

Waste Management Policy

National Waste Management Policy

The foundation policy statement on waste management “*Changing Our Ways*” was published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in September 1998. This statement firmly bases national policy on the EU Waste Management Hierarchy. In descending order, the current preference is: -

- Prevention;
- Preparing for Reuse;
- Recycling;
- Other Recovery (including energy recovery); and
- Disposal.

The 2002 policy statement ‘*Preventing and Recycling Waste - Delivering Change*’ identified initiatives to achieve progress at the top of the Waste Hierarchy to prevent waste arising and increase recycling rates.

In ‘*Waste Management – Taking Stock and Moving Forward*’ 2004, the significant improvement in recycling rates achieved since 1998 were recognised, but the need for further expansion was emphasised. The statement confirmed that Ireland’s national policy approach remained ‘*grounded in the concept of integrated waste management, based on the internationally recognised waste hierarchy, designed to achieve, by 2013, the ambitious targets set out in Changing Our Ways*’.

In 2006, the National Biodegradable Waste Strategy was published. Its primary focus was to achieve the targets set for the quantity of biodegradable municipal waste that can be landfilled under the Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC). A key element was the collection of source separated household and commercial food waste or “brown bin” material and its treatment, primarily biological treatment.

In 2008, the Government initiated a review of waste policy, to identify possible changes to policy at national level that would assist Ireland to move towards a sustainable resource and waste policy, including minimising the creation of waste and self-sufficiency in the reuse and recycling of materials. The review also addressed the application of alternative technologies for waste management.

The EU Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC was introduced to co-ordinate waste management in Member States, with the objective of limiting the generation of waste and optimising the organisation of waste treatment and disposal. The Directive, which also established the first EU wide recycling targets, was transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011 (S. I. No. 126 of 2011).

In response, the Government initiated a further review of national waste policy, one of whose objectives was to provide the necessary measures to ensure that waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with Articles 4 and 13 of the Directive. A consultation document issued by the Department stated that classification of a treatment process as a recovery activity depends on the level of success in recovering material or producing heat and/or power.

The Policy Statement '*A Resource Opportunity Waste Management Policy*' is also based on the EU Waste Management Hierarchy and encompasses a range of measures across all tiers namely, prevention and minimisation, reuse, recycling, recovery and disposal.

The Statement sets out how the higher tiers can reduce Ireland's reliance on finite resources, virtually eliminate reliance on landfill and minimise the impact of waste management on the environment. It is a policy objective that when waste is generated the maximum value must be extracted from it by ensuring that it is reused, recycled or recovered.

Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2020

Cork is part of the Southern Waste Management Region, which covers 42% of the land mass of the country with a population of over 1.5 million people. The settlement pattern is evenly split between urban and rural areas, with the four cities of Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Kilkenny having the highest population and the strongest centres of economic activity.

Nationally the total quantity of municipal waste managed has decreased year on year since 2007. In the Southern Region 860,425 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) was collected in 2012. Of this 59% percent was recovered which was in line with the national rate. Unmanaged waste remains a problem in the region which local authorities intend to tackle over the period of the plan.

Plan targets are to achieve a recycling rate of 50% for all managed municipal waste by 2020 and to reduce to 0% the amount of untreated municipal waste to landfill in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery processes

The Region appears to have significant available capacity for most waste streams, but there appears to be a shortfall in some areas for example the recovery of municipal solid waste and biowaste.

It is policy (Policy E1) that future authorisations by the local authorities, the EPA and An Bord Pleannála of pre-treatment capacity in the region must take account of the authorised and available capacity in the market... The Plan states that the consideration of pre-treatment authorised and available capacity at existing sites in the Region prior to authorisation of future pre-treatment activities may have a positive effect on the environment in terms of potentially reducing the scale of development of new greenfield sites.

The Plan does not identify specific technologies and/or locations for future waste related activities. Rather it highlights capacity need, and concludes that guidance on proper siting of future waste-related activities (including expansion of existing facilities) is the most appropriate method at this stage of the planning hierarchy to address the potential for impact on the environment.

The role of the waste industry is discussed in Section 17.2.8 of the Plan and includes *inter alia* to:

- Cooperate with designated lead authorities and local authorities to implement the objectives, policies, actions and targets contained in the plan
- Provide sustainable waste management infrastructure/technology in keeping with the waste hierarchy and the principle of self sufficiency
- Communicate with the public to encourage better waste management behaviours and better quality recycling.

Compliance with Policy Objectives

The current operation and proposed development are consistent with objectives of the current national and regional waste policy objectives and contribute to the achievement and maintenance of national and regional recycling and recovery targets.

Food Waste Regulations

It is not proposed to accept food waste at the installation.

For inspection purposes only.
Consent of copyright owner is required for any other use.