



WasteDataFlow Newsletter

ISSUE 8

Welcome to the Winter 2008 edition of your WasteDataFlow Newsletter

This is the eighth quarterly newsletter and is aimed at providing Local Authority Users, External Users and other interested parties with an update on the WasteDataFlow system including any new developments and performance.

If there are specific topics that readers would like to see covered in future newsletters, please provide feedback through the User Groups or the WasteDataFlow Helpdesk.

England National Statistics

Defra published the National Statistics for England in November.

The headline is that we are recycling more, landfilling less and generating nearly 30kg per head less municipal waste.

WasteDataFlow Helpdesk

Please remember that as for previous years the WasteDataFlow helpdesk will not be manned over Christmas and New Year.

The helpdesk for phone and email will close at 12.00 on Wednesday 24th December and reopen at 9.00 on Monday 5th January.

In this issue

- England National Statistics
- EA LATS review
- WDF system update
- LATS Annual Report 2007/8

England Quarter 2 0809 deadline approaching

Please ensure that you have submitted your Quarter 2 return to level 30 by Wednesday 31st December. Failure to meet the deadline can lead to penalties being issued by Defra.

Please inform the WDF team if the Local Authority contact for validation queries has changed since Quarter 1.

I don't need to remind you it is Christmas time, so please try and be early.

LATS Annual Report 2007/08

The Environment Agency published the Annual Report for England in November.

The headline is that all authorities met their allowances, the amount of BMW being landfilled is falling and no authorities were liable for penalties. There is good progress towards 2010 target.

HANDY HINTS

- Training courses are being run now for England local authorities. Check with the helpdesk for more details.
- Try and have cover for data-entry users, especially during deadline time. It is also best practice that the data-entry person does not do authorisation of a return..
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NEWS

- The deadline for England quarter 2 0809 returns is Wednesday 31st December.
- National statistics for England released
- New functionality on WasteDataFlow software due soon
- Northern Ireland 07/08 MSW data published in Excel format.

New Leader of Defra Waste Statistics team

On 17 November, David Lee replaced Jane Hinton as leader of the Defra Waste Statistics team. David was previously responsible for water statistics, publications, being the UK National Focal Point for the European Environment Agency, and working in Defra's project team working on the INSPIRE directive on geographical information, where he learned a lot about mapping data and policy.

Prior to this David has worked on administrative and sample surveys in the fields of agriculture, household food consumption and fisheries. After a few years working on general topics he is looking forward to the chance to get back to focusing on the complicated area of waste, and learning about the industry and its data collection issues.

David says "I have realised how important WasteDataFlow is to understanding the situation in the UK, and how much we rely on colleagues in local authorities to help us with data collection. I would like to say to those colleagues that your data allows us to support policymakers in Defra, and helps us provide answers to many people who are interested in this important area: from local to global - the waste community, general public and politicians, amongst others. We are really grateful for your help, and want to make sure WasteDataFlow is useful to you. The WasteDataFlow helpdesk is always happy to help with any problems or questions about your returns. You can also pass on your comments through your local User Group representative <http://www.wastedataflow.co.uk/html/partners.aspx>. I hope to meet as many of our colleagues as I can in time, but in the meantime thanks for all your help."

England Official Municipal Waste Statistics Release

At the beginning of November Defra released two sets of municipal waste statistics. The National Statistics for England and the regions at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/statistics/wastats/bulletin08.htm> showing the following headline results for 2007/8:

- There was an increase in the national household recycling rate, from 30.9% in 2006/7 to 34.5% in 2007/8.
- Less municipal waste was sent to landfill, decreasing from 16.9 to 15.5 million tonnes, or 54% of total municipal waste.
- Total municipal waste decreased by 0.6 million tonnes from 29.1 million tonnes to 28.5 million tonnes, or 2.2%. A decrease in total household waste was also observed, from 25.8 to 25.3 million tonnes.
- The average residual household waste per head decreased from 353kg per head in 2006/7 to 324 kg per head in 2007/8.

And the Local Authority performance figures for 2007/8, including BVPIs, at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2008/081106b.htm> showing that:

- 90 per cent of local authorities met or exceeded their recycling targets;
- 90 per cent of local authorities had less residual rubbish (or 'black bag' waste) to collect than in 2006/07;
- 94 per cent of authorities recycled and composted more of their household waste than in 2006/07; and
- 72 per cent of authorities sent a lower percentage of their municipal waste to landfill than in 2006/07.

User Groups

England

The England User Group met on the 10th September. The papers and results from the meeting will be available on the WasteDataFlow website under "Who's Who" then "Project Management". This was the 7th meeting and was well attended.

To find out who your User Group representative is or read the User Group documentation please go to the main web site at: <http://www.wastedataflow.co.uk/htm/partners.aspx>

Scotland

The next WDF User Group for Scotland will take place on the 8th January. During 2008 the User group was open to 18 local authorities on a rota basis, in order to allow for everybody to attend at some point. In July all local authority representative have been invited to attend. For 2009 a different format of the User Group will be adopted. Seven local authority representatives volunteered to become regular members of the User Group, of which five will be attending on a regular basis.

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland User Group met on 25th September. Presentations included WasteDataFlow developments, Waste Statistics Regulations, and options for material selection on WasteDataFlow. A User Group meeting will be convened in the New Year.

Northern Ireland published its annual municipal solid waste report during November on the NIEA website at: http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/waste/municipal_data_reporting.htm. This was the first time that such a report has been published in an Excel format moving away from previous text based reports. It is hoped that by publishing the report in this format will offer greater flexibility to interested parties.

Wales

The last meeting of the Welsh User Group took place on the 26th November. Minutes will be distributed once finalised. The group welcomed new member Beth Jones (Blaenau Gwent) as representative for Valley authorities, replacing Val Steel, who we would like to thank for her time on the group.

It was also decided a new representative would be added to the group for rural authorities, this will be Shaun Morris from Powys, who will attend the next meeting. The date of the next meeting has yet to be arranged but details will be distributed. If you have anything you wish to be raised please contact your representative.

LATS report 2007/08

The 2007/08 LATS report shows that all English local authorities met their allowances and the amount of BMW going to landfill is falling. No authorities were liable for penalties.

This represents good progress towards meeting England's allocation of the EU's 2010 target for reducing landfilled BMW. All 121 of the authorities responsible for this are to be congratulated.

The amount of BMW landfilled in England in 2007/08 was 10.6 million tonnes. This is already well below the 11.2 million tonnes limit for 2010 and a considerable drop from the 11.5 million tonnes landfilled in 2006/07. However there is no room for complacency. The UK's 2010 target is to cut the BMW going to landfill to 75% of 1995 levels and the 2013 target, is to cut this to half of that landfilled in 1995. Ultimately the 2020 goal is a 65% reduction against the 1995 amount.

Details from the LATS report finds WDAs and UAs are using banking, borrowing and trading to varying degrees. Just under 5.8 million surplus allowances were banked into 2007/08. In terms of borrowing, only one authority borrowed from its 2008/09 allocation, which is the same as in the previous reporting period. However, authorities cannot bank into, or borrow from, the target years 2010, 2013 and 2020. Surplus allowances will be lost at the close of the current 2008/09 trading year since they can not be banked into the target year.

A total of 160,886 allowances were traded for 2007/08 by 19 authorities with a total value over £1.9 million. The average price per allowance traded was £12.08 while the total value of all LATS trades so far is close to £16 million. Just 36% of authorities traded allowances during the first three years of the scheme but trading will almost certainly have to rise if 2013 targets are to be met.

In other areas of LATS, the 2007/08 results show significant improvements in reporting and validating LATS data on time. However the Environment Agency did need to use its powers to serve 17 notices for failure to reach Level 35 on time, one notice for incorrect reporting of commercial waste and 16 notices for failure to supply information regarding MRF reject rates.

The LATS operational review is complete and focussed on systems and processes. There are 29 recommendations to improve the scheme. The review and Government's response have been published by Defra.

Other developments during 2007/08 include:

- Almost 300 local authority officers took part in online WDF training sessions run by Enviro Consulting (Ltd)
- Meetings were held for local authorities in all nine regions about WDF and data reporting data. Questions and answers are published on WDF.
- Frequently Asked Questions were produced on reporting collected municipal waste to help with consistent data reporting.
- LATS Guidance on Reporting, Notices and Penalties was published and revised recently in response to feedback to allow authorities to change validated data twice a year rather than just once per year.
- There have been continuing improvements to WDF, including the XML (eXtensible Markup Language) data upload tool to help local authorities enter data more easily. Also authorities can now choose as many destinations as they need for the waste disposal questions (Qus 51-65) rather than just two

Overall, the 2007/08 LATS report evidences good progress in reducing BMW to landfill but this work has to continue if the much bigger targets ahead are to be met. Given the potential £150 per tonne fines for offenders and the possibility that government may pass on a proportion of any EU fines to individual authorities, all authorities should be thinking about their strategy to meet the 2013 target now if the positive trend of recent years is to be continued.

The full report is available is at: <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEHO1108BOWX-E->



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Landfill Allowances Schemes

England

Environment Agency's LATS web site is: :

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32130.aspx>.

You can contact us at: The National Customer Contact Centre: 0870 850 6506.

Please see the notice above; also there are some notes on LATS in the England User Group. The notice letter mentioned in the EA message above is available on the WDF website.

Scotland

The data for Q1 was published on the 13th November and is available on:

http://www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/waste_data_reports/landfill_allowance.aspx

The LAS is still under review in Scotland.

Northern Ireland

The annual NILAS Report for 2007/08 was published during October on NIEA's website at www.ni-environment.gov.uk/waste/municipal_data_reporting.htm

Wales

All data for July-September has been rolled up and validated. For quarter 2, there were two authorities over quarterly allowance. All others were under 90% of allowance.

The LAS audits have now all been completed. After consultation it is hoped the audit reports will be available online early in the New Year.

WDF Online Training Sessions for England

Since October 2008 we have run 15 web training sessions.

Online training courses are run free of charge covering the following topics: New Users, Reports, LATS and Performance Indicators.

By the end of December we expect to have had 20 sessions and trained over 200 people.

For more information on the content covered in the sessions or to be added to the training waiting list please contact the helpline.

Response Rates

England

We are now receiving and validating the quarter 2 returns for 2008/9 year. The deadline for submission is the 31st December. The deadline for the returns to then be validated and approved is 31st January.

All returns for quarter 1 2008/9 scheme year are submitted and validated. For quarter 2 currently 274 returns are being worked on by local authorities, of which 92 are submitted for validation and 24 actually validated to level 35.

Interestingly 53 local authorities are also working on the quarter 3 data. By 'working on', we mean that the quarter has been rolled up at least once.

Scotland

The deadline for reporting Q2 for Scotland was the 11th November. 21 local authorities (66%) submitted the data on time and 7 local authorities (22%) submitted the data within a week of the deadline. Two local authorities were more than 20 days late with their submission.

The data for Q3 is due to be reported by the 11 February 2009

Northern Ireland

The deadline for reporting July to September data was end of November. 26 district councils (100%) had submitted returns to their regional waste management groups at level 30 by the deadline. 25 district councils (96%) had their data authorised to NIEA at level 35 by their regional waste management group prior to the deadline.

Wales

Roll up to level 30 improved from 68% on time in Q1 to 82% on time in Q2. The main reasons for delay are problems using WDF or staffing issues. If you would like to arrange for training for new users please contact Alex Ross (alex.ross@environment-agancey.gov.uk).

In Quarter 2 100% of data was rolled to level 35 on time.

System News

This section gives an overview of the features of WasteDataFlow that you may not be fully aware of.

XML news

The XML functionality is up and running on WDF. We have added a training course for this into the web based training for England local authorities.

One thing is worth mentioning here as it has come up a couple of times via the helpline. The XML upload is designed only to replace the keying in of data into the questions. It is a manual process to load the XML file to the WasteDataFlow system and then the normal question complete, quarterly roll-up and authorisation processes must be completed.

There are guidance documents on the Datasets page of the website with information on how to use the XML Excel tool and how to use the XML upload functionality. If you are interested in using the upload functionality please consult your IT department, colleagues, contractor or supplier that has supported your waste information system(s).

Selection list management

There is no a selection list management screen that allows far greater searching of the available facilities.

The searching is now by name, address, licence number and type.

There has been some feedback for the next phase around the way the current items on a question list are presented. If you have any thoughts on this then do let us now either via your user rep or the helpline.

Change to log-in

The log-in process has been changed so that you log in before seeing any menus. This means we can avoid the confusion of menus that are visible but do not allow the user access.

We have also introduced a time-out on the system, such that if you don't have any interaction with the web site for over one hour you will be logged off.

New reports page

There is a new reports page with functionality to allow easy benchmarking of nearest neighbours. It will also facilitate the next release of new reports.

For all the developments there are guidance notes on the WasteDataFlow web site.