

# Don't Waste It!

Managing waste and preventing litter at home and at work



**Kildare County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Chill Dara

# Introduction

Many people contact the council with queries about managing waste — both to report people not dealing with waste properly, but also to enquire as to what they should or shouldn't be doing themselves to manage their waste. This guide should help to answer questions about many of these issues. Any websites or other resources listed can be found at the back of this booklet.



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# So how do I manage my domestic or commercial waste?

*Domestic or commercial waste disposal and recycling...*



## **Realistically, you have two options for regular waste disposal and recycling:**

Get set up with a waste contractor. If you live in a town or village with more than 500 people you are legally entitled to three bins (recycling, residual/landfill, and brown bin for food and garden waste). If you live in a rural area you are entitled to the two bin system (recycling and residual/landfill). Different contractors have different pricing structures, so shop around. Go to the links at the end of the booklet for information on how to use the bins properly (including what can go into the recycling and brown bins). All contractors must be able to weigh your collected waste, and you are entitled to this information as a customer

## **And/or:**

Use your local Civic Amenity Centre — these are large recycling centres where you can bring a wide range of waste types. There are currently two in Kildare, with another one planned, but also others in neighbouring counties. Details on these are provided at the end of this booklet. Importantly, you must keep your receipts, as the council is entitled to establish under waste management legislation how you dispose of your waste, and we can call to homes and businesses to follow up on this if there are grounds for suspecting that waste is being dumped or burnt.



## Illegal Waste Collections

### *“The man with the van”*

The council has adopted new Waste Management (Segregation, Storage & Presentation) Byelaws in 2018. These will be effective from 1st March 2019. The byelaws contain specific requirements for the segregation, storage and presentation of waste. A provision is contained therein for the imposition of a Fixed Payment Notice (€75 fine) where a household/commercial premises is found to be in breach of the requirements.

- ✓ Use a waste collector that you have checked is legitimate, e.g. has a proper business address, possibly with a website, a landline number etc. — not just a mobile number. This is just a starting point as you are obliged to ensure that they are compliant with the laws.

**If the waste collector does not have a permit, do not give them the waste. Instead, take the vehicle registration number and call or email the environment section of the council to report them.**

- ✓ If you get a flyer offering this type of service, do check the details.
- ✓ When the collection vehicle arrives, check that the driver has a valid Waste Collection Permit, and that the WCP number is written on the van or truck. Vehicles with no WCP number displayed are operating illegally.
- ✓ You can check the permit at the National Waste Collection Permit Office website.



## Presentation of Waste

In addition to barring the use of illegal waste collectors, the byelaws just mentioned also contain specific requirements for the segregation, storage and presentation of waste. The byelaws allow for the council to undertake inspections, including calling to premises. Where a premises is found to be in breach of the requirements, provision is made for the imposition of a Fixed Payment Notice (€75 fine). The following is what homes and businesses have to comply with when presenting waste for collection:

- ✓ Must be able to prove they avail of an authorised waste service (either collection or by routinely bringing waste to authorised facilities).
- ✓ Bins must be in good order, not overloaded and no waste is to be left on or beside the bin.
- ✓ Bins should not be left out before 8.00pm on the night before

the collection and must be taken back in before 8.00am the day after the collection.

- ✓ No hazardous waste allowed in either refuse or recycling bins, e.g. flammable, explosive, or toxic.
- ✓ Waste must be properly segregated into refuse (residual) or recyclable as well as food and garden waste, if you have a brown bin.

The byelaws contain a number of other provisions and can be viewed on the council website.

## Skips and skip bags

Skips and skip bags are also covered by waste regulations. Skip bags and skips can be problematic and the council has issued a number of fines for these being left in a public place for long periods of time — the waste in them remains your responsibility until it is removed by a legitimate collector.

## Burning of waste

Quite simply, it is illegal to burn waste as a means of disposal. In practical terms it is impossible for the council to prevent somebody from lighting the stove using old newspapers (nor would we want to use our resources doing so). However, we really do want to stop the practice of people routinely burning their domestic or commercial waste. Although this practice is less common than in the past, it still occurs and it remains a problem.

The issue is twofold — it causes a nuisance and it is bad for people's health. The nuisance is bad enough, and we do get complaints from neighbours of people who routinely burn waste, but the effects on human health can be more serious. Burning waste in a barrel or similar causes the release of different chemical compounds. You might see “backyard incinerators” for sale in garden centres — it should be noted that while it is not illegal to sell them, it IS illegal to use them to burn waste — and waste includes garden waste. As an example of the health effects of burning waste, one of the groups of chemicals that is released from burning are dioxins. Dioxins are proven to cause cancer in humans. Anybody who breathes in these fumes is at risk. The uncontrolled burning of waste inevitably leads to the release of these chemicals so it is very unwise to be in the vicinity of them.

A particular issue is bonfires at Hallowe'en. The council has noticed over the last number of years that many residents associations look for assistance in the run up to Hallowe'en to remove the piled up waste before it is lit. It is simply beyond the capacity of a local authority to remove all of these bonfire piles in

advance, especially as the bonfire material is hidden until near the day. In some cases, it is the same illegal waste collectors mentioned previously who bring waste to these bonfires to get rid of it. The council needs the help of the public to prevent this. So, please take note of the registration number of any vehicle you see leaving waste at bonfires as well as the date and if possible the type of waste being left, and report the details to the council.



## Litter

Littering (the offence is defined and prohibited as “no person shall deposit any substance or object so as to create litter in a public place or in any place that is visible to any extent from a public place”) is an ongoing issue, in Kildare and indeed across all of Ireland. Although the amount overall is considerably less than that from large scale illegal dumping, roadside litter is probably the most visible waste type as is dropped from vehicles, frequently in scenic areas, or where large gatherings occur and so forth. Following nearly 5,000 litter surveys carried out nationally in 2017 the following results were observed:

- ✓ 50% of all litter comes from pedestrians and motorists
- ✓ Only 16% of sites surveyed were litter-free
- ✓ Only 8% of surveyed beaches were litter-free.

The council regularly issues litter fines—over 500 issued in 2018 and nearly 70 cases sent to court for direct prosecution. Occasionally, the community wardens witness littering directly. More commonly, we find evidence after the fact, or members of the public report littering to us. Some common situations fines are issued for are:

- ✓ Domestic waste placed in a litter bin. This doesn't mean sweet wrappers, but bags of domestic waste brought to bins to avoid paying for the waste at home or business.
- ✓ Litter thrown from vehicles—this includes cigarette butts. If somebody witnesses you or your passenger throwing litter

from a vehicle, they can report it in and the registered owner of the vehicle will receive a fine.

- ✓ Dogfouling— becoming more frequent as a complaint. If you let your dog out of the house and it fouls the green area in your estate, don't be surprised that your neighbour reports you, and dogfouling is specifically mentioned in the Litter Pollution Act, 1997. A small number of fines have been issued for this in Kildare, but we expect reporting of this offence to increase as people realise that they can take action.

## Using litter bins for domestic waste

Some people are surprised to know that it is illegal to use public litter bins for disposing of domestic and commercial waste, but this is actually the case. Dumping of domestic waste fills up the bins faster, which puts pressure on servicing the bins. It also means that while most of us pay for the disposal of our waste, some people are putting the cost of this on the council and the taxpayer. The council has to pay for the disposal of the waste from litter bins. We obviously want to look after genuine litter, but we don't want to subsidise some householders in this manner. We do routine checks of bins where there is a pattern of domestic waste being found and fines are issued for this. In rare cases bins have had to be moved to other locations due to persistent dumping of waste. This is not something we want to do as it is an important service for the public.



## Dog fouling

Dog fouling is an increasing concern, and is regularly raised as an issue by residents associations, Tidy Towns committees and other community groups. People are becoming increasingly aware that dog fouling is unsightly, unpleasant and can lead to Toxocaríasis in humans—which causes illness and can even lead to blindness. You can reduce the health risk to the public by regularly worming your dog.

Toxocaríasis is caused by a parasite known as *Toxocara Canis* (more commonly known as Roundworm). These parasites live in the digestive system of dogs. Eggs can be released in the faeces of infected animals and contaminated soil. If someone ingests infected material the eggs may hatch into larvae and can lead to Toxocaríasis.

Toxocaríasis usually affects children who are between one and four years old. However, cases of Toxocaríasis have been reported in people of all ages. Young children are particularly at risk of getting Toxocaríasis because they are more likely to put things into their mouths and less likely to wash their hands properly.

So when residents associations look for help from the council to deal with ongoing dogfouling issues, it is not only a litter issue, but a public health issue. One common complaint is when



a householder lets their dog out of the front door house in the morning and the dog goes to a green area in a housing estate to “do it’s business”—the same area that children from the estate play in. This is not acceptable behaviour by the owner, and following information from other householders the council has successfully issued litter fines in a number of these cases.

The council’s policy on this is contained in our current Litter Management Plan (link to the council website is at the back of the booklet). The main focus is on “Any Bag–Any Bin”, in other words, if you have a dog, then you should bring a bag to clean up after the dog and then either bring the bag home or use a litter bin. The council is frequently asked to provide bag dispensers along with dedicated dog waste bins. This is a very big commitment in resources and would reduce the resources available to deal with all the other littering issues. The point really is that the dog, and what it produces, are the responsibility of the owner. Dog waste bags are readily available in many shops at a very low cost, so it is really up to the owner to get into the habit of bringing a couple of bags with them. Dogs must be kept under effectual control when in a public place, so this is just part of the overall care regime for your pet.

## So how can I help?

Apart from complying with all the above, many people want to do their bit in actually improving the county in terms of waste and litter. With over 5,000 kilometres of roads in the county, apart from housing estates, bogs and other areas, there are plenty of places that could be improved. There are a number of options in this regard:

- ✓ If you are in a town or village, you could join your local Residents Association or Tidy towns group. Both organise cleanups of the local area and it is a great way of connecting with the wider community. The council can pass on your details to your local tidy Towns group and most are on social media if you want to contact them.
- ✓ You can also register for National Spring Clean which takes place every April—in addition to getting an information pack, further assistance is available from the council in the form of litter pickers and bags—details are available on the council website and there is also a form for applying to have the collected waste removed. You will find the forms on the environment section of the website.
- ✓ In Kildare we are also promoting a particular day in April where we hold the Lily White Clean Up—we publicise this nearer the time, but the main point is to ask everybody in the county to take an hour or two on that day and make it the biggest clean up we can. It is advertised widely nearer the time.

# So what is Kildare County Council doing?

## *Enforcement*

### **Community wardens**

We currently have seven community wardens covering the county. They routinely patrol designated areas of the county and investigate all reports of littering. The key issue for the wardens is that they must have evidence of an offence—so if they go through dumped materials and there is evidence such as an envelope with an address, this will form the basis of a litter fine. However, in other cases, the only evidence is if somebody witnesses the littering or dumping. So, if you see somebody throwing waste from their car, you should take the vehicle registration number and report it to the council. In theory, the owner of the car can challenge the fine and this may result in us bringing the case to court—in practice, very few people challenge a litter fine. Generally, people want to just pay the fine and be done with it (and hopefully will have learnt not to repeat the offence!)

Prosecutions for dog fouling rely almost exclusively on



witnesses — nobody lets their dog foul a public area in front of the warden, but we do get regular reports of people seeing dogs being let out of a house onto the green in an estate. Increasingly, residents are getting fed up with this and we are beginning to see an increase in litter fines for this type of offence.

## CCTV

People frequently ask about the council using cctv to stop littering in problematic areas. It needs to be stated that cctv cannot solve the littering problem. Where it does work is at places like recycling banks, where the area is well-lit, and offenders are generally arriving by car—so the fine for littering will be issued to the registered owner of the car, once the registration plate is visible. The technology is improving all the time and registration plate detection is very successful now.

Where it doesn't work is in situations where pedestrians (including dog walkers) are the target. The footage will show just that — a person or persons littering. There are over 211,000 people

living in Kildare and the council doesn't know what everybody looks like! We are mindful of data protection when using cctv and aim to comply with GDPR at all times.

## Litter fines

Litter fines issued by the community wardens employed by the council take two forms. If it is a “casual discard” type of litter (thrown from a vehicle, or dogfouling for example), the council will issue an “on the spot” fine of €150. You have a set amount of time to pay this. If you choose not to pay this, or the council deems the littering to be more serious, such as dumping a large quantity of waste, we can issue a direct prosecution and this becomes a matter for the courts. You can receive a fine of up to €3,000 if the court agrees with the evidence presented by the council. Yes — the wardens do open up bags and go through them for evidence, and despite the offenders' best efforts, we are frequently able to find information that we can use to identify them.



There is a charge based on vehicle and weight for most items — the exception is electrical waste where no charges can apply if you bring only electrical waste. If you are unsure of what to do with waste, ring either civic amenity centre to enquire — they take most waste, but cannot take some waste types such as asbestos.

## Recycling banks

The council operates a network of 40 recycling banks around the county for glass bottles and jars and food and drinks cans. These facilities cost a lot of money to resource and service but remain free to the public. We therefore rely on the public to help in maintaining these. The simple rules are:

- ✓ If the banks are full, please don't leave any glass or cans on the ground. Contact the council and we will organise to get them emptied as soon as possible.
- ✓ Just because somebody else has already left glass or other waste around the banks does not mean it is ok for you to do so!
- ✓ Don't leave any boxes, bags or other waste behind you. This is considered to be dumping and you will face a fine of €150.
- ✓ Please note, we DO use cctv at recycling banks and we issued over 60 fines in 2018 specifically for leaving waste at recycling banks.

Please also bear in mind that over half of these recycling sites are on private property and many are there purely due to the generosity of the landowner as a resource for the community, for example, eight sites are currently provided by local GAA clubs. So

it is essential that people respect this and comply with the above conditions. Over the years we have lost a number of these sites because of repeated dumping at them.

People sometimes wonder why glass cannot simply be put into the recycling bin at home— the reason is simply that when glass breaks it will contaminate all the recycling material it is mixed with, making it impossible to handle. So we will always need these recycling banks and will always need the public's cooperation in maintaining them.

It should be noted that some waste contractors offer a recycling bin for glass for their customers. They are not obliged to offer this, so we are happy if you use it or the recycling banks— once the glass is being recycled everyone is a winner.

## Litter bins

Although it is a common complaint that there aren't enough litter bins in the county, it is important to note that every bin that is installed must be emptied regularly and there is a limit to how many bins can be emptied on a weekly basis. We currently service over 800 bins across the county. We have begun to roll out dual bins in some areas — these have two compartments, one for recycling and the other for residual (landfill) waste. This initiative will be rolled out as resources allow. If a bin is overflowing on an ongoing basis, please contact the council to inform us. We appreciate that if people want to deal with their litter correctly, it is our responsibility to ensure that the bins are serviced frequently enough to enable this.

## Assisting clean ups and resources

The council assists with the National Spring Clean in April and also the Lily White Cleanup (we pick one day in April and encourage everybody to choose an area to clean up).

We can also offer litter pickers and bags for cleanups as well as removing the gathered waste — check the forms on website for more details.

The council may also be in a position to provide dog fouling and or no dumping signage. These are small plastic corrieboard signs that can be secured with a couple of cable ties and are suitable for housing estates. In addition we can stencil dog fouling reminders in suitable areas — these typically last about a year but in areas where there are lots of dog walkers, the message is literally in front of them and they cannot say they weren't told! We also install (again, in suitable areas) an audio warning device that alerts passers — by that they need to clean up after their dog. These are installed for a few weeks to raise awareness in areas that are particularly badly affected.





# Contacts

## Council

Kildare County Council  
Áras Chill Dara  
Devoy Park  
Naas  
Co. Kildare, W91 X77F

Environment section:  
**045 980588**  
Freephone litter line:  
**1800 243143**

 [environ@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:environ@kildarecoco.ie)

 [www.kildare.ie/countycouncil](http://www.kildare.ie/countycouncil)

## Athy Recycling Centre

Opening Hours: 09:00–15:45  
(Thursday–Saturday)  
Address: Gallows Hill, Athy, Co.  
Kildare, R14 W228

Telephone:  
**059 8640657**

## Silliot Hill Recycling Centre

Opening Hours: 08:00–15:45  
(Monday–Saturday)  
Address: Silliot Hill, Kilcullen,  
Co.Kildare, R56 AC61

Telephone:  
**045 482229**

Scan this QR code to bring you to the environment section of the council website. You will find a lot of information on environmental issues, including a list of the current recycling banks, the waste bye laws and forms for a range of environmental issues.



Design & Printing: Donovan Printing Ltd.  
[www.donovanprinting.com](http://www.donovanprinting.com)

## Litter

To find out about an ongoing national litter survey:  
**[www.litter.ie](http://www.litter.ie)**

National Spring Clean:  
**[www.nationalspringclean.org](http://www.nationalspringclean.org)**

Irish Business Against Litter:  
**[www.ibal.ie](http://www.ibal.ie)**

## Waste and waste reduction

National Waste  
Collection Permit Office:  
**[www.nwcpo.ie](http://www.nwcpo.ie)**

How to manage all your waste:  
**[www.mywaste.ie](http://www.mywaste.ie)**

How to cut down  
on disposable cups:  
**[www.consciouscup.ie](http://www.consciouscup.ie)**

Where you can refill your  
reusable water bottle for free:  
**[www.refill.ie](http://www.refill.ie)**



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