



# Licensing of Waste Management Activities

Updated 01.10.2019

**NOTE:** Text underlined and in blue are hyperlinks to the documents mentioned.

It is, however, the responsibility of the reader to check that each document linked to is still relevant and has not been amended.

Waste management licenses, permits, authorisations and registration on the national [South African Waste Information System](#) (and provincial and municipal waste information systems where applicable) are required for:

## Waste Management Activities

- Collection
- Transportation
- Storage
- Re-use, recycling and recovery
- Treatment
- Disposal

## Waste Management Operators

- Waste collectors
- Waste transporters
- Waste recyclers
- Waste processors
- All those trading in waste

Find out more from your local municipality, recycling companies in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section of the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa website.

### **The IWMSA promotes professional waste management practices.**

Join us and enjoy:

- Networking with other waste management practitioners
- Updates on new developments, technology and legislation
- Quarterly newsletter and quarterly RéSource magazine.
- Special rates: IWMSA training courses, workshops and conferences

P O Box 79 Allen's Nek, 1737 Tel +27 11 675-3462, [info@iwmsa.co.za](mailto:info@iwmsa.co.za)

[www.iwmsa.co.za](http://www.iwmsa.co.za)

1. Legislation and Regulations
2. Licensing Authorities
3. Types of Waste
4. Activities requiring a Waste License
5. Environmental Impact Assessments
6. Fee Structures
7. Waste Management License Application Process
8. Provincial Government Contact Details
9. South African Waste Information System (SAWIS)

In South Africa waste management is governed by the:

- [National Environmental Management: Waste Act 2008 \(Act 59 of 2008\)](#)  
as amended by the
- [National Environmental Management: Waste Amendment Act \(26 of 2014\)](#)
- [National Environmental Management Laws Amendment Act \(25 of 2014\)](#)  
and the proposed [Amendment Bill of 2017](#)

The Waste Act promotes the waste management hierarchy as a means to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, through waste avoidance, reduction, re-use, recycling, recovery, treatment, and safe disposal as a last resort.

In order to reduce the impact on human health and the environment the Act also includes minimum requirements and licensing for activities involving the storage, transportation, re-use, recycling, treatment and disposal of waste.

Consult the [Waste Act Made Easy](#) for a user-friendly guide.

For a list of all waste-related legislation and regulations refer to the Department of Environmental Affairs website ([www.environment.go.za](http://www.environment.go.za)) and click on the Legislation link on the left-hand side of the opening page.

The Waste Act outlines the licensing authorities for different waste management activities.

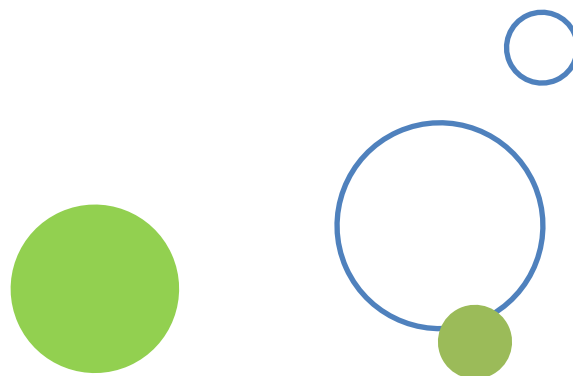
The Minister (Department of Environmental Affairs) is the licensing authority for

- hazardous waste activities (including health care risk waste), covering the establishment, operation, cessation or decommissioning of a facility at which hazardous waste has been or is to be stored, treated or disposed of.
- activities involving both hazardous and general waste at the same facility
- activities undertaken by a national department, provincial department, statutory bodies
- activities involving more than one province or crossing international boundaries
- activities involving international obligations for national government

The MEC (Member of the Executive Council of the relevant provincial department) is the licensing authority for

- all other general waste management activities within the jurisdiction of the specific province.
- the transportation of hazardous waste (including health care risk waste) within the province

Anyone offering waste management activities is required to register for authorisations / permits with the relevant local authority in which they operate. The [Current waste licenses](#) on the [South African Waste Information Centre](#) (SAWIC) website offers a search facility for current waste management licenses.



Waste is divided into two classes based on the risk it poses - general waste and hazardous waste.

**General waste** is waste that does not pose an immediate hazard or threat to health or to the environment, and includes:

- domestic waste
- building and demolition waste
- business waste
- organic waste
- inert waste
- any waste classified as non-hazardous waste in terms of the regulations

**Hazardous waste** is any waste that contains organic or inorganic elements or compounds that may, owing to its physical, chemical or toxicological content, have a detrimental impact on health and the environment, and includes electrical and electronic waste, health care risk waste and batteries.

For a detailed list of general and hazardous waste types and definitions, consult

- Annexure 3 of the [National Waste Information Regulations](#)
- Schedule 3 of the [National Environmental Management: Waste Amendment Act \(26 of 2014\)](#)

There are three categories of activities that require a waste management licence. No one may start, undertake or conduct any of these activities without a waste management licence.

For detailed requirements refer to the [List of waste management activities that have, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the environment and the Amendment to the list of waste management activities that have, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the environment](#) published in October 2017.



## CATEGORY A

Activity	Type of Waste	Volume	Size of Facility
Storage in lagoons	General Waste		
Recycling	General Waste		More than 500m <sup>2</sup>
	Hazardous Waste	More than 500kg Less than 1 ton/day	
Recovery, refining, utilisation or co-processing	General waste	More than 10 tons Less than 100 tons/day	
	Hazardous waste	More than 500kg Less than 1 ton/day	
Treatment	General waste	More than 10 tons Less than 100 tons/day	
	Hazardous waste	More than 500kg Less than 1 ton/day	
	Contaminated land remediation		
Disposal	Inert waste to land	More than 25 tons Less than 25,000 tons	
	General waste to land	Less than 25,000 tons	More than 50m <sup>2</sup> Less than 200m <sup>2</sup>
	Domestic waste in un-serviced areas	More than 500kg/month	
Construction, expansion or decommissioning of facilities for the above activities			

## CATEGORY B

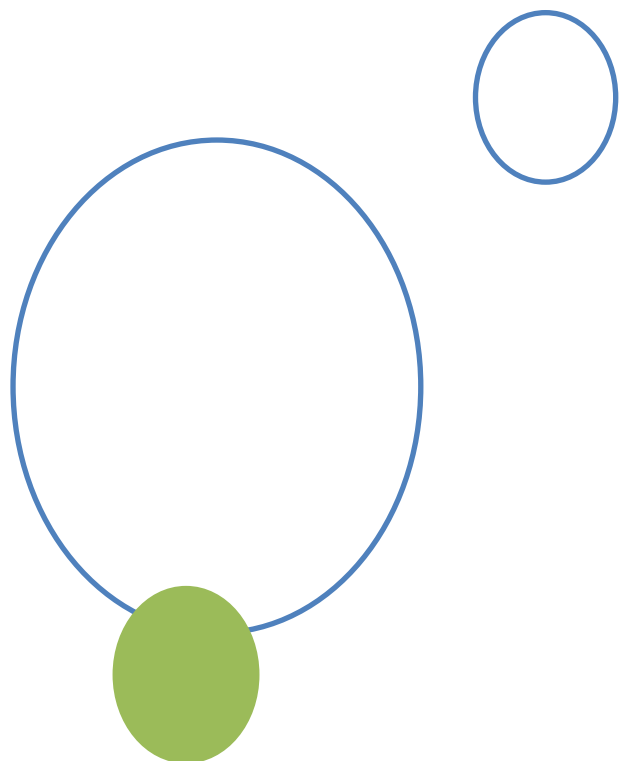
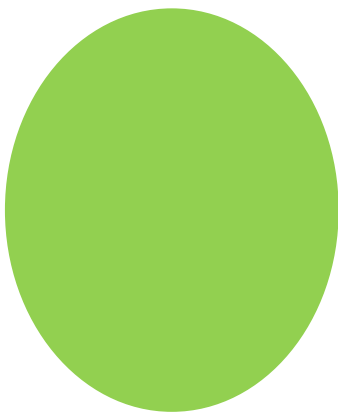
Activity	Type of Waste	Volume	Size of Facility
Storage in lagoons	Hazardous Waste		
Re-use, recycling or recovery	Hazardous Waste	More than 1 ton/day	
Recovery, refining, utilisation or co-processing	General waste	More than 100 tons/day	
	Hazardous waste	More than 1 ton/day	
Treatment	General waste	More than 100 tons/day	
	Hazardous waste	More than 1 ton/day	
	Hazardous waste in lagoons		
Disposal of waste on land	Inert waste	More than 25,000 tons	
	General waste	More than 25,000 tons	More than 200m <sup>2</sup>
	Hazardous waste	All	
Construction, expansion or decommissioning of facilities for the above activities			

## CATEGORY C

All the activities listed below are to comply with the requirements of the following:

- [National norms and standards for the storage of waste 2013](#); or
  - [National standards for the extraction, flaring or recovery of landfill gas 2013](#); or
  - [National standards for the scrapping or recovery of motor vehicles 2013](#);
- or
- [National norms and standards for the sorting, shredding, grinding, crushing, screening or baling of general waste 2017](#)

Activity	Type of Waste	Volume	Size of Facility
Storage	General Waste	More than 100m <sup>3</sup>	
	Hazardous Waste	More than 80m <sup>3</sup>	
	Waste tyres		More than 500m <sup>2</sup>
Sorting, shredding, grinding, crushing, screening or baling	General Waste		More than 1000m <sup>2</sup>
Scrapping or recovery	Motor vehicles		More than 500m <sup>2</sup>
Extraction, recovery or flaring	Landfill gas		



Based on the size, the volume of waste and the nature of the waste handled, the [Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014](#) and [Amendments published in 2017](#) determine that in order to obtain a waste management license:

- CATEGORY A activities listed above require a [Basic Assessment Process](#)
- CATEGORY B activities require a [Scoping and Environmental Impact Reporting Process](#)

The **Basic Assessment** is required for smaller-scale activities that are less likely to have serious environmental impacts, and identifies:

- possible environmental impacts of the activity
- possible ways to manage or limit these impacts
- whether there are any issues or impacts that require further investigation.

The **Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment** is a very costly and complex investigation required for activities that could cause higher levels of pollution, waste and environmental damage. The process identifies possible impacts on the biological, social, economic and cultural aspects of the environment

Anyone applying for a waste management license is required to appoint an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner, at own cost, to manage the process, as well as specialists if necessary. Contact the [Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa \(EAPASA\)](#) for more information.

[Fees charged for consideration and processing of applications for waste management licenses](#)

- **R10 000 for a S&EIR application in terms of NEMA or NEMWA;**
- **R2 000 for a basic assessment (BA) application in terms of NEMA or NEMWA;**
- **R2000 for an application for amendment of an environmental authorisation in terms of NEMA;**
- **R2000 for an application for the transfer of a waste management licence in terms of NEMWA;**
- **R2000 for an application for the renewal of a waste management licence in terms of NEMWA.**

These fees may change. Please consult the latest [Fee structure for consideration and processing of applications for waste management licenses, transfer and renewal thereof](#) for further information.

Contact the relevant waste management licensing (WML) authority, as listed in the tables below, to find out about:

- The license application process
- Integrated licenses
- Transfer, review, variation, renewal, revocation and surrender of licenses
- Availability of the current version of the relevant application forms
- Specific requirements, as each licensing authority has different requirements, e.g. number of copies, relevant reports and supporting documents
- Relevant application fee

#### For more information on licensing requirements

- Visit the [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) on the IWMSA website, as well as the [Licensing FAQs](#) on the [SAWIC](#) website.
- Although this may not be applicable for all licensing authorities, the generic [Waste Management License Application Form](#) gives an idea of the information required
- Refer to chapter 5 of the [National Environmental Management: Waste Act 2008 \(Act 59 of 2008\)](#)

#### GENERAL WASTE

Activity	Application Type	Licensing Authority
Re-use, recycling, recovery, treatment and disposal	Waste management license	Provincial Government (See item 8 for contact details and guidelines)
Storage	Registration to comply with <a href="#">Norms and Standards for Storage of Waste, 2013</a>	Provincial Government (See item 8 for contact details and guidelines)

#### HAZARDOUS WASTE (including Health Care Risk Waste)

Activity	Application Type	Licensing Authority
Re-use, recycling, recovery, treatment and disposal	<a href="#">Waste management license</a>	Department of Environmental Affairs: Mr Lucas Mahlangu Tel: 012 399 9791 Email: <a href="mailto:LMahlangu@environment.gov.za">LMahlangu@environment.gov.za</a>
Storage	Register to comply with the <a href="#">Norms and Standards for Storage of Waste 2013</a>	Department of Environmental Affairs Mr Lucas Mahlangu Tel: 012 399 9791 Email: <a href="mailto:LMahlangu@environment.gov.za">LMahlangu@environment.gov.za</a>
Transportation	Authorisation	Provincial Government (See item 8 for contact details)



## TREATMENT FACILITY

Activity	Application Type	Licensing Authority
Operation of a health care risk waste (HCRW) treatment facility	<a href="#">Waste management license</a>	Department of Environmental Affairs Mr Lucas Mahlangu Tel: 012 399 9791 Email: <a href="mailto:LMahlangu@environment.gov.za">LMahlangu@environment.gov.za</a>
Treatment of hazardous waste	<a href="#">Waste Management License</a>	Department of Environmental Affairs Mr Lucas Mahlangu Tel: 012 399 9791 Email: <a href="mailto:LMahlangu@environment.gov.za">LMahlangu@environment.gov.za</a>

## LANDFILL SITE OPERATIONS

Activity	Application Type	Licensing Authority
Operation of a GLB+, GLB-, GMB+ or GMB (B, C and D class landfills) site, as per the <a href="#">1998 Minimum Requirements for Disposal by Landfill</a> , read together with the <a href="#">2013 National Norms And Standards for Disposal of Waste to Landfill</a>	Waste Management License	Provincial Government (See item 8 for contact details)
Operation of a H:H or H:h landfill site, as per the Minimum Requirements for Disposal by Landfill	<a href="#">Waste Management License</a>	Department of Environmental Affairs Mr Lucas Mahlangu Tel: 012 399 9791 Email: <a href="mailto:LMahlangu@environment.gov.za">LMahlangu@environment.gov.za</a>

### IMPORTANT:

In addition to the above applications, anyone involved in the following in a specific municipal area should consult the relevant municipality or waste management by-laws to identify waste management activities that require municipal accreditation, registration and/or a permit.

- collection,
- transportation,
- recycling,
- treatment and disposal of general, health care risk waste or hazardous waste



Note: At time of compilation, a number of provincial environmental departments are in a state of change, and many links to waste management services are dead or do not exist. This list was updated in October 2019 and what details are given may have changed.

Province/Tel No.	Department	Postal & Website Address
Eastern Cape 043 605 7000	Economic Development, Environmental Affairs & Tourism	P/Bag X0054 Bhisho 5605 <a href="http://www.dedea.gov.za">www.dedea.gov.za</a>
Free State 051 400 4800	Economic, Small BusinessDevelopment, Tourism & Environmental Affairs	Private Bag X20801 Bloemfontein 9300 <a href="http://www.edtea.fs.gov.za/?page_id=1469">http://www.edtea.fs.gov.za/?page_id=1469</a> WML Application Forms <a href="http://www.edtea.fs.gov.za/?page_id=1375">http://www.edtea.fs.gov.za/?page_id=1375</a>
Gauteng 011 355 1804	Agriculture & Rural Development	PO Box 8769 Johannesburg 2000 <a href="http://www.gwis.gpg.gov.za/">http://www.gwis.gpg.gov.za/</a> Gauteng Waste Management Licenses, Authorisations, Registrations <a href="mailto:wastemanagementenquiries@gauteng.gov.za">wastemanagementenquiries@gauteng.gov.za</a>
KwaZulu-Natal 033 264 2500	Economic Development. Tourism & Environmental Affairs. Dept Environmental Management	Private Bag X9152 Pietermaritzburg 3200 <a href="http://www.kznedtea.gov.za">www.kznedtea.gov.za</a> WML Application Forms: <a href="http://www.iwmsa.co.za/Useful-Links">www.iwmsa.co.za/Useful-Links</a>
Mpumalanga 013 766 6020	Agriculture, Rural Development, Land & Environmental Affairs	Private Bag X11215 Mbombela 1200 <a href="http://dardla.mpg.gov.za/">http://dardla.mpg.gov.za/</a> NOTE: Site not working in October 2109
Limpopo 015 293 8648	Economic Development, Environment & Tourism	Private Bag X9486 Polokwane 0700 <a href="http://www.ledet.gov.za/?page_id=119">http://www.ledet.gov.za/?page_id=119</a>
North West 018 387 7700	Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism	Private Bag X15 Mmabatho 2735 <a href="http://www.nwpg.gov.za/dedect/">http://www.nwpg.gov.za/dedect/</a>
Northern Cape 053 807 7300	Environment and Nature Conservation	Private Bag X6120 Kimberley 8301 <a href="http://www.northern-cape.gov.za/denc/index.php/programmes/programme-4/pollution-and-waste-management">http://www.northern-cape.gov.za/denc/index.php/programmes/programme-4/pollution-and-waste-management</a>
Western Cape 021 483 4091	Environmental Affairs & Development Planning	Private Bag X9086 Cape Town, 8000 <a href="https://www.westerncape.gov.za/eadp/about-us/our-services">https://www.westerncape.gov.za/eadp/about-us/our-services</a>

Anyone involved in the following activities is required to register on the [South African Waste Information System \(SAWIS\)](#)

- **Generators** of more than 20kg of hazardous waste/day
- **Recovery or recycling of waste**
  - Energy recovery from general waste of more than 3 tons/day, calculated daily as a monthly average
  - Recovery of waste at a facility that has the capacity to process in excess of 10 tons of general waste or in excess of 100kg of hazardous waste per day, excluding recovery that takes place an integral part of an internal manufacturing process within the same premises
  - The scrapping or recovery of motor vehicles at a facility of more than 500m<sup>2</sup>
  - Recycling of general waste at a facility of more than 500m<sup>2</sup>
  - Recycling of more than 500kg hazardous waste per day
- **Treatment of waste**
  - Treatment of general waste at a facility able to process more than 10 tons of general waste or 500kg of hazardous waste per day excluding the treatment of effluent, wastewater or sewerage
  - Treatment of health care risk waste regardless of facility size or capacity
- **Disposal of waste**
  - Disposal of general waste to land covering more than 200m<sup>2</sup>
  - Disposal of any quantity of hazardous waste to land
- **Export of hazardous waste** from the Republic of South Africa.
- **Transportation of Waste**
  - Transportation of waste for gain, excluding when the transportation is done by a municipality

Refer to the [National Waste Information Regulations](#) for detailed registration and reporting requirements.

Please note that there are [Proposed amendments to the regulations cover reporting requirements, the registration of persons transporting waste for gain as well as other waste-related activities.](#)

Contact relevant provincial departments and municipalities to find out whether they have a provincial or municipal Waste Information System in place.



Institute of  
Waste Management  
of Southern Africa

Compiled by Liz Kneale

Updated by Peter Davies: October 2019