




# GUIDE TO CARRYING OUT A WASTE AUDIT



-  **REDUCE**
-  **REUSE**
-  **RECYCLE**



# WHAT IS A WASTE AUDIT

The following guidance is provided to enable you to carry out a waste audit in your place of work.

## WHAT IS A WASTE AUDIT

A waste audit will provide a full understanding of the amount and type of waste that is being created in your business or organization.

## THE WASTE HIERARCHY

The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment. It gives top priority to preventing waste in the first place. When waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for re-use, then recycling, then energy recovery, and last of all, disposal. A waste audit can identify what waste is being produced, hence opportunities for reduction and reuse.

The waste audit process can be supported by looking at business' procurement practices (e.g., what is bought, how is this organised, if sustainable purchasing guidelines are being followed). A business should consider if something should be bought in the first place.



## BENEFITS OF A WASTE AUDIT

A waste audit will highlight areas where improvements can be made and how this can be managed, such as improved recycling, better communication to colleagues about what is being thrown away, resulting in an overall reduction in unnecessary waste. You will understand what goes into the general waste as well as what is put in for recycling over a 24-hour period.

Understanding what ends up from waste will help you to understand the cost associated with your waste.



## THE AUDIT PROCESS

A waste audit provides data about specific types of waste. It requires the need to measure waste and analyse results to form an action plan with targets and timescales.

The following guidance includes a template for waste statistics.

## WHO CAN DO A REVIEW OR AUDIT?

The audit could be organised by anyone. This could be the person with responsibility for the office and purchasing, your facilities team, the sustainability lead for the company or other green team members.



# HOW TO CARRY OUT A WASTE AUDIT

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## PLANNING FOR THE AUDIT

You will need to plan and prepare for your waste audit. Proper planning will help your waste audit go smoothly and means you can replicate it at a later date or a different site and compare the results. Make sure all the bins, including recycling bins, have been emptied prior to the audit.

### Seasonality

Identify an 'average' day on which you will audit your business or office waste (e.g., not during peak holiday periods, or when large numbers of staff are out of the building).

### Safety

Carry out a risk assessment for the activity. Remember you will be going through each bag or bin of waste. Do not empty out hazardous waste containers.

## CARRYING OUT THE AUDIT

### 1. Start with empty bins

Make sure all the bins have been emptied before the day you've identified. This includes emptying recycling bins.

### 2. Label the bags

Ensure that all bags are labelled with the area of the office it came from (e.g., office 1, kitchen etc.).

### 3. Save the waste

Cleaner(s)/site manager/caretaker(s) should save the waste from the audit day for the office or whole business. This includes all materials collected for recycling.

Ensure all bags of waste are stored safely until you are ready to complete the audit, which should ideally be as soon as possible.

*Please note this does not include hazardous waste or sharps. Information on volumes of hazardous waste and sharps should be recorded according to existing management procedures.*



#### 4. Adhere to the risk assessment

Remind staff carrying out the audit of the risk assessment and any health and safety issues.

Gloves must be worn before touching any waste, if any sharp objects are seen in the rubbish, and appropriate action must be taken in accordance with the risk assessment.

#### 5. Sort the waste

1. empty each container onto a plastic sheet
2. separate the waste into the categories outlines in the worksheets
3. weigh each separated pile of waste
4. take photos at each stage as a reminder

#### 6. Complete the worksheets

There are two worksheets to complete;

1. Worksheet 1: record materials that are in the bins
2. Worksheet 2: create an action plan.

#### 7. Dispose of the waste appropriately

When all waste has been sorted and the data has been recorded, dispose of all the waste and recyclables in the usual manner. Toner cartridges, batteries, metals, glass and electrical goods shouldn't be thrown away with the rubbish. Do not empty out hazardous waste containers. Handle according to management procedures.

#### 8. Repeat for each location

The audit will need to be completed for each site that a business occupies, and the data collated to provide results for the business as a whole. All sites should try and complete their audit on the same day. For large multi-site businesses, it may be more appropriate to plan a series of audits.



# FOLLOW UP

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## 1. Calculate daily and weekly totals

Calculate the daily, weekly and annual totals for the whole business noting the totals that are recycled as well as the waste that is not sent for recycling separately. Multiply the daily totals by the number of operating days per week for the weekly results, and the weekly totals by 52 weeks. Work out the percentage of different types of waste produced.

## 2. Compare data

Compare waste data from different areas around the business and identify waste 'hot spots'.

## 3. Discuss your findings

- What are the most common types of waste?
- Is the business buying too much of something?
- Is any of the waste in general refuse bins recyclable?
- Which type of waste would make the biggest difference if recycled?
- What actions can be taken to increase recycling rates and reduce rubbish?

## 4. Develop an action plan

Use the information from your waste audit to reduce the amount of waste you generate, improve your recycling scheme and develop a waste action plan (worksheet 2).

Ask staff to make suggestions that could reduce the businesses waste.

## 5. Share findings

Share the findings of the waste audit with staff so that they are aware of the processes.



# WAYS TO ADAPT A WASTE AUDIT FOR DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

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## 1. Attach recording sheets to each bin on the evening before the audit.

Attach recording sheets to each bin on the evening before the audit. Ask everyone to tally what they throw in the bin. This avoids the need for sorting the waste by hand and is particularly suitable for smaller offices or businesses. The tallies can be used to estimate the relative proportions of materials in each area. However, this could skew results as numbers of staff will be more aware of where they are disposing of their rubbish.

## 2. Weigh the whole bin

An alternative to sorting the waste in each bin would be to weigh the entire contents of the bin. You can then repeat over a certain time period to see if the total waste has reduced. This would not give specific action points to reduce waste as it does not identify the contents of the bin.

## 3. Share findings

Present your findings to the rest of the business and staff, including the Senior Management Team.

## 4. Repeat your audit

Repeat the waste audit in 12 months' time, after you have set up or improved your businesses' waste management. This will show if your recycling system and action plan is effective. It also identifies areas which require further work.



# MORE INFORMATION

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## WHO CAN HELP?

email: [recycle@gov.je](mailto:recycle@gov.je) or [ecoactive@gov.je](mailto:ecoactive@gov.je)

## USEFUL LINKS

- details on how to reduce waste, and the waste hierarchy  
[www.gov.je/wastereduction](http://www.gov.je/wastereduction)
- How to carry out a waste audit (video)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4bJ4kB\\_w4k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4bJ4kB_w4k)
- details of recycling facilities in Jersey  
<http://www.gov.je/Environment/WasteReduceReuseRecycle/Pages/default.aspx>
- A-Z Jersey Recycling finder  
<https://www.gov.je/Environment/WasteReduceReuseRecycle/WhyRecycle/Pages/RecyclingFinder.aspx>
- glass collection and recycling  
<https://www.gov.je/Environment/WasteReduceReuseRecycle/WhyRecycle/Pages/GlassCollection.aspx>
- La Collette Household recycling facilities  
<https://www.gov.je/Environment/WasteReduceReuseRecycle/WhyRecycle/Pages/LaColletteHouseholdRecyclingFacilities.aspx>
- <http://www.wrap.org.uk/>





## WORKSHEET 1: WASTE AUDIT – MATERIALS COLLECTED

Use this sheet to record the amount of materials collected. Please indicate whether the bin is for general refuse or recycling.

Additional rows can be added, depending on the business. For example, construction waste, including concrete, wood.

Location		Example (g)				
Date of audit: __ / __ / ____		First floor office kitchen bin				
Recycling bin or general waste bin		General waste				
Paper and cardboard	Newspaper	50				
	Cardboard	50				
	Magazines	10				
	Office paper	60				
	Other paper	N/A				
Plastic	Plastic bottles (including lids)	20				
	Plastic food packaging	30				
	Film plastics	N/A				
	Other plastics	N/A				
Glass		N/A				
Metal	Cans	50				
	Metal packaging	30				
	Other metals	N/A				
Garden / green waste		N/A				
Food waste		30				
Textiles		N/A				
Other waste		140				
<b>Total</b>		<b>470</b>				



Material	Please indicate if, and how, this item is currently recycled	Annual disposal costs	Business total per day (kg)	Business total per week (kg)	Business total per year (kg)	Percentage (%) of total waste
Paper and cardboard						
Plastic						
Glass						
Metal						
Garden / green waste						
Food waste						
Textiles						

*\*Please note the following items shouldn't be put in the general rubbish: toner cartridges, batteries, metals, glass, and electrical goods*



## WORKSHEET 2: WASTE AUDIT – ACTION PLAN

Waste item	Action – identify actions to reduce / reuse or increase recycling of the material						
	Reduce	Reuse	Recycle	Next steps	By when	Who	Review date

