

Waste data – How to record and report the activity category

Fact sheet for disposal facility operators and transfer station operators

From 1 July 2024, facility operators are required to record and report the activity category of waste they receive at their facilities.

This fact sheet provides guidance on how to collect and report this information to the Ministry for the Environment.

For the seven activity categories, please refer to [appendix 1](#), or for other relevant factsheets please see [Further information](#).

Several methods are available for identifying the activity category of a given load of materials

We recommend that drivers state or self-report the activity category of materials they are depositing to the operator or in a logbook on a load-by-load basis. If the most appropriate category for the waste is unclear, operators should use their discretion in assigning one.

Another way to assign the activity category is to base it on the customer, or a job identifier, if you know the type of waste they carry in advance (ie, pre-assignment). For example, if a particular customer services only construction and demolition sites, you could assign all loads from this customer to the 'Construction and demolition' activity category automatically. If you require pre-approval for any waste entering your site, the approval stage may be an opportunity to request the activity category of that waste.

[Table 1](#) sets out best practice for determining activity categories for different facility types.

You should retain a record of how you identified the category of each load. This includes some form of evidence to confirm that no changes in activity have occurred – such as a receipt, written confirmation from the driver or customer, declaration forms and/or regular review of customers with pre-assigned activity categories. Operators must keep records relating to activity category reporting for seven years for audit purposes.

Table 1: Best practice for determining activity category based on type of facility

Facility type	Best practice
Staffed weighbridge or kiosk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Driver provides vehicle details at the weighbridge or kiosk. 2. Driver reports activity category unless they have a pre-assigned category. Staff can help drivers to determine an appropriate category. 3. If activity categories are pre-assigned, apply them to vehicle loads from a customer/job reference. If you have weighbridge software, this can be automated.
Unstaffed weighbridge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Driver uses code or swipe card to enter the facility. 2. Assign activity categories based on customer/job reference.
Unstaffed with no weighbridge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Driver enters vehicle details and date into a logbook. 2. Driver self-reports activity category unless they have a pre-assigned category. 3. If activity categories are pre-assigned, apply them to vehicle loads from a customer/job reference.

In circumstances where you do not know or have not recorded the activity category, you can estimate or infer the category in one of these ways.

- **Visual inspection of materials.** A brief look at the materials may provide an indication of the waste source. For example, plasterboard and timber would suggest construction and demolition waste.
- **Product or charge code.** Existing product or charge codes may align to some degree with activity categories.
- **Vehicle type.** Some vehicle types are more likely to carry a particular type of waste than others. For example, it might be expected that: side-loaders are carrying residential kerbside rubbish; front-end load vehicles hold mixed industrial, commercial and institutional materials; bulk haul trucks are coming from transfer stations; and cars are carrying residential drop-offs.
- **Site history.** Facilities may know the usual activity categories of waste they receive through Solid Waste Analysis Protocol composition studies or other means.
- **Expert assessment.** In the absence of site-specific information, operators may make inferences based on data available from similar facilities elsewhere or other sources of information. This is the least preferred method.

Adjusting processes to capture activity category and generate reports

Waste facility operators will need to adjust their processes to collect activity category data and generate reports. The adjustments needed will depend on the unique setup of each facility.

Facilities with weighbridges or staffed kiosks

1. Perform a stocktake of the weighbridge's capabilities and how it is currently used. This could cover technical capabilities, such as number plate recognition and data fields currently in use that you could use to fulfil reporting requirements – namely, product codes, vehicle ID and account names.
2. Identify additional data fields that you wish the weighbridge to be able to record, including activity category and any supporting information (eg, vehicle type). Operators may wish to develop a consolidated list of product codes and activity categories so that they can enter one field of data instead of two. After identifying them, you can add the new fields or update them in the weighbridge software.
3. Automate the mapping of data fields to activity category where you can do so with confidence. For example, automation would be appropriate if a vehicle registration number is always associated with the same activity source.
4. Provide the function to manually enter the activity category of vehicle loads from casual users.
5. You could set up the weighbridge software so that you can compile reports according to the reporting fields that will be required for your facility.

Facilities without weighbridges or staffed kiosks

Operators of facilities without weighbridges or staffed kiosks may need to adjust their existing process to capture activity category manually. For example, if your facility uses a logbook, you could consider adding a field for activity category reporting at the time the load is taken into the facility. Facilities will need to develop their own procedures for producing activity category reports. This could include always assigning a vehicle registration or customer with a particular activity category.

The Ministry can provide a customisable volume conversion template to help you meet record keeping and reporting requirements. The volume conversion template includes new activity categories for recording purposes. This can be requested from the Ministry by emailing levy.admin@mfe.govt.nz. Activity category tonnages are reported through the Online Waste Levy System (OWLS).

Activity category reporting will be available through OWLS. This will be an additional report alongside your Waste Return. All reported materials will need to have an activity category assigned. This means that the gross tonnage in your waste return should match the total tonnage of the activity category report. This report will be available in OWLS for the submission of your July 2024 return, due on 20 August 2024.

Further information

Fact sheets in this series

This fact sheet is part of a series of fact sheets for disposal facility operators and transfer station operators regarding their waste data and waste levy reporting obligations.

- For general information on the recent change in reporting requirements see the fact sheet *Waste data – Overview of activity category reporting*.
- For information on conversion factors and measuring waste tonnage, please refer to the fact sheet *Waste levy – Measuring waste tonnages*.

Find out more

For any questions about the new reporting requirements please email wastedataregsupport@mfe.govt.nz.

For any questions about using OWLS, please email info@wastelevy.govt.nz.

Or for general information visit the webpage [Waste disposal levy information and reporting requirements for site operators](#).

Appendix 1: Activity categories for waste disposal facility operators

Activity category	Description	Examples
Construction and demolition	Waste derived from the construction or demolition of buildings, structures, and infrastructure. This includes residential, industrial, and commercial structures, pipelines (above-ground and underground assets), roading, land development (including site clearance for building or subdivision construction), and regular slips or other debris not associated with a major natural hazard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste from individual or multiple building construction sites Waste from infrastructure projects Waste from the demolition of buildings Soil or fill material from construction or demolition of services or foundations for buildings Soil from 'greenfield' developments
Mixed industrial, commercial, and institutional	General waste from activities wholly or mainly for the purposes of a trade, business or industry, or for the purposes of sport, recreation, education, healthcare, or agriculture, and not including residential premises. This includes retail and light manufacturing or industrial activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste from mixed commercial sources Waste from council operations such as street sweeping and litter collection
Heavy industrial	General waste primarily derived from heavy industrial or manufacturing activities, in dedicated loads generated by the primary activity of an industry. This includes, but is not limited to, tanneries, canning factories, dairy factories, timber or pulp mills, incineration activities, fisheries, and horticulture processing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste from individual large factories or large industrial businesses Waste from food-production facilities Waste from timber-processing plants
Residential drop-off	Waste generated by residential premises that is dropped off to a facility and that is not entirely from construction, renovation, or demolition of the premises. Residential waste is composed of wastes from normal household activities and originating from residential premises or workplace activities that result in domestic-type waste (for example, lunch rooms, cafeterias). This does not include waste produced in the process of commercial or industrial undertakings. Loads of waste entirely from construction or demolition activities should be categorised as "Construction and demolition".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste from households delivered to a drop-off area. Waste from households received from gantry skip-bin collection
Residential kerbside collections	Waste generated by residential activity that is collected at kerbside and that is composed of wastes from normal household activities and originating from residential premises or workplace activities that result in domestic-type waste (for example, lunch room, cafeterias). This does not include waste produced in the process of commercial or industrial undertakings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential waste received from kerbside collection
Unusual activity	This category should be used only as an exception, to capture waste that does not fit into any of the other categories and that is from a distinct activity that occurs irregularly and significantly affects the overall composition of the waste stream.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe weather/emergency waste

Activity category	Description	Examples
Transfer station – mixed activities	Waste or diverted material that enters the facility from a transfer station. This includes loads from a transfer station to another transfer station and loads from a transfer station to a landfill. Waste or diverted material that enters a transfer station must be recorded under the relevant activity category associated with the activity that generated that waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each mixed-activity load must record the individual transfer station it is received from • Waste received from an individual activity (eg, construction and demolition) should instead apply the individual activity source

The ‘transfer station’ category exists only for waste delivered from a transfer station to another facility. For all other loads, transfer stations must categorise the waste they receive into the appropriate activity category.

