

REUSE OF MATERIAL

Updated October 2024

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.



Introduction

This guidance explains reuse of materials and when waste legislation does not apply.

What is “reuse”?

Reuse means ‘any operation by which products or components **that are not waste**, are used again for the same purpose for which they were conceived’ (Waste Framework Directive 2008).

What is covered by reuse?

Materials which are reused for their original purpose can be considered to be ‘reused’. Waste items can also be ‘prepared for reuse’, prior to being used for their original purpose, as a non-waste.

What is not covered by reuse?

If an item is being used for a different purpose, this is recycling and cannot be defined as reuse.

Direct reuse

Direct transfer of ownership from one user to another and there is certainty that the item will be reused for its original purpose.

Examples of direct reuse where there is no change of ownership - hire, lease, reuse systems e.g. equipment and machinery, clothes, tools, cars, office equipment, carpet mats, gas bottles, vegetable crates, reusable transit packaging, refillable containers, pallets.

Examples of direct reuse where there is a change of ownership - physical exchange from one individual or business to another, classified adverts, online exchange and physical exchange sites which all result in the item being reused, e.g. equipment and machinery, clothes, tools, cars, office equipment, carpets, vegetable crates, reusable transit packaging, refillable containers, pallets.

Indirect reuse

Ownership transfers to a third party, who prior to accepting the goods checks that the item can be reused for its original purpose, before it then passes onto a new owner.

Examples of indirect reuse with appropriate checking - second hand shops, pawnbrokers, charity shops, remanufacturers, trade ins, returns to suppliers of unused items, third sector organisations taking items from reuse containers at Household Waste Recycling Centres and salvage yards, who all check the items to determine that they can be reused prior to accepting them.

Examples of indirect reuse without appropriate checking - bulk donations to charities that have not been checked prior to their acceptance, indiscriminate house or office clearances where there is no checking of the items cleared from the property etc, any acceptance of used items without them being checked.

N.B. If items are not checked prior to or at the point of transfer to determine certainty of reuse, the items will be deemed to be waste.

Preparing items for reuse

If an item is waste but, following checking, assessment, cleaning, repairing and preparation for reuse, it is fit to be used for its original purpose, the item will no longer be considered waste.

Examples of preparation for reuse for waste to return to being non-waste - activities salvaging parts that have been checked and can be reused for their original purpose e.g. parts salvaged from End-of-Life vehicles. Goods/items sorted from bulk loads that, have been checked and can be reused for their original purpose.

Safe management of items for reuse

All items destined for reuse must be adequately protected during transit and storage - any failure to do so will reduce the certainty that the items can be reused and will result in their classification as a waste.

Legal Definitions (provided in the European Waste Framework Directive 2008)

Reuse means any operation by which products or components that are not waste are used again for the same purpose for which they were conceived.

Preparation for reuse means checking, cleaning, or repairing recovery operations, by which products or components of products that have become waste are prepared so that they can be reused without any other pre-processing.

Recycling means any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes. It includes the reprocessing of organic material but, does not include energy recovery and the reprocessing into materials that are to be used as fuels or for backfilling operations.

Waste means any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard.



Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Gníomhaireacht Comhshaoil Thuaisceart Éireann
Norlin Airlan Environment Agency

Enquiries should be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Regulation Unit
17 Antrim Road
Tonagh
Lisburn
County Antrim
BT28 3AL

Tel: 02890 569358

Email: wru.queries@daera-ni.gov.uk

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.



An Agency within the Department of
Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Gníomhaireacht de chuid na Roinne
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

An Agency w/in the Department o
Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard