CHSA Cleaning and Hygiene Suppliers Association

Valpak a Reconomy Group company

No waste to landfill

Customers and end users demand environmentally and ethically sustainable products and services. Conserving natural resources and reducing pollution, adopting a zero waste to landfill approach is an important step towards satisfying this demand.

To achieve certification the organisation has proved no waste is sent to landfill. All waste is reused, recycled, recovered, reprocessed or disposed of in an alternative way.

A variety of organisations can help you achieve zero waste to landfill certification. We have worked with one, Valpak, to develop this Fact Sheet.

The process

Phase 1: Define and agree the scope

The first step is to identify the current position. Some organisations will be ready for the certification audit immediately, while others may need guidance about what to do to prepare. This may include initial advice on the changes to be made and the processes and procedures to be introduced. These organisations may then conduct the full process as part of a preliminary audit, prior to applying for certification.

Phase 2: Identify and audit waste streams

Every waste stream, many of which are not obvious, is identified during a site visit.

An organisation can choose to secure certification for an individual site, a combination of sites or its entirety. The only requirement is that this is clearly defined at this stage.

Communication with employees will also be reviewed. Organisations that successfully achieve certification have secured and can demonstrate the active support and engagement of employees.

Phase 3: Document review

During this phase, documentation is gathered to evidence the handling and disposal of all waste. This will include waste transfer notes, hazardous waste consignment notes, and waste carriers' licences, permits and exemptions.

It is essential to evidence the processing of the waste within the organisation and what happens to it once it leaves. For example, if cardboard boxes are said to be sent to a paper mill and recycled into new packaging, there must be evidence to prove it. It may also be necessary to specify if the disposal is in the UK or overseas.

Should any evidence be missing during the audit, organisations will be able to gather it before the final report is confirmed.

Zero waste to landfill Certified by Valpak

Phase 4: Report

The final report brings together the findings of the audit. It will include information on the waste arising in each stream, its handling, and the appropriate evidence trail.

Organisations securing zero waste to landfill certification are expected to have a philosophy of continuous improvement. Areas for improvement will be highlighted in the report.

Top tips

Know your waste: understand the waste produced, why it is produced, and what happens to it throughout its complete lifecycle.

Staff engagement: secure their active engagement. They need to understand your goal, why it matters and what they need to do.

Continual improvement: never let up. Build on your success, driving waste out of all your processes or up the hierarchy.

Common Challenges

Hazardous waste: some waste streams have to go to landfill because it is stipulated by law or it is economically unviable for them to be incinerated. If appropriately evidenced, exceptions can be made.

Sanitary waste: this waste stream is often overlooked.

Obtaining information from contractors: the average organisation uses six waste contractors. Some may be initially reticent to provide the relevant documentation but are happy to release it when told it is for zero waste to landfill certification.

Managing the paperwork: maintaining all the evidence for the handling and disposal of all waste is essential as this is a legal requirement. But many still find it difficult to gather and maintain the relevant up-to-date documentation.

Time and resources: successfully managing an organisation's waste can be time consuming for many due to diverse job roles. It can, however, provide a competitive advantage to secure zero waste to landfill certification and is an important step forward in protecting the environment.