

# Waste Management Information for Farmers



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Waste management has become an increasingly important issue in farming throughout Ireland. Everyday issues encountered by farmers include disposal of waste generated from routine practices to dealing with repercussions from the unauthorised activities of others and the increasing blight of illegal dumping. It is important for everyone to understand their responsibilities in respect of correct waste management practices in order to protect the environment, and to protect themselves from potential prosecution.



## Farm plastics

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Ireland is one of the few countries in Europe to have introduced legislation specifically designed to promote farm plastics recycling. The regulations are critical to supporting farm plastics recycling as they place a legal responsibility on producers of farm film products to specifically support recycling. As part of that legislation “farm plastics” means sheeting, netting, bale twine, bale wrap or bale bags.

The regulations require companies that sell farm film products to either become directly involved in the recycling of farm plastics waste with their customers (referred to as offering a deposit and refund scheme) or to participate in a government approved farm plastics recycling scheme. The Irish Farm Film Producers Group (IFFPG) is the national farm plastics recycling compliance scheme. It provides a recycling service for farmers to ensure we reach recycling targets set by government. It operates approximately 235 bring centres annually, as well as providing a farmyard collection service.

The IFFPG currently recycles in excess of 25,000 tonnes of farm plastics yearly, which equates to a national recycling rate of over 70%. The collection locations and associated dates are available on the IFFPG website [www.farmplastics.ie](http://www.farmplastics.ie).

For information on all compliance schemes visit [www.mywaste.ie](http://www.mywaste.ie).

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## Invasive Species

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Invasive species are non-native plants or animal species that are harmful, either, to human health or to the environment. Plants like Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam are the most common invasive species on Irish farmland. The movement of topsoil and the disturbance and disposal of cuttings are the main cause of spreading. However, it can also be spread on the tyres of a tractor, in tracking machinery or even by foot.

A licence is required to remove and dispose of certain invasive species. Further information can be obtained from the Licencing Unit of National Parks and Wildlife Service <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie>

The waste management Act 1996, as amended and associated regulations must also be complied with if invasive species contaminated material is to be moved off site.

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## Asbestos

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**If you are carrying out any building or renovation work on your farm you must have an asbestos survey carried out by a specialist asbestos monitoring/surveying company.**

Up until 1999, asbestos was commonly used in building materials, mainly for insulation and fireproofing, and in some consumer goods. However it is now illegal to place asbestos or asbestos-containing products on the market. If you are carrying out any building or renovation work on your farm you must have an asbestos survey carried out by a specialist asbestos monitoring/surveying company. If asbestos is present an asbestos management plan is required. Removing material containing asbestos must only be done by a specialist contractor. Asbestos waste is a hazardous waste and the original producer must ensure that it is disposed off in an authorised manner. There is always a risk that illegally dumped waste may contain asbestos or other hazardous wastes therefore it is vital to exercise caution if illegal waste is encountered on your farmland.

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## Tyre Producer Responsibility Initiative

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The Waste Management Tyre Regulations apply to all farmers once the first movement of waste tyres onto or from their farm occurs after-which, farmers using waste tyres to anchor a silage pit, must register with the approved body Repak ELT ([www.repakelt.ie](http://www.repakelt.ie)). Once registered, farmers are entitled to store up to a maximum of 8 tyres per square metre of their silage pit's floor area. Farmers are prohibited from storing other waste tyres on their farm, other than the temporary storage of tyres related to their business. Registered farmers must inform Repak ELT of all tyre movements onto or off their farm. All waste tyres removed off the farm must be done by an authorised waste collector.

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## Illegal Dumping including Construction and Demolition Waste

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Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste is waste generated from construction and demolition activities (including excavated soil from contaminated sites). A holder or producer of waste is required by law to ensure their waste is dealt with in a responsible and authorised manner. Waste should only be handed over to authorised waste collectors who hold a waste collection permit from the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO), and only brought to an authorised waste outlet with a valid waste licence, issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), or waste facility permit, issued by the Local Authority. It is illegal to deposit waste on lands without an appropriate waste license or permit. As well as posing a risk to their local environment (such as to soil, groundwater and surface water), landowners, who allow waste to be deposited on their land without a waste authorisation, may face both significant costs in cleaning up the waste and the risk of criminal prosecution. If waste is dumped on farm land without the knowledge of the landowner the landowner can be held responsible for the clean-up costs and face prosecutions.

A landfill levy of €75 per tonne of waste is applicable to all unauthorised waste on site.

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## Hazardous waste disposal

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The Farm Hazardous Waste Collection scheme was established to provide farmers with an accessible location in which they can safely dispose of hazardous waste. Hazardous wastes include items such as waste oils, batteries, fluorescent tubes, waste chemicals and pesticides etc.

The scheme is led by the EPA in collaboration with Teagasc, the Department of Agriculture, the DCCAE and local authorities. While some waste can be disposed of free of charge, other types range in price from €2-4 per kilogram.

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Information on collection dates and locations can be found on [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie).

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## Containers

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Empty pesticide and dairy hygiene containers are potentially hazardous wastes if not managed properly and can represent a management challenge for farmers.

To assist farmers in managing this waste, national agencies have issued guidelines on how to manage these empty containers. Only triple-rinsed empty pesticide containers can be classified as non-hazardous waste. The guidelines are available from the EPA.

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## Backyard burning

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Burning waste is not only a nuisance to neighbours; it can release many harmful chemicals into the atmosphere. Such illegal practices lead to the release of toxic dioxins which are a real hazard for peoples' health and the environment.

In September 2009, a law concerning waste disposal by burning came into force. These regulations, the Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste Disposal by Burning) Regulations make explicit the offence of disposal of waste by uncontrolled burning and prohibits such disposal within the curtilage of a dwelling. Failure to comply with these regulations is an offence and fines of up to €3,000 may be imposed.

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## Penalties

Penalties under the Waste Management Act, as amended shall be liable to:

a) On summary conviction, to a Class A fine (€5,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or to both such fine and such imprisonment, or

b) On conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €15,000,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years, or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

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## Cross Compliance

Under Cross Compliance requirements, a farmer receiving payment must respect the various Statutory Management Requirements and GAEC standards set down in EU legislation (Directives and Regulations) on the environment, climate change, good agricultural condition of land, public, animal and plant health and animal welfare.

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## Complaints

The EPA operate a confidential national environmental complaints line to enable members of the public report environmental pollution, fly-tipping, and illegal dumping of waste. Members of the public can use this 24 hour lo-call telephone number 1850 365 121, or alternatively contact Local Authorities directly to report a complaint. Local authorities and/or the Gardaí and the EPA will follow up on the information provided by the public.

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This booklet has been produced by  
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Waste Management Offices and also the 3  
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