

Landfill of Waste

Council Directive 99/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste entered into force on 16.07.1999. The deadline for implementation of the legislation in the Member States was 16.07.2001.

The objective of the Directive is to prevent or reduce as far as possible negative effects on the environment from the landfilling of waste, by introducing stringent technical requirements for waste and landfills.

The Directive is intended to prevent or reduce the adverse effects of the landfill of waste on the environment, in particular on surface water, groundwater, soil, air and human health.

It defines the different categories of waste (municipal waste, hazardous waste, non-hazardous waste and inert waste) and applies to all landfills, defined as waste disposal sites for the deposit of waste onto or into land. Landfills are divided into three classes:

- landfills for hazardous waste;
- landfills for non-hazardous waste;
- landfills for inert waste.

The Directive does not apply to:

- the spreading on the soil of sludges (including sewage sludges and sludges resulting from dredging operations);
- the use in landfills of inert waste for redevelopment or restoration work;
- the deposit of unpolluted soil or of non-hazardous inert waste resulting from prospecting and extraction, treatment and storage of mineral resources as well as from the operation of quarries;
- the deposit of non-hazardous dredging sludges alongside small waterways from which they have been dredged and of non-hazardous sludges in surface water, including the bed and its subsoil.

A standard waste acceptance procedure is laid down so as to avoid any risks:

- waste must be treated before being landfilled;
- hazardous waste within the meaning of the Directive must be assigned to a hazardous waste landfill;
- landfills for non-hazardous waste must be used for municipal waste and for non-hazardous waste;
- landfill sites for inert waste must be used only for inert waste;
- criteria for the acceptance of waste at each landfill class must be adopted by the Commission in accordance with the general principles of Annex II.

The following wastes may not be accepted in a landfill:

- liquid waste;
- flammable waste;
- explosive or oxidising waste;
- hospital and other clinical waste which is infectious;
- used tyres, with certain exceptions;

- any other type of waste which does not meet the acceptance criteria laid down in Annex II.

The Directive sets up a system of operating permits for landfill sites. Applications for permits must contain the following information:

- the identity of the applicant and, in some cases, of the operator;
- a description of the types and total quantity of waste to be deposited;
- the capacity of the disposal site;
- a description of the site;
- the proposed methods for pollution prevention and abatement;
- the proposed operation, monitoring and control plan;
- the plan for closure and aftercare procedures;
- the applicant's financial security;
- an impact assessment study, where required under Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

Member States must ensure that existing landfill sites may not continue to operate unless they comply with the provisions of the Directive as soon as possible.

Member States must report to the Commission every three years on the implementation of the Directive.

On the basis of these reports, the Commission must publish a Community report on the implementation of the Directive.

Studies

- **Study on the implementation of Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste in the EU-15**
 - [Report](#)
 - [Annexes](#)
- [Waste Management Options and Climate Change](#)
- [Economic Valuation of Environment Externalities from Landfill Disposal and Incineration of Waste](#)

Reports

- Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the national strategies for the reduction of biodegradable waste going to landfills pursuant to Article 5(1) of Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste
[es](#) [da](#) [de](#) [el](#) [en](#) [fr](#) [it](#) [nl](#) [pt](#) [fi](#) [sv](#)
- Commission working document with the annex to the report
[en](#)

Legislation

Summary of EU Waste Legislation on Landfill

- [Directive 99/31/EC](#) on landfill of waste
Ancillary legislation relating to landfill of waste:
 - [Commission Decision 2000/738/EC](#) concerning a questionnaire for Member

States reports on the implementation of Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste

- Proposal for a Decision on acceptance criteria, [COM\(2002\) 512](#)
- COUNCIL DECISION of 19 December 2002 establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills pursuant to Article 16 of and Annex II to Directive 1999/31/EC (2003/33/EC)

[es](#) [da](#) [de](#) [el](#) [en](#) [fr](#) [it](#) [nl](#) [pt](#) [fi](#) [sv](#)

Information on islands and isolated settlements exempted by Member States under Article 3(4) of the Landfill Directive

Pursuant to Article 3(4) of the Landfill Directive Member States may declare, at their own option, parts or all of Articles 6d), 7i), 8a)iv), 10, 11 1) a), b) and c), 12a) and c), Annex I, points 3 and 4, Annex II except point 3, level 3, and point 4) and Annex III, points 3 to 5 to this Directive not applicable to:

A) landfill sites for non-hazardous or inert wastes with a total capacity not exceeding 15 000 tonnes or with an annual intake not exceeding 1 000 tonnes serving islands, where this is the only landfill on the island and where this is exclusively destined for the disposal of waste generated on that island. Once the total capacity of that landfill has been used, any new landfill established on the island shall comply with the requirements of this Directive;

B) landfill sites for non-hazardous waste or inert waste in isolated settlements if the landfill is destined for the disposal of waste generated only by that isolated settlement.

By 16 July 2003 Member States had to notify the Commission of the list of islands and isolated settlements that are exempted. The Commission shall publish the list of islands and isolated settlements.

To date the Commission has received such lists from two Member States:

- Spain [es](#) [en](#)
- Greece [el](#) [en](#)

WASTE TOPICS HOMEPAGE

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