

NetRegs

Your guide to environmental law affecting your business

Welcome to the April update from NetRegs. It's time to spring into action with new environmental legislation designed to make your business greener. With everyone looking to cut costs as we go into a tough new financial year, find out how keeping up to date with the latest regulations doesn't have to cost the earth and could save you money.

If you pollute, you pay



There is now a greater financial incentive than ever to green your business activities if you want to avoid expensive clean-ups. Since the [Environmental Damage Regulations 2009](#) came into force in England on 1 March you no longer have to be prosecuted before you

can be made to deal with pollution caused by your business. This means that if your activities threaten to damage, or have damaged, water, land, natural habitats or species, you have to alert your environmental regulator and do whatever is necessary to prevent or repair the damage. Similar regulations are expected in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland later this year. See our [Environmental Damage Regulations guidance](#).

In this issue:

- Environmental damage
- PCBs
- Gypsum ban from landfill
- Hazardous waste
- Site waste management plans
- Environmental permitting phase 2
- CRC seminars

Spread the word

Do you know a business that would benefit from staying informed, saving money and going green with NetRegs updates? [Recommend us to a friend](#).

Help us to help you

Do you work in metals production? Do you have a question about how to green your business or comply with the regulations? Email us at news@netregs.gov.uk and we'll do our best to answer it when we update our guidance on NetRegs.

Clamp down on PCBs



The environmental regulators are advising anyone still in possession of equipment contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to register it, and arrange to dispose of it safely or have it decontaminated. PCBs are highly

toxic man-made chemicals that were used commonly as coolants in transformers and other electrical components until they were banned from production in the 1980s. Our [PCB page](#) explains what equipment is most likely to be affected.

Gypsum banned from landfill



Sulphates in gypsum from waste plasterboard can produce toxic hydrogen sulphide gas when they come in to contact with biodegradable waste in landfill. To combat this, all gypsum waste in any quantity is banned from normal landfill from 1 April, and must now go to a separate cell for high sulphate waste.

This ban was already in place in Scotland. Read more on [how to dispose of your plasterboard and other construction waste](#).

Hazardous waste burden eased for business



In England, the amount of hazardous waste you can produce in a year without registering with the Environment Agency is rising from 200kg to 500kg on 6 April in a bid to ease the burden for businesses. There are still strict controls on how this waste is stored, moved and disposed of, so check you're in line

with the law with our [hazardous waste guidance](#).

Dates for your diary

Meet the NetRegs team at the [Business Advice Open Day](#) at Ramada Hotel and Resort, Maidstone on Thursday 30 April, and at the [May Day Business Summit on Climate Change at Our Dynamic Earth](#), Edinburgh on Friday 1 May.

Word of the month

Bioaccumulation (*noun*)

The increase in concentration of toxic substances (identified as 'of very high concern' by the REACH regulations) such as pesticides or other organic chemicals in an organism over time via a food chain.



Construction clean-up



As the economic downturn continues, construction businesses are being urged to save money by cutting out unnecessary waste. Site waste management plans (SWMPs) have been a legal requirement for construction projects over £300k in England for a year now, and are best practice in the rest of the UK. They will go

into consultation in Wales later this year, so why not check out our [guidance on SWMPs](#) for ideas on how to manage and reduce your waste ahead of the new legislation?

Environmental permits enter phase 2



The environmental permits system that currently controls industrial activities and waste management in England and Wales could soon be expanded to include other pollution prevention measures – water discharge consents, groundwater authorisations and radioactive substances regulation. The plans should further lighten

your administrative load and make it easier for you to comply with the regulations. [Read up on the proposals and have your say by 11 May.](#)

Get clued up on the carbon reduction commitment



If you could do with some extra guidance on what you'll need to do from next year to comply with the carbon reduction commitment (CRC), sign up to attend a [free seminar](#) with the Environment Agency in England and Wales, SEPA in Scotland or NIEA in Northern Ireland. Read our brief summary for the [background to the CRC](#).

We're back in Welsh!



Good news for Welsh speakers: the new-look NetRegs is once again available in Welsh. Just click on the [Cymraeg](#) tab at the top of any NetRegs page.

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