688. Sustainability & Climate Action - Carbon, Energy & Resources - Waste Generation & Recycling Monitoring

Category:	Sustainability & Climate Action
Subcategory:	Carbon, Energy & Resources
Status:	**Best Practice**
Type:	Competent Person
Priority:	Recommended
Commonality:	Common

Note: This document provides guidance to support compliance but is not a substitute for professional advice.

Why This Task Matters

Your careful monitoring of waste generation and recycling performance directly supports healthier learning environments for pupils and staff by reducing environmental harm and demonstrating responsible resource management. By tracking this important data, you help minimise landfill impact, support cost savings, and build confidence in the organisation's sustainability commitment while recognising the vital role facilities staff play in fostering eco-conscious educational communities that protect both current and future generations.

Task Summary

Best Practice: This task requires quarterly monitoring of waste volumes, segregation rates, and recycling performance. The process involves collecting data from waste contractors, measuring recycling rates, analysing waste generation patterns, and identifying opportunities for improvement. Staff should ensure accurate recording of different waste streams (general waste, recycling, food waste, hazardous materials), calculate diversion rates from landfill, and prepare reports for management review. The monitoring should include verification of contractor performance, assessment of segregation effectiveness, and evaluation of waste reduction initiatives. Data should

inform the Climate Action Plan and support continuous improvement in waste management practices. This regular monitoring helps demonstrate environmental responsibility and can identify cost-saving opportunities through improved recycling.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

- **Climate Change Act 2008**: Supports waste reduction as part of carbon management strategies.
- **Environment Act 2021**: Includes provisions for waste management and resource efficiency.
- **Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011**: Establishes requirements for waste management and record-keeping.
- **DfE guidance on waste management in schools**: Recommends monitoring and reporting of waste performance.
- **Waste Hierarchy (Prevention, Preparing for Re-use, Recycling, Other Recovery, Disposal)**: Prioritises waste management approaches.

Typical Frequency

This task should be completed quarterly, aligned with waste contractor reporting cycles and seasonal variations in waste generation. The frequency could vary if more frequent monitoring is needed to track specific initiatives or if significant changes in waste patterns are observed. In education settings, quarterly monitoring captures term-time variations and supports annual sustainability reporting.

Applicability

This task is recommended and common, applying to most schools and colleges as part of good environmental management practices. It is particularly relevant for establishments generating significant waste volumes from catering, teaching activities, and maintenance operations. The task applies regardless of organisation size, though larger establishments may have more complex waste streams requiring detailed monitoring. Schools and colleges should consider this essential for demonstrating environmental responsibility and achieving sustainability objectives.

Responsible Persons

- **Task Type**: This is a Competent Person task that can be carried out by facilities staff or administrative personnel familiar with waste management processes.

- **Contractor Requirements**: Not applicable as this is a Competent Person task.

- **In-House Requirements**: Staff should have basic training in waste management principles and familiarity with the organisation's waste streams and contractor arrangements.
- **Permit to Work**: No permit to work is required for this task.
- **Delivery Model**: This task is normally completed in-house by trained staff, often coordinated with waste contractor visits.

Key Considerations

Important factors include coordinating with waste collection schedules, ensuring access to contractor documentation, and maintaining data consistency. The task should be planned to capture accurate seasonal variations. Consider the educational value of involving pupils in waste monitoring activities. Risk assessment should focus on data accuracy and compliance with waste regulations.

Task Instructions

Prerequisites & Safety

- Access to waste contractor documentation and records
- Understanding of waste categories and recycling processes
- Basic data collection and analysis skills
- Knowledge of waste management regulations

Tools & Materials

- Waste monitoring spreadsheet or database
- Waste contractor transfer notes and reports
- Weighbridge tickets or volume measurements
- Calculator for recycling rate calculations
- Photographic records of waste segregation

Method (Step-by-Step)

1. **Data Collection**: Gather waste transfer notes and reports from contractors for all waste streams.
2. **Volume Measurement**: Record weights or volumes of general waste, recycling, and other streams.

3. **Rate Calculation**: Calculate recycling rates and diversion from landfill percentages.
4. **Performance Analysis**: Compare current performance with previous periods and targets.
5. **Contractor Review**: Assess contractor performance and segregation effectiveness.
6. **Report Preparation**: Prepare quarterly monitoring report with key findings and recommendations.

Measurements & Acceptance Criteria

Waste should be measured by weight or volume with recycling rates calculated as diverted waste divided by total waste. Performance should show clear trends and comparison with established targets.

If Results Fail

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. If monitoring identifies poor performance, immediate actions should include reviewing contractor arrangements and implementing improvement measures.

Reinstatement & Housekeeping

No reinstatement required. Ensure waste areas remain clean and secure.

Completion Checks

Confirm that all waste data has been collected, rates calculated, report completed, and evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod.

Record-Keeping & Evidence

- **Upload Process**: Upload any required statutory or supporting evidence to the corresponding task form in Compliance Pod.
- **Statutory Evidence**: No statutory evidence is required for this task.
- **Supporting/Good Practice Evidence**: Waste transfer notes, recycling reports, and internal monitoring records.

Common Pitfalls & Best Practice Tips

Common mistakes include inconsistent data collection methods, failing to account for all waste streams, or not verifying contractor data. Best practices include establishing standard measurement

procedures, maintaining historical data for trend analysis, and involving staff in waste reduction initiatives. In educational settings, use monitoring data to inform pupil education programs. Warning signs include declining recycling rates or unexplained increases in waste volumes.

Quick Reference Checklist

- [ ] Collect waste transfer notes from contractors
- [ ] Record volumes for all waste streams
- [ ] Calculate recycling and diversion rates
- [ ] Analyse performance trends
- [ ] Review contractor effectiveness
- [ ] Prepare monitoring report
- [ ] Upload evidence to Compliance Pod

Grouped Tasks

Grouping is feasible; align with related tasks of the same frequency and contractor visit.

Related Tasks

- Sustainability & Climate Action - Carbon, Energy & Resources - Carbon Emissions & Energy Use Monitoring
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Carbon, Energy & Resources - Water Consumption & Efficiency Monitoring
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Education & Engagement - Pupil & Staff Engagement Sessions on Climate Action

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