases, waste material from one business can be the raw material needed for another, so creating a possible opportunity for recycled, recovered or repurposed materials.
3. **Protect the Environment:** Proper waste disposal prevents release of pollutants into the environment (e.g., plastics into rivers and oceans) which can cause long-term harm to humans and wildlife.
4. **Reduce Your Carbon Footprint:** Dealing with any waste stream is an energy-intensive process.



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5. **Generate Positive PR:** Showing the public that your business cares about cutting waste enhances its reputation.
6. **Comply with Environmental Legislation:** All businesses are legally required to exercise a duty of care by properly disposing of waste they generate.
7. **Tax incentives:** Businesses that invest in technologies and strategies that encourage sustainable resource use and energy saving may be eligible for tax savings.

What can you do?

1. Shop around and save on business water rates and waste disposal costs

Use waste comparison sites to find the most competitive water rates and disposal options for your business. Examples might include:

[Business Cost Comparison](#)

[Expert Market](#)

[The Eco Experts](#)

[Love Energy Savings](#)

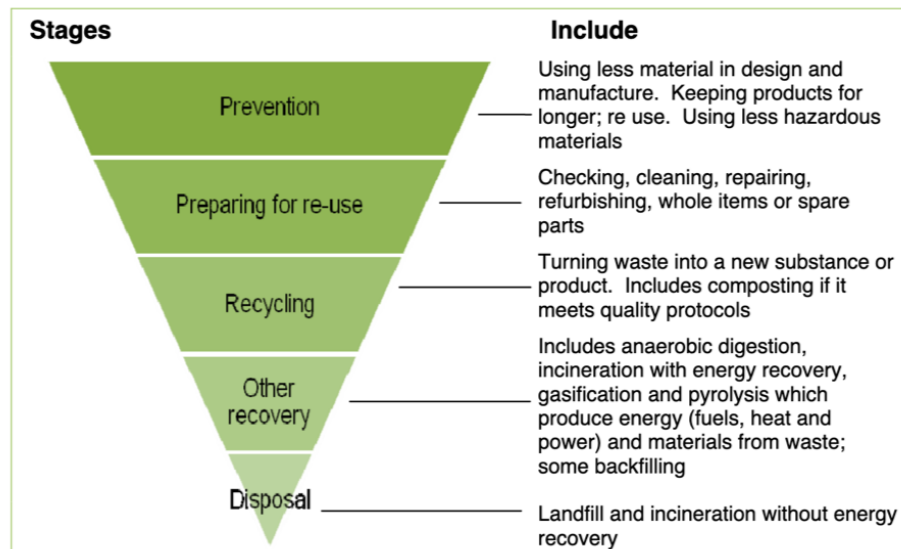
2. Reduce Waste Generated

No cost steps:

- Carry out a simple waste audit of the facility and evaluate the supply chain of items that become waste. What consumables do you stock? Can you switch to compostable or at least recyclable products? How are waste bins placed? Consider how you far down the waste hierarchy you could go:



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Source: [Guidance on applying the waste hierarchy](#)

- Make sure that recycling and composting containers are more convenient than landfill-bound containers, and that labels are easy to read. Signage with photos showing what goes where are highly effective, and waste disposal companies often provide free templates.
- Evaluate how full the compactors, wheelie bins and recycling containers are prior to collection. Facilities that increase their recycling rates often can decrease the frequency of pick-ups, thus saving additional money.

Low cost/Longer-term

- Provide separate bins for different waste streams – recyclable items, food waste and general waste
- Replace plastic with compostable cutlery in staff restaurants where appropriate
- Consider ways to reduce the packaging used for the business' own products and discuss options with suppliers for reducing the packing associated with purchased goods
- Eliminate bottled water – switch to filter and glasses as an alternative
- Go paperless as far as practicable
- Investigate opportunities to use recycled, repurposed, remanufactured, or refurbished materials and products (e.g., remanufactured office furniture)