



From mountain to sea

Frequently Asked Questions

Recycling Centre Permits (updated 30/8/2019)

Contents

1. BACKGROUND.....	2
Q: Why the need for permits at recycling centres?.....	2
Q: Who was consulted on these proposals and who made the decision?	2
Q: How can the Council justify reducing services – what do I pay my Council Tax for?	2
Q: Will the permit system lead to fly-tipping? What are you going to do about that?.....	2
2. HOW WILL THE SYSTEM WORK	3
Q: What are the permits for?	3
Q: Who can apply for permits?.....	3
Q: How much do the permits cost?	3
Q: How can I apply for permits?	3
Q: What will I be asked in the application form?	3
Q: When can I apply for permits?	3
Q: What will the permits look like?	3
Q: Can I use my permits at any recycling centre?	4
Q: How will I know how many permits I have left?	4
Q: Why do I need a permit for my pick-up when a 4x4 doesn't require one?	4
Q: Why can I not get a permit for my large trailer?.....	4
Q: How are you going to check my trailer size?	4
Q. Can our community group get a permit?	4
WHAT IF.....	5
Q: What if I don't have online access to apply for permits?.....	5
Q: What if I move house?	5
Q: What if I change my car?.....	5
Q: What if I tow my trailer with a pick-up?	5
Q: What if I have both a trailer and a towable horse box?.....	5
Q: What if I hire a trailer?	5
Q: What if I have a car-derived van, a crew van etc. – do I still need a permit?	5
Q: What if my company vehicle is the only vehicle I have?.....	5
Q: What if I use my work van with a logo on it for taking materials to recycling centres?	5
Q: What if I hire a van?	6
Q: What if I forget to take my permit with me?	6
Q: Why if I don't live in Aberdeenshire?.....	6
Q: What if I don't have time to apply for a permit?	6
Q: What if somebody else uses my permits?	6



From mountain to sea

1. Background

Q: Why the need for permits at recycling centres?

A: The aim is to create space for additional recyclable materials at recycling centres to improve services to households. This will be done by providing businesses an alternative to take their waste to waste transfer stations and putting in place a permit system at recycling centres to prevent the unlawful use of recycling centres by businesses unwilling to pay for the disposal of their waste and recycling.

Currently some businesses unlawfully use recycling centres by disguising their business waste as household waste. Based on car counts and anecdotal evidence, business waste is estimated to be up to 20% (10,000 tonnes) of the waste handled at recycling centres annually and cost around £0.5 million to dispose of – this is paid for by taxpayers.

In practice the permit system means that householders using commercial type vehicles (a van, a pick-up, a minibus or a trailer) to take materials to recycling centres need to apply for a permit in advance to be able to do so. The permits are free of charge.

The purpose of the permit system is simply to limit the unlawful use of recycling centres by businesses and the only effective way of doing this is to ask householders using a commercial type vehicle (a van, pick-up, minibus or a trailer) to prove as part of the application process that their vehicle is used for household waste and recycling only.

Q: Who was consulted on these proposals and who made the decision?

A: Following a public consultation in the autumn 2018 on the Council's new 5-year waste strategy, Infrastructure Services Committee approved the waste strategy, including the proposals to move trade waste from recycling centres to waste transfer stations, in January 2019. Area committees were then consulted in June 2019 on the proposals on how this would be done in practice, including the permit system at recycling centres. Infrastructure Services Committee approved the final permit scheme in August 2019.

Q: How can the Council justify reducing services – what do I pay my Council Tax for?

A: The aim is to create space for additional recyclable materials at recycling centres to improve services to households.

This is done by providing businesses an alternative to take their waste to waste transfer stations and by putting in place a permit system at recycling centres to prevent unlawful use of recycling centres by businesses unwilling to pay for the disposal of their waste and recycling.

The disposal of business waste taken to recycling centres is estimated to cost around £0.5 million per year to dispose of – this is currently paid for by the taxpayers.

Q: Will the permit system lead to fly-tipping? What are you going to do about that?

A: Businesses and householders fly-tip as is. There are always concerns about fly-tipping when waste and recycling services are changed. In Aberdeenshire's and other local authorities' experience, fly-tipping resulting from service changes tends to be time-limited and usually very localised.



From mountain to sea

2. How will the system work

Q: What are the permits for?

A: Permits are required for commercial type vehicles, i.e. vans, pick-ups, minibuses and trailers (up to 6 x 8ft in size) used by households for taking household recycling and waste to recycling centres.

No permit is required for cars, estate cars, people carriers, MPVs or 4x4s, unless they tow a trailer or a horse box.

Q: Who can apply for permits?

A: All households in Aberdeenshire can apply for permits. One set of permits is issued per household, so if a household has more than one vehicle requiring a permit, then they should decide which vehicle they want to get permitted.

Q: How much do the permits cost?

A: The permits are free of charge.

Q: How can I apply for permits?

A: The application form will be available online but if you don't have online access, you can pick up an application form from a recycling centre and post it back to us. Details of how to apply will be provided when we are ready to accept applications.

Q: What will I be asked in the application form?

A: The application form will be available online but if you don't have online access, you can pick up an application form from a recycling centre and post it back to us.

The application form will ask for your name, address and contact details, together with details of the vehicle you are planning to permit. You will also need to attach a photo or a scan of your V5 vehicle registration form and also of a recent utility bill showing your name and address (the latest council tax bill would be ideal).

If you applying to permit a vehicle to tow a trailer or a horse box, you also need to provide the size of the trailer / horse box.

Q: When can I apply for permits?

A: The new permit system is planned to be introduced in early 2020. We will advertise the start date widely at recycling centres and through local media and our Facebook page, and permit applications can be submitted in advance of the start date. To get the most up to date information, please follow us on [@AberdeenshireWaste](https://www.facebook.com/AberdeenshireWaste).

Q: What will the permits look like?

A: We are currently investigating putting in place a fully electronic permit system in which case you will get a notification of your application being successful by email. A site assistant at the recycling centre would enter your car registration details onto our system and confirm that your vehicle is permitted and has valid permits left. If we end up using paper permits, then you will be provided



From mountain to sea

with a pack of 24 paper permits and you can tear off one at the time to hand over at the recycling centre.

Whether electronic or paper, the permits will be linked to your vehicle registration number and will also specify the type of vehicle permitted and a valid to date.

Q: Can I use my permits at any recycling centre?

A: Yes, the permits can be used at any of the 15 recycling centres run by Aberdeenshire Council. For locations, opening hours and materials accepted at each centre, please see www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/recyclingcentres

Q: How will I know how many permits I have left?

A: We are currently investigating putting in place a fully electronic permit system in which case you would receive an email after each use to notify you of how many permits you have left. However, if we end up using paper permits, then you will be able to count yourself how many are left.

Q: Why do I need a permit for my pick-up when a 4x4 doesn't require one?

A: Unlike 4x4s, pick-ups are typically taxed as commercial vehicles and they have a separate compartment out with the cab (whether covered or not).

Q: Why can I not get a permit for my large trailer?

A: Permits are available for trailers up to 6 x 8ft in size. Large trailers are used by many businesses and limiting the trailer size is another way to prevent businesses from unlawfully using recycling centres.

A 6 x 8 ft trailer could fit in around 1m³ of material – this is a lot of household recycling or waste to take to a recycling centre at any one time.

Q: How are you going to check my trailer size?

A: You will be asked for your trailer size in the application form. Site attendants can measure up a trailer if they think it might be larger than 6 x 8 ft. Your permits will be invalidated if you have not provided the correct size in the application form.

Q. Can our community group get a permit?

A: Local community groups can, in addition to applying for permits for their household vehicles to tow a trailer, apply for a community group permit. The community group permit will not be vehicle-specific but will allow anybody holding the permit to access a recycling centre with a permissible vehicle type.

In line with the household scheme, the number of permits is 24 per year and permitted vehicles are vans, pick-ups, mini-buses and trailers up to 6 x 8ft in size. As part of the application process, a group needs to provide evidence of being an established local community group.



From mountain to sea

What if...

Q: What if I don't have online access to apply for permits?

A: You can pick up an application form from a recycling centre and post it back to us.

Q: What if I move house?

A: If you move house, your permits will remain valid until the valid to date as long as the same vehicle is used. The permits only display a vehicle registration number, vehicle type and a valid to date. You should also notify us of address change so that the new people in your old address can apply for permits, should they need to.

Q: What if I change my car?

A: If you change your vehicle, the remaining permits can be swapped to new ones. New permits, matching the number of unused permits and displaying the new vehicle registration number, vehicle type and the original valid to date, will be issued.

Q: What if I tow my trailer with a pick-up?

A: Only one vehicle per household can be permitted. This means that you can't use your pick-up to tow a trailer. The logic is that a pick-up has plenty of space in the load bed at the back (whether covered or uncovered) for transporting household recycling and waste.

Q: What if I have both a trailer and a towable horse box?

A: Only one vehicle per household can be permitted so you need to decide which one you would like to use for taking recycling and waste to recycling centres. A trailer can be used up to 24 times per year but permits for towable horse boxes are limited to 6 per year due to the fact that you can fit in much more in a towable horse box than a trailer.

Q: What if I hire a trailer?

A: A trailer requires a permit so you would need to apply for a permit for the vehicle you are planning to use to tow the hire trailer. Please remember the trailer size is limited to 6 x 8ft.

Q: What if I have a car-derived van, a crew van etc. – do I still need a permit?

A: Yes, you do. Vans by default are commercial type vehicles, hence if you want to use any type of van to take your household recycling or non-recyclable to a recycling centre, you'll need a permit.

Q: What if my company vehicle is the only vehicle I have?

A: In that case you will need an authorisation letter from your employer to confirm that you are authorised to use the vehicle for taking your household recycling or non-recyclable waste to recycling centres. However, if our site attendants suspect that the recycling or non-recyclable waste you take to a recycling centre is from a business, we will invalidate your permits.

Q: What if I use my work van with a logo on it for taking materials to recycling centres?

A: In that case you will need an authorisation letter from your employer to confirm that you are authorised to use your work van for taking your household recycling or non-recyclable waste to



From mountain to sea

recycling centres. However, if our site attendants suspect that the recycling or non-recyclable waste you take to a recycling centre is from a business, we will invalidate your permits.

Q: What if I hire a van?

A: If you hire a van, hire documentation (not a lease) together with matching personal identification (e.g. driving licence) can be shown to a recycling centre attendant to access a recycling centre instead of a permit. This only apply to hire van - leased vans can't use this option.

Q: What if I forget to take my permit with me?

A: We are currently investigating putting in place a fully electronic permit system in which case you will not need to hand over a permit – the site assistant would enter your car registration details onto our system and confirm that your vehicle is permitted and has valid permits left. If we end up using paper permits, then you would not be able to get entry unless you have a permit with you.

Q: Why if I don't live in Aberdeenshire?

A: In emergency situations where there is no time to wait for a permit application to be processed, for example due to an urgent house clearance following a death, households can call the Council's contact centre to arrange one-off access to a specified recycling centre using a vehicle which would normally require a permit.

This one-off access can be provided to non-Aberdeenshire residents if required to allow relatives not residing in Aberdeenshire to access a recycling centre with a vehicle type normally requiring a permit.

Q: What if I don't have time to apply for a permit?

A: In emergency situations where there is no time to wait for a permit application to be processed, for example due to an urgent house clearance following a death, households can call the Council's contact centre to arrange one-off access to a specified recycling centre using a vehicle which would normally require a permit.

Q: What if somebody else uses my permits?

A: The permits will be linked to your vehicle registration number, so nobody else should be able to use them without your permission.