

# 5. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## 1 PASSWORD

### What do I do if I forget my password?

If you are a Data Entry User, your Authority Administrator User has the ability to reissue you with a new password. The Authority Administrator User should go to the "User Administrator" option under the "Management" menu and click on the "Edit" section for the relevant user's entry and click on the "Password" button. Alternatively, you may contact the helpline by telephone on 0161 874 3602 or e-mail [wastedataflow@enviros.com](mailto:wastedataflow@enviros.com) where a member of the helpline team will assist.

### When I enter the correct username and password I am unable to log on to the site. What should I do?

WasteDataFlow uses "cookies" to ensure that only authorised users can access the site. In some organisations the default web browser settings do not allow cookies to be used, which results in access to the website being denied. To gain access you should contact your IT department to have the WasteDataFlow cookie allowed on your machine.

### How can I change my password?

You can change your password by clicking on the "Change Password" option under the "Management" menu.

## 2 RETURNS

### How often do I need to enter data?

Most of the data can be entered on a monthly or quarterly basis according to how frequently you receive the information. Some questions are only asked on an annual basis.

The advantage of entering monthly data is that more detailed reports (graphs, tables etc) will be generated from the database. The more data you put in, the more information you can get out.

WasteDataFlow returns are required quarterly. Annual questions will be completed and returned with the last quarter of the financial year. Welsh local authorities have 1 month after the end of a quarter to make their return, Scottish local authorities have 42 days, Northern Irish local authorities have 2 months and English local authorities have 3 months to return their data.

To enter quarterly data, select the last month of the quarter you are interested in, you may then start answering the questions. Please save your work before you start moving to another question as omitting to do so means your data will be lost.

### Who authorises my data?

Once the data for a quarter has been entered and saved, the person entering the data (an Authority Data Entry User) the data must be approved by a second person, typically a manager / Head of section (an Authority Administrator User). This person will have a separate password and access rights to the web site. The Authority Administrator User's role is to review the data inputted and ensure it is accurate before authorising and submitting the data into the WasteDataFlow database.

Once the data has been submitted to the WasteDataFlow website as approved, it can be viewed by the local authority but it is no longer accessible by the local authority for editing. It will then be validated and signed off by the responsible regional or national authorities (for more details, please refer to levels 30, 35, and 40 in table located under 2.1.1)

### Who are the National level authorities?

The National level authorities are detailed in the table located under 2.1.1.

### 3 ACCESS / AMEND THE DATA

#### Who can view my data?

In WasteDataFlow, the data is located in two distinct domains, the local authority domain and the non-local authority domain. This depends on the level of the data.

Data in the process of being entered in the system by the data entry person as well as data that has been rolled up for review by the administrator user are in the local authority domain. In other words, data at level 0, 10 and 20 are still in the local authority domain. It cannot be viewed by anyone other than those issued with a username and password within the local authority.

Data which has been reviewed and authorised by the Administrator User has been submitted to the WasteDataFlow database. It is hence viewable by the relevant national level authorities who will validate the data. Data will also be viewable via reports to fellow local authorities who may want to benchmark themselves against your authority. Benchmarking can take place against a series of performance indicators such as *recycling* rates, waste arisings, Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) in England, or National Assembly Wales Performance Indicators (NAWPI's) in Wales or Key Performances Indicators (KPIs) in Northern Ireland.

Until the data is fully validated and fit for publication, it will only be viewable by local authorities and national bodies. In the near future, it is planned to add to WasteDataFlow a read-only access function to allow information to be available to a larger audience.

#### How can I amend or edit my data?

Data that has not yet been authorised outside the local authority domain can be amended or edited. If the Data Entry User has already submitted the data to the Administrator User for reviewing before full submission to the WasteDataFlow database, then the latter can release the data back down to the Data Entry User level for modifications. If the Data Entry User has not yet submitted the data for reviewing by the administrator user then they can amend the data themselves.

It requires a person at the level of access that the data is currently at to release the data back down a level until it reaches level 0, where it can be modified by the Data Entry User.

## 4 LACK OF DATA / ESTIMATED DATA

### Can I submit estimated data?

Every effort should be made to obtain actual figures. However, it is possible that in some cases contractors or reprocessors may not be able to deliver waste data in time to incorporate it into a quarterly submission. In these instances estimated data should be supplied, based on initial weighbridge data and previous experience.

If data arrives after the cut-off point (see above), then any discrepancy in the data should be taken account of in the next quarterly submission, with an accompanying note explaining where any amendment has been made. This adjustment will not be possible across the year-end and hence tonnages should balance out by the end of the respective year.

### What do I do if I cannot obtain data quickly enough from reprocessors / contractors?

Where data cannot be obtained in time for a quarterly submission, then estimated data will need to be supplied (see previous question).

### What do I do if I discover an error in my data after submission?

If an error is discovered after having submitted data to the WasteDataFlow database for validation (i.e. after being approved and submitted by the Authority), then the relevant 'National' authority will need to be contacted through the WasteDataFlow helpline in order to release the data back to the data entry level (please refer to the table located under section 2.1.1 for more detailed information on National authorities).

### What sort of reports can I produce from the database?

WasteDataFlow enables users to produce a series of reports involving graphs and tables of data. For more detailed information on each type of report available please consult sections 4.1 for Basic Reports, 4.2 for Benchmarking Reports, and 4.3 for Trend Analysis Reports. Examples include reports on Government Performance Indicators (BVPI's in England, NAWPI's in Wales and KPIs in Northern Ireland) quantities of *biodegradable municipal waste* diverted from landfill and benchmarking reports of performance against other named authorities.

### Can I skip questions and go back to them later?

When completing WasteDataFlow you will be able to enter some data, save it; move to another question and return to them later for completion. All the data you have saved before moving to another question will still be available when you return to it. Ultimately, each question needs to be answered and ticked "Question Complete" to submit a quarterly return. A comment should be made in the "Comments" box when questions are not applicable (e.g., No organic waste collection). Similarly, a note of how the data was estimated should be specified in the box where relevant.

### How do I convert items (such as bric a brac, WEEE) into tonnages?

Wherever possible waste items should be weighed, however, if this is not possible, for example *reuse* of furniture or *bric a brac*, please use the standard weights of appliances and goods derived from the 'Measure your Treasure' document (produced by the Community Recycling Network) in order to calculate tonnages as included in the guidance to the relevant questions. See Appendix 2.

### **What is the deadline for submitting data?**

The deadline for submitting data for a particular quarter onto the website (i.e. data entered and approved by the Authority) is dependent on your country.

England – the deadline for completion of data is 3 months after the end of the quarter i.e. for the April – June quarter, the deadline for completion and approval by the Authority is the 30th September.

Wales – the deadline for completion of data is 30 days after end of quarter.

Northern Ireland – the deadline for completion of data is 2 months after end of quarter.

Scotland – the deadline for completion of data is 42 days after end of quarter

### **Do I need to complete questions that are not relevant to my Authority?**

Yes, all questions should be completed. It will not be possible to submit the quarterly return unless all questions have been answered. On each question where data is not entered, a comment should be submitted in the Comments Box as to the reason, for example “no organic waste collection”.

### **How can I add a comment or qualify my submission?**

There is a Comments Box facility for any additional notes an Authority wishes to make, for example where any data has been estimated. If the Authority has a query or an issue to raise, the helpline should be used rather than the Comments Box.

### **Who is authorised to use WasteDataFlow?**

When a local authority registers with WasteDataFlow they will be given a username and password for an Authority Administrator User. The Authority Administrator User can then use the website to create as many Authority Data Entry Users as the local authority requires.

There is no public access to the database. In the near future, it is planned to add to WasteDataFlow a read-only access function to allow information to be available to a larger audience.