

Terms used in packaging recycling

Below is a list of terms used in reference to packaging recycling and producer responsibility.

Producer responsibility

Producer responsibility for packaging

As regards to packaging, producers are companies who pack or import packed goods for the Finnish market, and whose turnover is over EUR 1 million. The majority of these are Finnish businesses. According to the guidelines adopted on 1 May 2015 by the Pirkanmaa ELY Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, a producer is a firm that:

- has a Finnish business ID and at least one office in mainland Finland,
- has a turnover of over EUR 1 million in Finland,
- packs products in Finland or imports packed products for the Finnish market.

For a foreign company to be a producer, the following conditions need to be met: a branch of the company has been entered in the Finnish Trade Register, the branch has a Finnish business ID, and its place of business is in mainland Finland.

A Finnish firm, whose turnover is over EUR 1 million, is also regarded a packaging producer when it buys packed goods from a foreign company that does not meet all the above-mentioned criteria.

Producer responsibility

Producer responsibility is an approach where a company is responsible for the reuse, recycling and other waste management issues related to its products, and for the resulting costs. According to the Waste Act, producer responsibility pertains to companies which – irrespective of the method of selling – import or manufacture tyres from motor vehicles, cars, electronic and electrical appliances, batteries and accumulators, recyclable paper products and packaging.

Producer organisation

Producers can manage their producer responsibility by joining a producer organisation in their respective field. Producer organisations have legal capacity and are officially registered. Producer organisations organise the recycling of end-of-life products in such a way that the objectives of the legislation are achieved.

Packaging

Packaging

Packaging is defined in the Council of State decree 518/2014 and its annex. Packaging preserves and protects a product, and enables product handling and transport from producer to consumer or other users. Packaging provides information on the product and helps in the selling, marketing and in-store display of the product. All reinforcement and components of packaging, such as labels, constitute packaging. In addition, any product or one-way product that fulfils any of the functions of a package is considered a packaging.

Sales packaging

Sales packaging is intended to be used to pack a product for sale. Examples include milk cartons, cereal packaging, detergent bottles, food cans, paint pots and food tins.

Grouped packaging

Grouped packaging comprises packaging used for product collation in addition to sales packaging. Group packaging may either be used at the point of sale or a product line may be sold collated in grouped packaging. Grouped packaging containing products packed in sales packaging may be intended for use by consumers or firms. Examples include corrugated cardboard trays, display racks, and plastic or cardboard wrapping material, such as packs for grouping together beer cans.

Transport packaging

Transport packaging comprises packaging used to transport products in addition to sales and grouped packaging. Examples include wooden, plastic or corrugated cardboard pallets, metal roller cages, corrugated cardboard, plastic or wooden boxes or crates, plastic pallet hoods and metal or plastic strapping. Note! Containers with a volume of over 1000 litres used in road, rail, sea or air freight are not classified as packaging.

Packaging for consumers

Packaging for consumers comprises the packaging for products that are intended to go to consumers or households such as sales packaging, as well as some grouped and transport packaging.

Packaging for firms

Packaging for firms comprises the packaging for products that are only intended for use in the trade between firms or to display products in retail outlets

Waste

Waste

Waste is defined in Section 5 of the Waste Act 646/2011. Waste means any substance or object which the holder discards, intends to discard or is required to discard.

Biowaste

Biowaste is biodegradable food and kitchen waste produced by households, restaurants, catering and retail businesses or food industry, or biodegradable garden and park waste.

Special waste

Special waste is waste that is not classified as hazardous waste, but which due to its harmfulness, quality or quantity requires special processing or measures during collection or transportation. This category includes sharp, odorous and dusty waste.

Recyclables

Recyclables are waste collected for recycling or other type of recovery.

Packaging waste

Packaging waste is packaging material and packaging removed from use. Reusable packaging is packaging waste only when it can no longer be prepared for reuse.

Production waste produced in packaging manufacturing is not considered packaging waste.

Garden waste

Garden waste is biodegradable waste such as grasses, leaves, twigs and branches.

Construction and demolition waste

Construction and demolition waste is generated during the construction, renovation and demolition of buildings or structures, or waste from earth, water or similar construction.

Mixed waste

Mixed waste is what remains when the separately collected waste has been recovered by sorting at source. Also known as mixed municipal waste.

Waste under producer responsibility

Waste under producer responsibility is waste where the management and the resulting costs of which are borne as per Section 6 of the Waste Act by the importer or producer of the end-of-life product, or by a producer organisation acting on its behalf. These include tyres from motor vehicles, cars, electronic and electrical appliances, batteries and accumulators, recyclable paper products and packaging.

Hazardous waste

Hazardous waste means any waste with properties that render it flammable or explosive, infectious, poisonous, corrosive or otherwise hazardous to human health or the environment.

Municipal waste

Municipal waste means waste generated in permanent dwellings, holiday homes, residential homes and other forms of dwelling, including sludge in cesspools and septic tanks, as well as waste comparable in its nature to household waste generated by administrative, service, business and industrial activities.

Collection and transportation

Regional collection point

Regional collection point is a waste collection point organised by a municipality or a municipal waste management authority to which households not covered by the municipal solid waste collection

deliver their mixed municipal waste and possibly also other types of waste.

Recycling point, recycling station, take-back point

Recycling point, recycling station, take-back point is a collection point organised by a municipality, municipal waste management authority or a producer where consumers can leave their sorted waste. The point must collect at least one type of recyclable or recoverable waste. No mixed waste is collected.

Rinki eco take-back point

Rinki eco take-back point is a collection point for packaging waste or material where consumers can recycle fibre, glass, metal or plastic packaging. The points are organised and maintained by packaging producers. The number and regional distribution of the collection points is defined in the Council of State decree 518/2014. The Rinki eco take-back point network has been operating since 1 January 2016.

Waste management

Waste management covers the collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste.

Municipal solid waste collection

Municipal solid waste collection is a service organised by a municipality under the Waste Act, where the transport of municipal waste is organised by the municipality itself or regionally by a private transport company following an open competitive tender.

Collection

Collection means the collection of waste at a reception point provided by the property holder, municipality, producer, distributor or other party, for on-site treatment or for the purpose of transportation for treatment, including preliminary sorting and temporary storage of waste.

Collection point

Collection point is a point located on the property for the collection of one or more types of waste with one or more containers for short-term storage and transportation of each waste type.

Collection equipment

Collection equipment is a container or a bin located on the property or at a regional take-back point.

Individually-contracted waste collection

Individually-contracted waste collection is an exception to the Waste Act, decided by the municipality on a case-to-case basis. Here, the property holder ensures waste disposal according to municipal waste management provisions by organising transportation with a private waste haulage company. Previously known as contract-based waste collection.

Property-specific waste collection

Property-specific waste collection means transportation organised by a municipality or the property holder, where the waste is collected from a collection point located on the property, or a joint collection point of several properties. Also known as property-specific waste transport.

Collection system decision

Collection system decision is a decision made by the waste management authority on the waste types and areas covered by individually contracted waste collection. If no such decision exists, the collection is arranged by the municipality.

Municipal waste management system

Municipal waste management system is an umbrella term for municipal solid waste management and related services organised by the municipality. The system consists of take-back and collection points, property-specific waste collection, and waste disposal.

Sorting at source

Sorting at source means sorting waste at homes and in companies by their type.

Recycling and recovery

Energy recovery or waste-to-energy

Energy recovery or waste-to-energy is a process where waste material is converted into energy and utilised, for example, in heating.

Recovery or utilisation

Recovery or utilisation as a concept includes both recycling (using waste material for making new products) and waste-to-energy. Delivering waste to a collection point is not considered recovery. Sorting is not recovery, but only the first step in the process.

Recycling

Recycling means using waste materials as raw material to manufacture new products. For example, corrugated cardboard boxes or carton packaging can be turned into paper roll cores, or beverage cans into new beverage cans.

Reuse

Reuse means using packaging (not waste) again for its original purpose. Examples include beverage bottles, plastic and cardboard boxes, roller cages and wooden pallets reused as packaging.

Preparation for reuse

Preparation for reuse is considered a part of recycling. This means, for example, preparing or repairing FIN and EUR pallets for reuse.