

Contamination – Will we ever win?



Recycling Contamination

Occurs when the wrong items, or the right items prepared the wrong way, are placed in curbside recycling bins

#RecycleRightNJ



Why do residents put the wrong things in their recycling bin?

- Deliberate v Non- Deliberate
- Lazy or Confused
- Some may have moved from different area which recycles different things
- Sometimes they are not sure or don't know despite leaflets, advertising and access to websites and social media
- Some just lazy cannot be bothered
- Some have more important priorities

What have we done so far

- We send leaflets
- We hold roadshows
- We put stickers on bins
- We make videos
- We send lists and lists with pictures
- We have panels on side of lorries
- We remind frequently

What else can we do?

Whilst recycling has increased in most cases and well done Wales for your recycling rates, WRAP research shows that 80% (4 in 5) UK households put things that are not collected locally in their bin especially plastic film and wrapping, toothpaste tubes and cooking glassware.

WRAP's feedback is that the information provided still isn't clear enough to 44% of their respondents.

In some areas contamination has increased from 4% to over 25%, more than half a million tonnes of household recycling was rejected in 2019/20, this equates to £48 million.

Wrong Thing Wrong Bin!



DO NOT put Refuse Sacks / Bags next to your blue bin



DO NOT put Refuse Sacks / Bags inside your blue bin

STOP & THINK
ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE LOOSE NOT IN BAGS



Your blue bin will not be emptied if any refuse sacks / bags are found inside or placed next to your blue bin

We were unable to empty your green or brown bin because it contained:

	PLASTIC BAGS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	POLYSTYRENE	<input type="checkbox"/>
	GENERAL WASTE	<input type="checkbox"/>
	NAPPIES	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>

We were unable to empty your green bin because it contained:

	FOOD WASTE	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SOIL	<input type="checkbox"/>

The material should be removed before your next scheduled collection

For further information please call:
 Armagh 028 3752 0626
 Banbridge 028 4666 0604
 Craigavon 028 3833 9021

Sorry!

We were unable to empty your bin today because it contained the wrong materials.

Please see details overleaf.

Download the Bin-Ovation app to find out what materials you can put in your bin

Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council



Main Contaminants

- Nappies
- Food Waste
- Dirty food/drink containers
- Plastic bags/sacks
- General waste
- Polystyrene
- Textile
- Wood
- Hard plastics

Are we doing enough and how do we reduce contamination?

UK-wide effective recycling is associated with the following scheme characteristics:

- A restricted/limited capacity for general rubbish
- A higher number of materials collected for recycling
- A food waste recycling service
- A “multi-stream” recycling scheme where residents sort recycling into different containers
- A service that collects small waste electricals and textiles.
- The best performing households live in Welsh “Collections Blueprint” areas that provide a clear and consistent recycling service.

Kerbside Sort v Co-mingled?

Is it time to change? Funding? One council paying £208,000 a month due to contamination last year



Why now?

Constricting markets and legislation has resulted in tighter controls at MRFs

Less “recycling” staff to encourage and educate

More rejected loads so increase in collection and disposal costs

The change to definition – output from sorting facility rather than input – impact on 2025 targets

Other Actions

Several councils are reminding residents about putting the wrong thing in the wrong bin

Some are using technology to generate reminder letters after tagging contaminated bins, some offer to empty for a charge, most won't empty unless wrong items removed.

Some are even threatening to take bin away

Enforcement?

Advise, Support, not Punish

Recommendations and lessons from others

- WRAP recommends using Recycle Now assets, promote Britain Recycle/Does and Recycle Week - these apparently work with 18-34s, urbanites, and those disposing incorrectly.
- Provide clear information what can and can't be recycled locally
- Using Recycling Locator so people know where to recycle what
- Councils should work towards collecting a common set of dry recyclables and food waste.

What next?

- UK Government make manufacturers of non-recyclable packaging pay for extra sorting and disposal.
- It is considering a surcharge on single use plastic.
- It is consulting on extended producer responsibility
- It is consulting in consistency in recycling
- It is consulting again on the deposit return scheme and hope to implement in 2024! It's 2 years since I completed last consultation and 11 years since they announced their waste review
- Fines?
- More sharing of best practice which I am sure APSE can help with

Thank you

Any questions or suggestions?

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