

Fact-sheet - How to control the final disposal of waste?



What is the objective?

Why the factory should control the final disposal of waste?

- **Responsibility:** even when removed from the production site, it is the responsibility of the factory to know what will be done with the waste generated. In particular, it is the responsibility of the factory to control the final waste disposal when the factory has the choice among different waste contractors.
- **Control and minimization of the environmental impact of the waste final disposal method:** the factory needs first of all to be aware of what could be the potential environmental impacts of the final disposal of the waste and based on this knowledge, the factory should try to take actions to avoid providing the waste to contractors that will not dispose/treat the waste in an environmental-friendly way.

The control of the final waste disposal is particularly important for **hazardous waste**¹ since there is a risk of soil, water and air contamination.



How to achieve this objective?

Step 1: Collect the information about the final waste disposal from your waste contractors to assess what are the potential environmental impacts of the different waste disposal methods. Focus on all the hazardous waste types generated in your factory. Example:

Type of waste	Final treatment/ disposal method	Environmental impacts
Contaminated dyes and chemicals packaging	Uncontrolled Landfill	Air pollution: Harmful gases (CO ₂ and Methane) are produced and contribute to the global warming ² .
Sludge		Soil and water pollution: Harmful substances (in particular, heavy metals from the sludge) contaminate the soil and then the groundwater. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Actions to be taken: avoid this final disposal option and consider other possibilities. How can the sludge be treated? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cement industry (1st choice) ○ Controlled landfill (2nd choice) ○ Brickfield industry (3rd choice)
Empty drums	Re-used on local market	Soil pollution: if empty drums are not properly washed and chemical residues leak from these drums. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Actions to be taken: ensure a proper process to rinse the drums and fully decontaminate them. See the fact sheet "Waste storage conditions".
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If you cannot get the information about the final waste disposal, **you have to request that this information is provided in the agreement/contract signed with the waste contractor.** Note that in some countries, this is a legal requirement that only authorized waste treatment companies can collect your waste and agreements must be signed. Moreover, you should have the waste contractors' licenses copies.

Step 2: Review the options you have for the waste collection when you have identified that the current final disposal method for a given waste is not environmental-friendly. Again, focus on the hazardous waste as a priority.

¹ **Hazardous waste:** waste that because of its quantity, concentration, persistence or physical, chemical or biological characteristics may cause or significantly pose a substantial or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed.

² **Global warming:** the increase in Earth's average surface temperature due to rising levels of greenhouse gases (source: NASA.gov).

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- **Appoint** a manager to be in charge of identifying all the waste treatment companies/contractors available in your area and to collect the information about their practices;
- **Assess** the practices of the waste contractors: conduct audits or request them to fill-in a self-assessment questionnaire about their practices (do they assess the environmental impacts of their waste disposal practices? Etc.).



Common non-compliances

Sludge from ETP sent to brickfields whereas a cement factory is available in the area

The factory is sending the sludge to a brickfield nearby because they are not aware of the possibility to send the sludge to the cement industry where the sludge can be incinerated with lower environmental impact.