Toolbox talk

Waste and recycling on site

Less waste, sorted right, taken by the right people

10 minutes

For: Everyone on site, especially anyone ordering materials or arranging skips

Why it matters

Construction waste is business waste, and the law puts a duty of care on whoever produces it. Mixed, badly stored or illegally dumped waste costs money, harms the environment and can lead to prosecution.

Key points

1. Follow the waste hierarchy: prevent waste first, then reuse, then recycle, then recover.
2. Order and cut carefully. The cheapest waste is the waste you never create.
3. Keep different types of waste apart so they don't contaminate each other and can be reused or recycled.
4. Use suitable containers, label what's in them, and cover them so waste can't blow away.
5. Never mix hazardous waste with general waste. Keep it separate and tell your supervisor.
6. Only let registered waste carriers take waste away. Check them on the public register.
7. In England, non-hazardous transfers need a transfer note or equivalent. A valid season ticket can cover repeat loads. Keep the records for 2 years.
8. In England, hazardous waste normally needs a consignment note. Producers keep the site register for 3 years. Check national rules before transfer.

Sources: GOV.UK: Dispose of business or commercial waste; GOV.UK: Sorting and storing business waste; GOV.UK: Hazardous waste segregation and mixing; GOV.UK: Find a registered waste carrier.

This talk supports, but does not replace, your site-specific risk assessment, method statement, training and supervision. Free to copy and use. **tradefoxapp.com/toolbox-talks/waste**

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Do

- Put waste in the right skip or bag first time.
- Keep offcuts that can be reused on the job.
- Cover skips and bags so waste can't blow away or get soaked.
- Keep oily rags, used spill pads and chemical tins separate.
- Report anyone offering to take waste away cheaply with no paperwork.

Don't

- Don't throw everything into one mixed skip.
- Don't put hazardous waste in general waste.
- Don't hand waste to someone who isn't a registered carrier.
- Don't overfill skips or let waste spill onto the road.
- Don't leave waste lying around. It's a trip and fire hazard too.

Ask the group

- Which skips do we have, and what goes in each one?
- What do we throw away most, and how could we cut it?
- What hazardous waste do we make on this job?
- Who checks the waste carrier and keeps the transfer notes?

If it goes wrong: If waste is in the wrong skip, hazardous waste is mixed in, or a carrier turns up without paperwork, stop and tell your supervisor before anything leaves site. Report unregistered carriers who dump waste illegally to Crimestoppers.

On this site

Nearest first aider _____ Emergency assembly point _____

Site-specific hazards and controls _____

_____

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Go further: How to clear a construction site efficiently, step by step

Sources: GOV.UK: Dispose of business or commercial waste; GOV.UK: Sorting and storing business waste; GOV.UK: Hazardous waste segregation and mixing; GOV.UK: Find a registered waste carrier.

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Attendance register

Waste and recycling on site

Site / project

Date and time

Presented by

Company

	Name (print)	Company	Signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			

By signing, attendees confirm they took part in this toolbox talk and understood the key points. Keep this record with your site safety file.

Presenter signature

Follow-up actions

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Go further: How to clear a construction site efficiently, step by step

Sources: GOV.UK: Dispose of business or commercial waste; GOV.UK: Sorting and storing business waste; GOV.UK: Hazardous waste segregation and mixing; GOV.UK: Find a registered waste carrier.

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Quick check

Waste and recycling on site

Tick one answer for each question. Your presenter has the answers.

Name _____ Date _____

1. What's the first step in the waste hierarchy?

- [ ] Recycle
- [ ] Prevent waste in the first place
- [ ] Send it to landfill

2. Can hazardous waste go in the general skip?

- [ ] Yes, if it's a small amount
- [ ] No, it must be kept separate
- [ ] Only on Fridays

3. Who can take waste away from site?

- [ ] Anyone with a van
- [ ] Only a registered waste carrier
- [ ] Any skip company you find online

4. How long must waste transfer notes be kept?

- [ ] 2 years
- [ ] 1 month
- [ ] They don't need keeping

5. Why keep waste types separate?

- [ ] It looks tidier
- [ ] So they don't contaminate each other and can be reused or recycled
- [ ] It doesn't matter

Sources: GOV.UK: Dispose of business or commercial waste; GOV.UK: Sorting and storing business waste; GOV.UK: Hazardous waste segregation and mixing; GOV.UK: Find a registered waste carrier.

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For the presenter

Answers and sources

Quick check answers

1. Prevent waste in the first place

Prevent waste first, then reuse, recycle and recover, in that order.

2. No, it must be kept separate

You must not mix hazardous waste with non-hazardous waste.

3. Only a registered waste carrier

Check the carrier is registered on the public register before handing waste over.

4. 2 years

Keep a paper or electronic copy of each waste transfer note for 2 years.

5. So they don't contaminate each other and can be reused or recycled

Separating waste stops contamination, makes reuse easier and keeps the paperwork right.

Sources

- GOV.UK: Dispose of business or commercial waste
  https://www.gov.uk/managing-your-waste-an-overview
- GOV.UK: Sorting and storing business waste
  https://www.gov.uk/managing-your-waste-an-overview/sorting-storing-waste
- GOV.UK: Hazardous waste segregation and mixing
  https://www.gov.uk/hazardous-waste-segregation-and-mixing
- GOV.UK: Find a registered waste carrier
  https://www.gov.uk/find-registered-waste-carrier

> **Presenting tips:** keep it to about 10 minutes, use real examples from your site, ask the group questions rather than reading everything out, and record attendance on the register.

Right waste. Right skip.

1. **Reduce, reuse, then recycle**
2. **Keep hazardous waste separate**
3. **Registered carriers only**

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Sources and qualifications

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Scope: environmental duties and record periods quoted here are for England unless otherwise identified. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have separate rules and regulators. Use the rules for the site location.

A4 applicability: no installation-design requirement is asserted in this talk. Its claims are referenced to the subject-specific sources below.

S1. GOV.UK: Business waste responsibilities

Waste hierarchy, duty of care, secure segregation and registered carriers; key points 1-6, Do/Don't and quiz.

https://www.gov.uk/dispose-business-commercial-waste

S2. GOV.UK: Waste transfer notes

Non-hazardous note or equivalent, season tickets/schedules and 2-year records in England; key point 7 and quiz 4.

https://www.gov.uk/dispose-business-commercial-waste/waste-transfer-notes

S3. GOV.UK: Hazardous waste producers and holders

Consignment notes, separation, authorised businesses and 3-year register for producers/holders in England; key point 8.

https://www.gov.uk/dispose-hazardous-waste/producers-and-holders