

Charges for waste disposal – Frequently Asked Questions

Charges and payment

Which waste will I be charged for?

We charge for disposal of inert waste, plasterboard, tyres and asbestos.

What is inert waste?

Inert waste is waste that is neither chemically nor biologically reactive, and will not decompose. This includes, but is not limited to breeze blocks, bricks, ceramics, ceramic sanitary ware (e.g. sinks, toilets, cisterns, bidets, shower trays, etc.), concrete, flagstones, gravel, hard-core, pottery, rubble, slates, soil, stones, tarmac, tiles, and turf.

Where can I take my waste?

All eight of our household waste recycling sites accept tyres and inert waste. All sites accept plasterboard, with the exception of Ellar Ghyll in Otley. You can find out more about our sites on the [Recycling Sites](#) page of our website.

Where can I take asbestos?

Asbestos can only be taken to our Kirkstall Road site. All deliveries must be pre-booked 24 hours in advance by calling 0113 37 83030. You can find out more about asbestos disposal by [reading this leaflet](#) on our website.

How do I pay for the waste I want to dispose of?

Upon arriving at site, park your vehicle without unloading the waste material, approach a member of staff and explain that you have some chargeable waste to dispose of. They will assess the quantity of waste and provide you with a price. You can then pay by credit or debit card, or contactless device using a secure card payment machine. All charges must be paid in full prior to disposing of the waste. Please note we do not accept cash, cheques or postal orders.

How much will I be charged?

A full pricing structure is available on our website on the [Recycling Sites](#) page, and these details are also displayed at the sites.

How do you measure the waste?

Inert waste is assessed by the amount of 25 litre bags or equivalent loose or boxed content. Plasterboard is charged either by sheet, by 25 litre bag or by equivalent loose or boxed content. Tyres are charged per tyre.

Do I have to pay even if I just have a small amount?

Yes, charges apply for all quantities. Quantities below a 25 litre bag or equivalent will be charged for the full bag, i.e. half a 25 litre bag or equivalent will be charged at the cost for one full bag.

Can I pay in advance?

No, as the quantity of waste needs to be assessed at the site and this will dictate the price.

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How have you worked out the costs?

The prices we have set are based only on covering the costs we incur for handling, transporting and disposing of these wastes. We have developed our scheme with reference to similar schemes run by neighbouring authorities and have taken into account the prices we currently charge for similar waste from businesses. We also sought advice from Trading Standards when we composed our pricing groups and structure. All our site staff are trained to accurately assess quantities of chargeable waste.

What if I don't agree with the price you quote or your assessment of my waste?

You are not obliged to use our sites to dispose of your waste. If you do not want to pay, you may arrange disposal of the materials via alternative means, for example skip hire. However, we believe our prices are fair and reasonable, and that using a household waste recycling site is the most convenient way for residents to dispose of these wastes.

What if I cannot pay or do not want to?

If you cannot pay or have not brought your credit or debit card with you, you are able to phone a family member or friend from the site and they can make the payment for you over the phone. You will not be allowed to dispose of any chargeable materials unless you can pay. If you do not want to pay, you must make your own alternative arrangements for disposal.

Transportation and disposal

How do I need to bring my waste material?

Please bring your material in appropriately strong bags or containers where possible so that the quantity can be assessed easily. You must separate chargeable and non-chargeable waste to enable our trained site staff to assess quantity and charges. If you do not separate your waste then you could be charged for the whole load according to the relevant price for inert or plasterboard waste.

Will you collect my waste from my property?

No. The council's unwanted items collection service does not collect these construction-type wastes.

If I take my waste to the Kirkstall or East Leeds sites will I need to go over the weighbridge?

No, all waste from residents will be paid for using the same system as the other six sites. The waste transfer stations at the Kirkstall and East Leeds sites are for trade waste only.

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Existing permit schemes

What kind of permit do I need?

Since 2015, all household waste recycling site users have been required to display a Leeds Resident Permit in their vehicle if bringing their waste to our sites in a car, 4x4 without pick-up, estate car or people carrier. If you are transporting your waste in a van not exceeding 3 tonnes gross vehicle weight, a car with a trailer, a 4x4 with pick-up, minibus or camper van, you will need a Commercial, Large Vehicle and Trailer Permit.

What is a Leeds Resident Permit?

The Leeds Resident Permit was sent to all households with the 2015/16 Council Tax bill. It is a free car window sticker which helps our site staff identify Leeds residents. There is no expiry date on these permits, so they were not included with subsequent Council Tax bills. They are required for all cars, 4x4s without pick-up, estate cars and people carriers.

How do I get a Leeds Resident Permit?

You can email leeds.waste@leeds.gov.uk to request one, including your name and address. A permit will be sent to you in the post.

Can I show anything else to prove that I am a Leeds resident?

No, only your Leeds Resident Permit will be accepted as proof.

What is a Commercial, Large Vehicle and Trailer Permit?

Commercial, Large Vehicle and Trailer Permits are for any residents who choose to transport their waste in vans not exceeding 3 tonnes GVW, cars with trailers, 4x4s with pick-up, minibuses or camper vans.

How do I get a Commercial, Large Vehicle and Trailer Permit?

To receive a set of 12 permits, you need to complete an application form. Further details of the application process are available on the [Permit Scheme](#) page of our website.

Background information

Why have you introduced the charges?

Due to financial pressures, Leeds City Council is no longer able to cover the full cost of disposal of certain types of waste which are not considered to be regular household waste. Construction and other similar wastes such as those being charged for are not classified as 'household waste', and the council is not required to accept and deal with them free of charge.

The proposal to charge for these wastes was included in the council's budget setting proposals for 2017/18, and was the subject of public consultation during 2017. Reductions in the Government's funding for local authorities means the council has to make difficult decisions and continually review the services we provide. The introduction of this charge will enable us to maintain other vital council services without making any further cutbacks. Many other councils operate similar charging schemes, including a number of our neighbouring authorities.

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What happens to this waste?

Rubble, hardcore, soil and ceramics are used for roads and surface cover on landfill sites. Plasterboard is used as a soil conditioner and blended with organic waste in the manufacture of compost. Tyres are shredded and sent abroad as fuel for cement kilns and are also utilised in the creation of landfill schemes.

What are you doing with the money you are making?

The council will not make any profit from the charges, and the prices are based only on covering the costs we incur for handling, transporting and disposing of these wastes. A combination of reduced funding and cost pressures means that the council will need to deliver more than £81m of savings by March 2018, and further savings the following year. Charging for plasterboard, tyres and inert waste is one part of this wider strategy for reducing our costs. This will enable us to maintain other vital services without making further cutbacks.

Does everyone have to pay?

Yes, there are no concessions available or exceptions.

Are you legally allowed to charge me?

Yes, we are allowed to charge for these types of waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as they are not classed as household waste.

I am carrying out D.I.Y. work myself, why isn't this classed as household waste?

We are legally allowed to charge for this type of waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Although the waste has been produced and transported to site by a householder, it is still classified under the regulations as being commercial/industrial waste and not household waste. 'Household waste' does not include wastes that consist of the very fabric (e.g. the bricks and mortar) of a household.

Can I appeal against the charge?

No, as the decision to charge for the service and policy change was democratically made we cannot accept any complaints or appeals. We will only accept formal complaints if the service has failed to implement the agreed policy correctly.

What other options did you consider?

One option we considered was to stop accepting this kind of waste entirely, since it is not household waste and we are therefore not obliged to accept it at the household waste recycling sites. Other councils have introduced this policy. However we decided against this as it would have reduced choice and convenience for our residents. We also considered only accepting this type of waste at our Kirkstall and East Leeds sites where there is a facility for the waste to be weighed. However, this would also have restricted choice for residents.

What will you do if I leave my waste outside the gate and refuse to pay?

This is illegal, as it is a form of [fly tipping](#). Your details will be passed on to the appropriate department of the council who deal with these incidents, and may take enforcement action.

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What if I put the waste in my bin or fly tip?

We do not allow non-household waste to be placed into residents' bins. This causes contamination of the waste, can make the bins too heavy to be safely emptied, increases waste disposal costs and reduces recycling. Any incidents of fly tipping will lead to enforcement action.

What is fly tipping and what are the consequences?

[Fly tipping](#) is where people illegally dump waste onto the highways, footpaths or land. Fly tipping is a crime and offenders can be fined up to £50,000 or face a custodial sentence upon prosecution.

Will charging for certain types of waste lead to an increase in fly tipping?

We introduced other charging schemes in 2017 for replacement bins and large item collections, and these did not result in increases in fly tipping. Fly tipping is a serious offence and we do not believe that Leeds residents will resort to illegal activity as a result of the introduction of modest charges for these occasional wastes. Other local authorities who have introduced charging have observed either no increase in fly tipping, or only small amounts in line with national trends.