



The Waste Minimisation Act

Information for the Waste Industry

The Waste Minimisation Act (2008) provides a new legislative framework with new tools and responsibilities for solid waste management in New Zealand. This guide provides an overview of your responsibilities under the Act, with quick hyperlink references to the legislation and other useful information.

Responsibilities under the Act

Product stewardship

The Waste Minimisation Act provides a framework for **product stewardship** to reduce waste from products. The Minister for the Environment may declare some products to be **'priority products'** and a product stewardship scheme **will be required** for that product.

The Minister may set **guidelines** for the product stewardship scheme for a priority product that could affect waste industry organisations. For example, the Minister may set:

- expected waste minimisation, treatment or disposal objectives for the product and the timeframes for meeting them
- reporting and information requirements, including information to be provided to purchasers, users and handlers of the product to which a scheme relates.

The content of these guidelines will depend on the design of the particular product stewardship scheme. You may be required to meet these guidelines when providing services to organisations that are part of a priority product stewardship scheme.

The Minister may also recommend **regulations in relation to products, materials and waste** that could affect waste industry organisations. For example, the Minister may set quality standards that must be met when reusing, recycling or recovering a product or material. The Ministry for the Environment will consult widely before any such regulations are made.

Waste disposal levy

To generate revenue to help communities and businesses address waste issues, the Act puts a **levy** on waste disposed of at landfill. Landfill operators will have to pay the levy based on the weight of material disposed at landfill.

We anticipate the cost of waste disposal at municipal landfills to go up as operators pass on the cost of the levy. You may want to factor this increase into your charges for services that involve eventual landfill disposal.

Approximately half of the levy money will be allocated to territorial authorities to spend on implementing their waste management and minimisation plans. The remaining levy money (minus administration costs) will be allocated, through a fund, to waste minimisation projects (the Waste Minimisation Fund).

Records and auditing

Under the Act you could be asked to provide **records and information** to help the Ministry for the Environment monitor waste in New Zealand. The Ministry will consult widely before such regulations are made.

What else can I do?

- **Have your say.** Implementing the Waste Minimisation Act requires the Ministry for the Environment to seek public opinion on a number of matters. Check the **Ministry website** to find out about our latest consultation plans and how you can contribute.
- **Support accredited product stewardship schemes.** You can do this by providing services to organisations that are part of a **government accredited product stewardship scheme**, to help establish and support successful collection, storage, transport or processing systems.

- **Find out about the Waste Minimisation Fund.** You could be eligible to apply for the Waste Minimisation Fund. Keep an eye on the Ministry website and *re:source* newsletter for future updates. Start to think about potential projects that will achieve waste minimisation.
- **Inform your local territorial authority** if you are operating a waste collection, recycling, recovery, treatment or disposal service. When territorial authorities review their waste management and minimisation plans, they must make a **waste assessment**. This assessment must contain a description of all the collection, recycling, recovery, treatment and disposal services provided within the district (whether by the territorial authority or otherwise).
- **Review your operation's record keeping process** and be sure all relevant staff are trained to use it properly. Also, now is a good time to reassess how incoming waste information is recorded, catalogued and filed.

Key dates

- **Public consultation** on a number of Waste Act issues begins in **March 2009**.
- From **1 July 2009** operators of waste disposal facilities will be required to pay a **levy of \$10 per tonne** on waste disposed of at their facility.

More information

- **re:source newsletter** is our bi-monthly e-newsletter, designed to keep stakeholders up-to-date with the latest developments in sustainable business, waste minimisation, and progress being made with the implementation of the new Waste Minimisation Act.
- The Waste Minimisation Act – **Questions and Answers**.
- The Ministry for the Environment works on a range of waste issues. **This page** is your first stop for information on the Ministry's waste work programmes.
- **Sources of funding of projects and participation.**
The Ministry for the Environment manages a number of funds. This page is your first stop for information on the Ministry's funds, who is eligible, and how to apply.

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