



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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## BACKGROUND:

### Q1. What is Pay by Weight?

Waste companies currently charge for collecting waste in different ways including flat fee, pay per lift and **Pay by Weight**.

On July 1st 2016 the charging arrangements for household waste will change to a new system called **Pay by Weight**. Regardless of how you pay now, from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 all households across Ireland availing of a kerbside collection will be charged on a **Pay by Weight** basis for each of the different types of waste presented for collection at the kerbside i.e. recycling, organic and general waste bins. Pay by Weight does not apply to separately collected glass.

Similarly Pay by Weight charges will apply to householders using pay to use (PTUs) compactors.

### Q2. Why is Pay by Weight being introduced?

Studies conducted in Europe as well as by Ireland's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have concluded that Pay by Weight on a per kg basis is the most effective pay by use (PBU) system in terms of waste prevention, waste recycling and diversion of waste from landfill.

Under flat rate or pay by lift charge, there are less incentives to reduce or to segregate waste. The application of Pay by Weight to all three types of household waste (recycling, organic and general waste):

- Ensures compliance with the polluter pays principle;
- Will stimulate the prevention of all three types of waste;
- Will ensure a more environmentally sustainable approach to the management of waste in Ireland;
- Should provide better value for households who segregate better.

Pay by Weight is also a key component of Ireland's progressive waste policy and:

- Will help Ireland achieve greater levels of waste prevention and recycling.
- Will help Ireland achieve current and future EU waste targets in relation to recycling rates and the diversion of recyclable and biodegradable waste from landfill. This is very important for Ireland's economy and our international reputation.
- May result in job creation as a result of the processing of increasing quantities of recycling and organic waste.

### Q3. When is Pay by Weight being introduced?

The Pay by Weight system, will come into effect nationally from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, and all other charging mechanisms (i.e. flat-fee / pay per lift) will cease from this date.



#### **Q4. Will Pay by Weight affect me?**

If you are currently charged on a flat-fee, pay per lift, or banded weighing system these changes will affect you.

From July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 your kerbside collector must charge on a Pay by Weight basis, for all waste types (excluding segregated glass) and may have a service charge. The general waste will be more expensive than the recycling or organic wastes.

#### **Q5. What impact will Pay by Weight have on me?**

You can control your waste costs by placing less waste in each bin, so there is a great incentive to prevent waste. Not only will this benefit you, it is also good for the environment. In areas where Pay by Weight is already operating, householders have reduced their waste and have become more efficient in segregating their generated waste.

#### **Q6. How effective is Pay by Weight?**

A recent EPA study of householders participating in a Pay by Weight charging system found that 91% of respondents felt that Pay by Weight charging encouraged them to recycle more, whilst 80% of the same households felt that the charges encouraged them to reduce waste.

If you put the waste in the right bin you are on the right track for cheaper bin charges and a better environment.

#### **Q7. What should I do next?**

Your collector is obliged to inform you of changes to their charging mechanism in accordance with their "Customer Charter" therefore your current household waste collector should be in contact with you in early June 2016 informing you of their pay by weight charging mechanism and the associated cost for each of the waste types they collect (excluding segregated glass collection).

Prices may vary depending on your collector and the area where you live. To find out what charges apply to you contact the waste collector(s) operating in your area.

If there is more than one waste collector in your area, contact a number of these to ensure you get value for money. If you get a better quote, consider changing or ask your current provider to match the rate.

**"ONLY YOUR WASTE COLLECTOR KNOWS YOUR CHARGE"**

#### **Q8. I currently live in an apartment? Will the new legislation apply to me?**

Under the Waste Management Act 1996, waste produced by apartment occupants is considered household waste and the new household waste collection regulations will apply to apartments. Therefore the management company operating your apartment block will be charged on a pay by weight basis. How they calculate the waste charge per apartment will be a matter for the management company. You should contact the management company or landlord to discuss the issue further.



## Q9. Will the new legislation apply to waste generated by commercial premises?

The Pay by Weight system being introduced on the July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 will only apply to household waste. The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government are intending to develop proposals to introduce Pay by Weight system for commercial waste later this year. However, it is open to an operator to charge Pay by Weight for commercial waste, if they wish.

### CHARGE:

#### Q10. Is this a new charge?

**No** Householders already pay for waste collection and no new charge is being introduced. The arrangements for charging for the collection service are changing. From the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 all household waste collectors will be required to charge on a per kg basis for all three bins (recycling, organic and general waste), in addition to this per kg charge a fixed service charge may also be applied.

Your household collector will be contacting you shortly to communicate their new charging mechanism.

#### Q11. Is this just another tax on households?

**No.** It is important to note that no new waste collection charges are being introduced, just new charging arrangements in line with the "polluter pays principle". These new charging arrangements do not directly provide an additional revenue source to the State.

Householders already pay for waste collection. Pay by Weight is a new method of calculating the charge for waste collection which has the potential to lead to cost savings for households who segregate better.

#### Q12. Is this another burden on hard pressed consumers?

**No.** There is no new charge being levied on householders, who already pay for waste collection. Pay by Weight (per kg) is a new method of calculating the charge for waste collection which has the potential to lead to cost savings for households who segregate better.

### COST:

#### Q13. How will Pay by Weight charge be calculated?

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 there will in general be two elements to how waste charges will be calculated.

- Typically householders will pay a fixed service charge to the waste collector for the provision and collection of all bins from the kerbside.
- Weight charges will then apply to the amount of each waste type presented and this charge will be levied on a per kg basis.



## **“ONLY YOUR WASTE COLLECTOR KNOWS YOUR CHARGE”**

### **Q14. How much will it Cost?**

The cost will vary per household depending on how much waste the household produces and the fees charged by your local collector. It is important to note that no new fee or charge is being introduced, but rather a changed charging system.

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 waste contractors will apply a charge based on the weight of the waste collected. There will typically be two elements to the charges:

- A fixed service charge for the provision and collection of all bins from the kerbside.
- Weight charges will then apply to the amount of each waste type presented and this charge will be levied on a per kg basis.

To protect the environment general waste will cost more than recycling & organic waste. These differential charges also incentivise more segregation.

Your current household waste collector should be in contact with you in early June 2016 informing you of their pay by weight charging mechanism and the associated cost for each of the waste types they collect (excluding segregated glass collection).

## **“ONLY YOUR WASTE COLLECTOR KNOWS YOUR CHARGE”**

### **Q15. What are the minimum fees?**

In 2016 the Department of Environment Community & Local Government published legislation setting out the minimum fees to be charged per kg to collect recycling, organic and general waste. The minimum fees were established through an independent study commissioned by the Minister and have been prescribed based on the approximate cost of managing the waste from the point after it is first deposited at an authorised facility to its final treatment.

### **Q16. Why set a minimum charge at all?**

The minimum charge will ensure that the collector at least covers the cost of sorting, bulking, onward transport and final treatment of the waste from the first unloading point. It will also ensure that the ‘polluter pays’ principle applies to the householder, who in turn will be incentivised to reduce and segregate waste.

### **Q17. Does a minimum charge prevent competition in the market place from July 2016?**

**No.** Collectors will compete on elements of the charge i.e. the fixed service charge and the weight based per kg charge.

### **Q18. Why Do I have to Pay a Fixed Service Charge?**

The fixed service charge is intended to cover vehicles, weighing systems, service crew staff, back office staff, technology and transport costs associated with the collection from the kerbside.



This fixed service charge ensures that a collection truck passes your home on a regular basis to check if you have bins left out for collection.

### **Q19. How much will the Fixed Service Charge be?**

Collectors will set the fixed service charge element. The fixed service charge may vary depending on whether you are living in an urban or rural area.

### **Q20. Will I reduce the service charge if I don't use the Organic Bin and start home composting?**

**No.**

The service fee for collecting the bins (not the per kg fee) in an area subject to the European Union (Household Food Waste and Bio-waste) Regulations 2015, cannot be increased on the basis that a person uses a brown bin, or reduced on the basis a person chooses not to use a brown bin.

### **Q21. Can you confirm that the charges will be the minimum charges as set out in the legislation.**

**No.** These are the minimum processing charges set out in the legislation for the general waste bin, organic bin and recycling bin. (The minimum charge will ensure that the collector at least covers the cost of sorting, bulking, onward transport and final treatment of the waste from the first unloading point).

Collectors charges are likely to be significantly in excess of the minimum charges quoted. The collector may also have a fixed service charge to cover the costs of providing the service at the kerbside.

### **Q22. Can households achieve cost savings under the new system?**

**Yes.**

Pay by Weight (per kg) gives householders more control over their waste charges. Those that prevent waste and segregate better will pay less. Even large families that engage in home composting and make a good effort at waste prevention and recycling may reduce their bills. If a householder does not segregate and recycle their waste they can expect to pay more.

### **Q23. My recycling bin is currently collected for free – why do I now have to pay to have it collected?**

There is a cost associated with collecting the recycling bin, even though this cost may not have been visible as a separate charge. Where a collector offered the recycling bin at a zero charge the recycling charge was not visible on your bill, but was included in the overall charge.

Under the new system customers bills will be transparent and will provide clear sight of how the weight of waste they generate converts to a per kg charge.





## PRESENTATION OF WASTE AT KERBSIDE:

### Q24. Why are different wastes types going into the same truck?

Some of the waste collection companies now have multi-compartment trucks which allow them to collect different types of waste simultaneously (depending on the number of compartments within the truck)

Where a collector collects different types of household kerbside waste simultaneously the existence of this facility must be clearly displayed on the vehicle.

### Q25. Will I still be able to present my household waste for collection in bags?

**No**, unless you are living in an area specifically designated by your local authority.

Bags are being phased out. This means that other than in very limited circumstances and in areas specifically designated by your local authority as having a need for continued bag collection services (due to accessibility issues etc), household kerbside waste cannot be collected in bags after July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. Please contact your local authority for more information.

## WEIGHING BINS

### Q26. How does the truck weigh the bin?

The collector inserts a microchip in each bin and has your account number matched to the chip. When your bin is emptied an onboard dynamic weighing system recognises the chip and assigns the weight to your account. The bin gets weighed both on the way up and on the way down and your net weight (i.e. the weight of your waste) is the difference between these two weights.

### Q27. How do I know the weight of my waste?

Since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 waste collectors have been required to weigh a bin each time it is collected and to make that information available to the customer at least monthly. Your collector should be reporting in writing or make available through electronic means, the weights of all bins collected from your house. Having access to weights of each waste category you produced will allow you to take steps to control the amount you produce.

### Q28. How do I know the weights provided by my collector are accurate?

The weighing systems used by the household waste collectors must be certified to EU standards and verified at least once per year in accordance with the Metrology Act 1996



## **NON-KERBSIDE HOUSEHOLD COLLECTION SERVICES (i.e PTUs & CAS)**

### **Q29. I currently use a pay to use (PTUs) compactor for disposal of my domestic waste – will I be affected by Pay by Weight?**

**Yes** - Pay by Weight charges, for all waste types i.e. general, recycling and organic will apply to users of pay to use compactors (PTUs) from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 (Regulations are due shortly).

From 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2016, PTU operators must:

- charge on a Pay by Weight basis; and
- verify to your local authority which households are using their service.

The weight based charge (i.e. per kg element) for general, recycling and organic household kerbside waste must be charged on a per kg basis.

Therefore if you use a PTU after the July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 you will be required to provide your contact details and you must be provided with a receipt indicating the weight for each waste type presented at the PTU.

### **Q30. I currently use a civic amenity site (CAS) for disposal of my domestic waste – will I be affected by Pay by Weight?**

Regulations are due to be issued shortly requiring civic amenity sites (CAS) to charge on a Pay by Weight basis for general household waste accepted directly from householders.

There will be no obligation on CAS operators to charge on a per kg basis for recycling or organic wastes.

## **CUSTOMER CHARTER:**

### **Q31. What is the “Customer Charter”?**

A “Customer Charter” is a statement describing the level of service a customer can expect from their household waste collector.

Every household waste collector must have a documented “Customer Charter”, a copy of which is available on the collector’s website (where they have one). Copies of all customer charters are available on the National Waste Collection Permit Office website ([www.nwcpo.ie](http://www.nwcpo.ie)) under the relevant collectors details i.e. use the “permit search” facility to find the relevant collector.

### **Q32. What details must be included in the “Customer Charter”**

The “Customer Charter” must include details of the following:

- Customer service standards
- Communication with customers
- Householder Responsibilities



- Pricing, charging mechanism and access to account information
- Complaints procedure/dispute resolution
- Education and raising awareness
- Termination of service / refunds / changing service providers
- Changing equipment and ownership of bins

## POSSIBLE ISSUES ARISING:

### Q33. At what times can my waste bins be collected?

From the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 waste collectors will only be allowed to collect household kerbside waste:

- Between the hours of 6am and 10pm in areas where a 60 km per hour or lower speed limit applies, unless otherwise agreed with your local authority
- At any time, in areas where an 80 km per hour or higher speed limit applies,

### Q34. How do I prevent other people from using my bin?

If you are aware of who is placing the waste in your bin advise them to stop doing so. If this is unsuccessful report the complaint to your local authority.

You could also consider the installation of a gravity lock on your bin. Gravity locks are available which only let the bin lid open if you have a key, or when the bin is turned upside-down as in when it is being emptied.

You should also ensure your bins are brought in as soon as possible after been emptied.

### Q35. A member of my family has medical issues resulting in large volumes of incontinent wear and our general waste bin is very heavy –will there be any financial assistance?

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government has met with groups who represent persons with special needs to discuss and explore the impact of pay by weight charging on households with special needs. The Department has also been in consultation with the HSE and the waste management industry to discuss the issue and to try to find a workable and fair solution to this important matter and a number of possible solutions are being explored as a matter of urgency.

### Q36. What happens if the householder places general waste in the recycling or organic bin in order to avail of the cheaper per kg charge?

The “Customer Charter” must detail the collector’s procedure for dealing with contamination of a bin through waste being deposited in the incorrect bin.

In general if you contaminate your recycling bin or your organic bin you will end up having to present these bins again as general waste and then you will pay a higher per kg charge.



**Q37. Will the upcoming change to a Pay by Weight household waste collection system lead to increased illegal dumping?**

There is no indication from areas where Pay by Weight has already been implemented that there was increased evidence of dumping/fly-tipping. The environmental enforcement officers of your local authority are experienced in dealing with the issue of illegally dumped waste and will take all necessary measures to identify any culprit and take appropriate legal action.

## TIPS & TRICKS TO PREVENT & REDUCE WASTE:

Reduce the Weight...

# KNOW YOUR WASTE CONTROL YOUR COSTS

*Tips & Tricks!*



To help lower your bills, prevent waste and conserve natural resources please use these helpful tips in your home.

### Your waste collection service



*Shop around!*

Contact a number of waste collectors to ensure you are using the one with the lowest rates. If you get a better quote, change or ask your current provider to match the rate.

*Get your Food Bin!*

If you are in a town with a population greater than 500 people, your collector is obliged to provide you with a food waste bin.

**x 500 =** 

### Waste Prevention

Before putting "waste" in any bin

*Upcycle it*

Before you bin it, could it be used for something else?



*Fix it*

Before you bin it, can you repair it?



 <p><b>Quality</b> Quality goods last longer</p>	 <p><b>Flog it</b> www.donada.ie www.abay.com www.gumtree.ie</p>	 <p><b>Donate it</b> Give reusable items to family &amp; friends. You can also donate them to charity or place them on www.freefragsireland.ie</p>
<p>Visit the only Free Banks in the country!</p>  <p>Give old clothes a good home and recycle your glass at your nearest bring bank. It's FREE!</p>		
<p><b>Blue box it</b> Keep an eye out for the blue battery box in all shops selling batteries.</p> 	<p><b>Don't waste it!</b></p> <p>Prevent food waste by careful planning and cooking the correct amounts for you and your family. More info at <a href="http://www.stopfoodwaste.ie">www.stopfoodwaste.ie</a></p> 	

## How to lighten your **General Waste Bin**

Before you bin anything check to see if its compostable or recyclable. Your waste collector can provide a current list of acceptable items for each waste stream.

Remove any water or liquid from the item so it is as light as possible

Keep glass out and bring it to your bottle bank

Building rubble e.g. tiles, concrete or plasterboard, timber or metal may be accepted for a small charge at your local Civic Amenity Site



## How to lighten your Recycling Bin



The infographic features a central illustration of a person in a green silhouette pushing a green shopping cart. The cart is overflowing with various items, including a clock, a coffee cup, a detergent bottle, and a laptop. A sign on the cart reads "50% MORE BOX". Surrounding the illustration are several circular callouts with text and icons, connected to the central scene by dashed lines. The background is a light green color.

- To reduce weight ensure that used food containers are clean and dry**
- Look for goods with less packaging**
- Choose goods in refillable packaging such as detergents & coffee**
- Follow the list of recyclable materials accepted by your waste collection company (they will provide you with a list)**
- Leaving packaging in the shop if allowed, e.g. shoe boxes.**
- Invest in a refillable water bottle, coffee cup & lunch box to reduce waste when you are on the move**
- Look out for compostable & recycling symbols on packaging**
- Place a NO JUNK MAIL sticker on your letter box**



## How to lighten your Food Waste Bin

You could compost the uncooked vegetable waste instead of placing it in the food waste brown bin

Keep all dairy products in the fridge to preserve them as long as possible.

When shopping try to make a list of what you need and stick to it!

Make sure fruit and veg is stored correctly so you get time to eat it.

Check the use-by date before purchasing to ensure you will have time to eat it before it goes out of date.

\*Use up leftovers to make another recipe, or as tomorrow's lunch!



\* Note: Food safety guidance should be followed when storing and preparing food



You can also compost grass cuttings and plant waste at home. For more go to [www.stopfoodwaste.ie](http://www.stopfoodwaste.ie) [www.browmbin.ie](http://www.browmbin.ie)

Use your freezer - its your ally in preventing food waste

