

WASTE

(2009)

 WCL 009

**“Waste: any substance or objectwhich the holder discards or is required to discard”
 (European Waste Framework Directive)**

WHAT’S IT ALL ABOUT?

Waste

Local Authorities have the responsibility for managing, collecting and disposing of a wide range of waste in Northern Ireland. Wheelie bins are collected from outside our door and the contents are tipped into a lorry leaving them free to be filled again.

What happens to the rubbish in the Lorry?

The lorries take this rubbish to the local landfill site. In some areas, this is a giant hole (perhaps an old quarry) that has been specially lined to prevent direct contamination of the surrounding land.

The waste is dumped, buried in more waste and eventually covered with clay and soil.

In general the waste we put in our wheelie bins is made up of food waste, dust, paper and card, glass, metals and textiles.

Here in Northern Ireland approximately 85% of our household waste goes to landfill. Some of this waste will decompose fairly rapidly. Kitchen and garden waste is biodegradable but as it begins to decompose it releases a gas called methane and a putrid liquid. Both of these are potentially harmful to the environment.

Although the waste that does not decompose may not release by-products it takes up space and will be around for hundreds of years (see table below).

Item	Approx. time for biodegradation
Newspaper	6 weeks
Apple Core	8 weeks
Natural Fibre Rope	14 months
Plastic Bag	10-20 years
Aluminium Can	80-100 years
Glass Bottle	up to 500 years
Plastic Bottle	indefinite

WHAT CAN WE DO?

We can reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by reducing the amount of waste produced in the first place:

- Avoid buying disposable items
- Say no to plastic bags, use reusable bags or bags for life
- Buy things with as little packaging as possible
- Re-use items such as bags, lunch boxes, glass milk bottles and jam jars.
- Re-use envelopes by covering the old address with a sticker.
- Give unwanted toys and clothes to someone else or to a charity shop



RECYCLABLE ITEMS



WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR WASTE

WE CAN RECYCLE THINGS

Contact your local authority to find out what recycling and composting facilities are available in your area and make use of them!

In some areas councils have started collecting dry recyclables from households on a regular basis.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION..

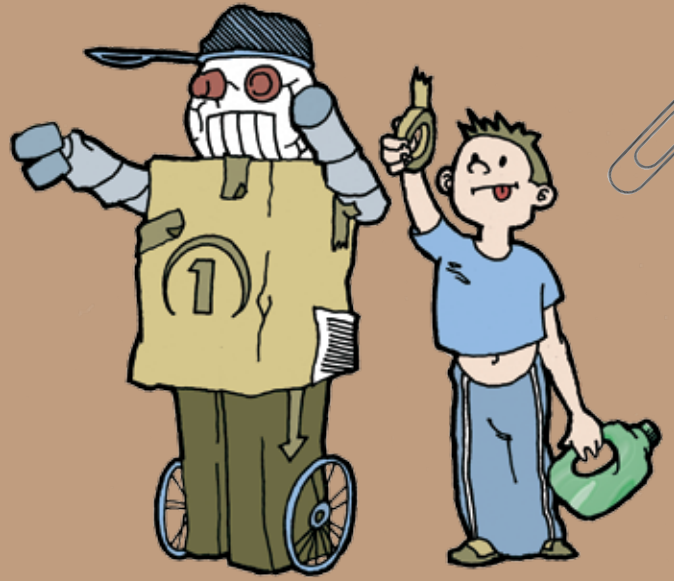
www.wakeuptowaste.org is the DoE website for the 'Wake up to Waste Campaign'.

NIEA contains information on the NI Waste Strategy and legislation Tel. 028 905 46615

www.wastewatch.org.uk you can download or print other factsheets.

www.recycledproducts.org.uk has some information on products made from recycled materials.

USE YOUR IMAGINATION



REFUSE PLASTIC BAGS



Our aim is to protect, conserve and promote the natural and built environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

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