

Extended producer responsibility for packaging: recycling obligations and waste disposal fees

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UK organisations that are affected by extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging may need to get evidence of packaging waste recycling and pay disposal fees.

If you're a UK organisation that supplies or imports packaging, you may be affected by extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging.

If you're affected by EPR, you, or a compliance scheme working on your behalf, must:

- create an account on the report packaging data service
- submit your organisation details
- submit your packaging data
- pay your registration fees to your environmental regulator

If you're a large organisation, or a compliance scheme working on their behalf, you also need to do the following to meet your producer obligations:

- review your 'recycling obligations' - these are calculated as a percentage of the packaging waste you've reported
- fund an equivalent amount of recycling by buying packaging recycling notes (PRNs) and packaging export recycling notes (PERNs) from waste reprocessors and exporters
- provide the PRNs and PERNs as evidence of you meeting your obligations

You must meet your obligation for each material. If you exceed your obligation for a material, the 'tonnage outstanding' column will show '0' for that material.

You cannot use excess PRNs or PERNs acquired for one material to substitute meeting your obligation for another material. For example, if you exceed your recycling obligation for glass, you still need to meet your specific obligation for paper in full.

Since October 2025, you also need to pay waste disposal costs. A compliance scheme working on your behalf cannot do this for you.

Get evidence of your packaging waste recycling

Once you've registered on the report packaging data (RPD) service, submitted your data, and paid your registration fees, you must review your recycling obligations. You will soon be able to see this when you log into your RPD account.

Accredited waste reprocessors and exporters who manage packaging waste can issue PRNs and PERNs to you for the packaging waste they recycle. You can issue your own if you're accredited.

You must get evidence in the form of PRNs and PERNs for the packaging waste recycling equivalent

to the weight of your obligation from them.

For example, if you placed plastic packaging on the market, you need to get plastic PRNs or PERNs equivalent to 57% of its total weight (rounded to the nearest tonne).

PRNs and PERNs are issued for specific packaging materials - for example plastic, wood, aluminium or steel. You can only use a PRN or PERN to meet the obligation for the material stated on the PRN or PERN.

There's a combined recycling obligation for 'paper, board and fibre-based composite material'. To meet the obligation, you can use any combination of PRNs or PERNs for:

- paper or board
- fibre-based composite material

For glass, a minimum of 76% of your glass recycling obligation must be made up of glass re-melt PRNs or PERNs. To meet the rest of your glass recycling obligation, you can use any combination of PRNs or PERNs for:

- glass re-melt
- glass other

Only large organisations must obtain PRNs and PERNs for the packaging they place on the market.

If you recycle packaging waste your own business handled or supplied, you must still obtain a PRN or PERN from accredited reprocessors and exporters. For example, if you've supplied a specific amount of paper bags, you must obtain PRNs or PERNs showing recycling equivalent to your recycling obligation for that material.

View the register of reprocessors and exporters.

Packaging recycling targets 2025 to 2027

Material or process	2025 business target	2026 business target	2027 business target
Paper, board or fibre-based composite material	75%	77%	79%
Glass	74%	76%	78%
Aluminium	61%	62%	63%
Steel	80%	81%	82%
Plastic	55%	57%	59%
Wood	45%	46%	47%

Decide what year to use your evidence for

Once you've received the PRNs and PERNs you need, you need to use, or 'accept', them toward meeting a year's recycling obligations.

If waste is received at an accredited reprocessor or exporter in December of any year, you can choose to accept the PRN or PERN for either:

- the year the waste relates to
- next year's obligations

PRNs and PERNs that relate to months that are not December can only be used toward the recycling obligations for their accreditation year.

For example, a PRN or PERN issued under 2025 accreditation for March can only be accepted toward meeting 2025 recycling obligations. However, you can choose to accept a PRN or PERN issued for waste received or exported by an accredited reprocessor or exporter in December 2025 for meeting 2025 or 2026 recycling obligations.

The deadline for meeting each year's recycling obligations for the year ending 31 December is 31 January the following year.

For example, the deadline for acquiring PRNs or PERNs for recycling obligations relating to the 2026 year will be 31 January 2027.

Where to manage your PRNs and PERNs

The way you can access your PRNs and PERNs has changed.

Both producers who report directly and compliance schemes should use the EPR for packaging service to accept or reject PRNs and PERNs towards 2025 recycling obligations. Use your RPD account to access the service.

You cannot use the National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD) to accept or reject PRNs and PERNs.

Your specific recycling obligations for each material for 2025 will soon be calculated and visible on the EPR for packaging service after you're registered, and you've submitted both your packaging and organisation data, and the regulators have accepted it.

Until your recycling obligation has been calculated, your obligation status on the EPR for packaging service will show 'no data'.

To find out how your recycling obligation will be calculated, see schedule 5 of the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024.

How to view data from previous years

If you need to see your data from previous years, you can log into the NPWD, but you need to log into your RPD account to manage your PRNs and PERNs for your 2025 recycling obligations.

Recycling obligations and waste disposal fees for groups and

subsidiaries

If subsidiaries join or leave a group over the course of a year, responsibilities for their recycling obligations and waste disposal fees may change.

To find out how mid-year changes affect reporting and obligations, check appendix 9 of the ‘agreed positions and technical interpretations’ guidance, produced by the environmental regulators. It’s currently stored on the National Packaging Waste Database.

Waste disposal fees

If you’re a large organisation responsible for packaging, the data you collected and reported in 2024 is used to calculate the waste disposal fees you must pay in 2025. These are also called ‘waste management fees’.

Waste disposal fees only need to be paid for packaging that is classed as household, commonly binned packaging and glass household drinks containers.

Fees for packaging placed on the market in 2024 are invoiced from October 2025.

Base fees

Material	Rate (in £ per tonne)
Aluminium	266
Fibre-based composite	461
Glass	192
Paper and card	196
Plastic	423
Steel	259
Wood	280
Other	259

‘Other’ includes any materials not listed in the table. For example, bamboo, ceramic, copper, cork, hemp, rubber.

The fees are rounded to the nearest £1. Invoices are based on fees rounded to 4 decimal places.

Read more about the base fees for EPR, including how they’re calculated and future modulated fees.

Get help

If you have any questions, contact your regulator or the EPR customer service team.

Environment Agency

Email: packagingproducers@environment-agency.gov.uk

Natural Resources Wales

Email: packaging@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Email: producer.responsibility@sepa.org.uk

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Email: packaging@daera-ni.gov.uk

Defra EPR customer service

Telephone: 0300 060 0002 Monday to Friday, 8am to 4:30pm

Email: EPRCustomerService@defra.gov.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/extended-producer-responsibility-for-packaging-recycling-obligations-and-waste-disposal-fees>