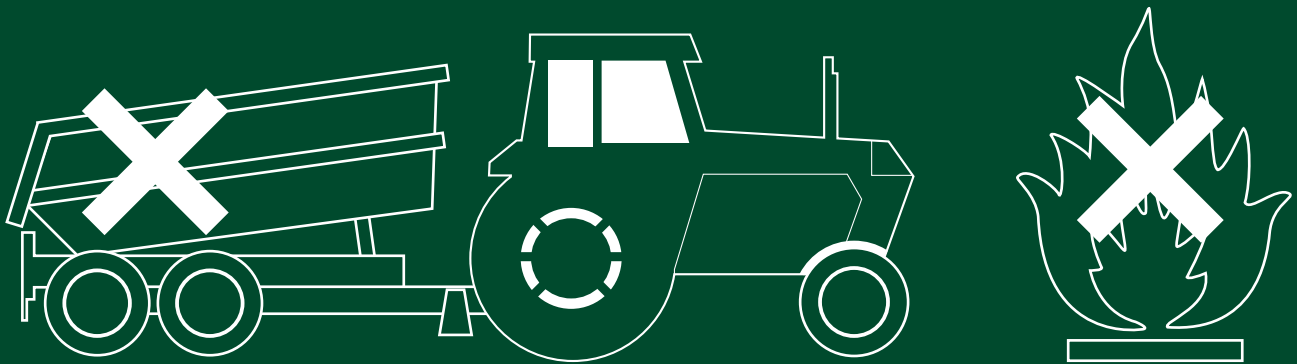


# Agricultural Waste - Your Obligations

# STOP TIPPING STOP BURNING

This guide is to help farmers manage their waste under the new rules. It aims to provide a basic introduction to some changes you need to make.



## What is a farm tip/dump? What is waste burning?

- Farm tips/dumps and burning waste such as plastic on your farm are now illegal following the introduction of the Waste Management Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.
- A farm dump or tip is any area on your farm where you've got rid of waste, like dumping your waste in an old quarry/hole in the ground or even dumping old tyres in woodland.
- Waste burning is when you dispose of waste by incinerating it or burning it out in the open.

## What has changed?

- From 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006 you won't legally be able to operate your farm tip/dump without a permit. These permits are expensive to get and maintain.
- From 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006 you also won't be able to burn most wastes, such as plastics, in incinerators or in open fires. You'll be able to burn cleaned plastic pesticide containers in a drum incinerator for a year after the new controls start, but after this, you have to stop burning them.
- If you bury waste without permission or cause pollution by burning waste, you'll be breaking the law and could face serious legal and financial penalties.
- These changes bring farmers in line with the laws that have applied to other businesses for many years.



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## **What to do next**

The new controls mean that you'll have waste that you can't burn or bury anymore. You'll have to decide what to do with that waste (you can store your own waste on your farm for 12 months).

Getting rid of waste costs money. It's far better, for both your pocket and the environment, if you don't produce it in the first place.

You will still have waste even if you reduce the amount you produce. You can do things on your farm with this waste to save your disposal costs. Some of these things include:

- Using waste paper as animal bedding.
- Using tyres on a silage clamp.
- Chipping logs and branches from cutting down trees and hedges, and shredding plant material.
- Clearing mud and debris (dredgings) from water-courses such as streams and ditches and depositing it along their banks.
- Using a compactor bin to crush waste. Baling waste plastic silage wrap, shredding paper packaging, crushing empty containers, and cleaning pesticide containers.
- Burning logs and branches from fallen or chopped down trees. Burning untreated timber from fence mending. Burning hedge trimmings, leaves, bark and any other naturally occurring plant matter.
- Letting spoiled crops rot down at the farm where they are produced, for example rotten potatoes.

Usually the new controls would mean that you would need a waste management licence to do these activities but they have been made exempt (they are therefore known as exemptions). If you carry out an exempt activity you won't need a waste management licence but you will need to register it.

There are other exemptions available but we think that the ones listed above are the main ones you need. More information on exemptions is available in the guidance accompanying the agricultural waste exemption application form.

Exemptions are free for agricultural waste: all you have to do is register.

If you want to do any of these activities you'll need to register an exemption but don't worry you have a year to do this.

Sometimes you'll find that you still have waste that you need to send off your farm. You must dispose of this waste at an appropriately authorised waste management facility eg. a landfill site or recycler or reprocessor.

## **What to remember**

- You should have stopped using your farm tip/dump without a permit prior to the regulations being implemented.
- You could apply to us to keep your farm tip legal, but you'd need to meet strict landfill operating standards, which is a very expensive and time-consuming option.
- You must stop burning farm wastes such as plastic (except for cleaned plastic containers in a drum incinerator – which you can do for a further year after the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006).
- You can still burn untreated timber, wood, bark, other natural plant tissue and crop residues in the open, but you'll need to register an exemption with the Environment & Heritage Service by the end of the 12 month transitional period.
- If you keep using your tip or burn waste illegally you'll be breaking the law and could face serious penalties.
- You have a year to register your exemptions.

## **Where to find out more**

Agricultural Waste Guidance & Exemptions Pack

Website: [www.ehsni.gov.uk](http://www.ehsni.gov.uk)