



SEPA

Paragraph 12 Small Exemption – Composting

Registration form:

[Activities exempt from waste management licensing](#)

Small composting units at business or education facilities

This is a simplified, one page exemption registration form for small scale composting at business or education facilities where individual composting units are being used, each less than 2m³ capacity.

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[Activities exempt from waste management licensing](#)

Register your composting site for an exempt activity

Normally if you manage waste you must hold a Waste Management Licence (WML) or Pollution Prevention Control (PPC) permit. However, some waste management activities are exempt from the full requirements of WMLs and PPC permits. These are called 'exempt activities'. As described in this guide, if you plan to carry out an exempt activity you must register it with SEPA and comply with the rules, which can be found by following the link opposite.

If kitchen and canteen food waste is being used, with or without meat, it needs to be composted using a containment system.

Regulations on the permitted use of compost are most easily understood by reading the SEPA and APHA Guidance described below.

Permitted uses of your compost

For a compost made from waste to no longer be considered a waste, and to be considered a product, it needs to be made in compliance with the PAS 100 standard. However, the complexity and cost of small-scale composting is likely to be a significant barrier. If compost does not meet PAS 100 it will be regarded by SEPA as waste and subsequent use will need to be in compliance with waste regulatory controls. This includes the registration of an exemption for:

- Use on agricultural land or gardens and landscaped areas
- Use to restore or improve land which has been subject to man-made development or for
- use in specified works such as recreational facilities.

However, your compost can be used by householders on their gardens or allotments (includes community gardens/growing projects) i.e. the compost made by the community composting project can be collected, donated or sold.

If the compost contains kitchen and canteen waste with meat (or cooking oils used for meat) then the APHA guidance below needs to be followed.

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Guidance on Paragraph 12

[Paragraph 12 Exemption Technical Guidance Note](#)

APHA

Guidance on producing compost that includes animal by-products (e.g. meat, eggs etc)

[Using animal material in home, work or community compost heaps](#)

Producing compost from kitchen and canteen waste containing meat - identifying if you need APHA approval, and permitted uses

The APHA provides a scoring system in the guidance opposite, which can help you to either design a project that avoids having to be regulated by them, as well informing you how to operate legally. If you score 19 or less, your project does not need to be regulated by the APHA, and all you then need to do is register for the waste exemption above. The APHA guidance then states that this means you can use your compost off-site or sell it to other people without taking any further action. If you score 20 or more, you must contact your nearest [APHA office](#) to seek approval first. Three of the important factors involved in securing a score less than 20 are:

- Tonnage – producing less than 10 tonnes of compost gives a score of zero. More than 10 tonnes gives a score of 10.
- Accessibility of farmed animals (including such animals kept as pets) to the compost site – if there is no access the score is 0. If there is access, the score is 20.
- Access of farmed animals (including such animals kept as pets) to places where compost is used - if no access the score is 0. If there is access, the score is 15.

If you collect and move waste or arrange to have it moved as part of your project, you have to register with SEPA as a waste carrier or broker, even if you only deal with, collect and move the waste once in a while. A “Professional Collector & Transporter of Waste” is the category that will result in you having the most straightforward application and it is free of charge. A charity or a voluntary organisation is automatically considered to fall into this category. The full description of when persons or organisation can be considered a professional collector and transporter of waste applies if you are a person or organisation that collects and transports waste as a normal and regular part of your activities, where you are a:

- Charity or voluntary organisation (as already mentioned above)
- Person who only transports animal by-products (e.g. food waste including meat)
- Waste collection, disposal, or regulation authority (a public body including local authority)
- Person who only transports waste from mines and quarries or waste from agricultural premises.
- Business that regularly transports its own waste (unless it is construction and demolition waste including waste generated in the maintenance of properties by trades such as plumbers, builders, joiners, kitchen fitters, etc – these trades should register as a Carrier of Controlled Waste).

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[Waste carriers and brokers](#)

If the above does not apply to you then:

- If you transport the waste yourself you must register as a waste carrier.
- If you arrange to have it carried you must register as a waste broker

The fees for new registrations as a waste carrier and/or broker, to cover three years, are provided below, accurate as of the 1st April 2022. These fees are changed annually and readers should check the website opposite to double-check the rates:

- Carrier or broker - £231 (£77 per year)
- Combined carrier or broker £462 (£154 per year)

If you are renewing your registration for a further three years the fees are:

- Carrier or broker (renewal) - £147 (£49 per year)
- Combined carrier and broker (renewal) - £294 (£98 per year)