

This issue

The Waste Information Today

Quarterly newsletter is aimed at communicating the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) Branch: **Chemicals and Waste Management projects**.

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS PUBLISHES THE NATIONAL WASTE INFORMATION REGULATIONS

The Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Edna Molewa today, 13 August 2012 published under section 69(1)(y), (aa) and (ee) of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008) (Waste Act) the National Waste Information Regulations, 2012 in *Gazette No. R 625* for implementation on 1 January 2013.

The Waste Act was implemented on 1 July 2009, and section 60(1) of the Waste Act requires the Minister to establish a national waste information system for the recording, collection, management and analysis of data and information on waste management. As such, the South African Waste Information System (SAWIS) was developed to support the reporting framework for the generators, recyclers, exporters and disposers of waste. Through its implementation, the SAWIS has proved to be a useful tool in informing waste management decisions. The SAWIS is a web-based system which enables waste managers to register new waste activities and submit quarterly information on the following web-link <http://www.sawic.org.za>

Waste management facilities across the country continue to register and report waste management information to the SAWIS, but one of the main challenges for the full implementation of the SAWIS was the lack of waste information regulations to enforce the SAWIS. Consequently, in July 2010 draft national waste management regulations were published for public comment. The comments received were reviewed and the draft regulations were revised and published today.

The purpose of the national waste information regulations, 2012 is to regulate the collection of data and information to fulfil the objectives of the SAWIS as set out in section 61 of the Waste Act.



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The national waste information regulations, 2012 apply to persons engaged in the recovery and recycling of waste, the treatment of waste, disposal of waste, exportation of hazardous waste as well as the generators of hazardous waste. A person conducting any of these waste management activities in a province that has an established waste information system and collects the minimum information required by these regulations must submit such information to the provincial waste information system.

Based on the assessment of the status of provincial information systems, the regulations will only take effect on 1 January 2013 thus allowing provinces to align their information systems with the SAWIS.

Any person conducting the identified activities, with effect from 01 January 2013, must apply to the Department of Environmental Affairs to be registered on the SAWIS. A registered person will be required to report waste management information to the SAWIS on a quarterly basis, and must keep a record of all the waste management information submitted to the SAWIS or the Department for a period of at least 5 years. The waste management information must include, amongst others, information on the category and source of the waste as well as the quantities of the waste in tonnes. All information submitted to the SAWIS will, when necessary be subjected to verification.

WASTE CLASSIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS AND SUPPORTING STANDARDS

The Department of Environmental Affairs has since March 2009 engaged with stakeholders in reviewing the current Waste Classification System contained in the DWAF Minimum Requirements document. This review process has culminated into a draft Waste Classification and Management Regulations and supporting Standards viz: Standard for Assessment of Waste for Landfill Disposal as well as a Standard for Disposal of Waste by Landfill. The development of these regulations is also provided for by Section 69(1)(a-ee) of NEMWA giving provision for the Minister to develop regulations with regard to a wide range of aspects related to the Act. This includes the waste issues that are covered on the above said section of the Act [section 69(1)(a, b, g, h, m, q, r, s, dd, ee)].

These documents have been gazetted from 03 July 2011 for 45 days, and as a result of stakeholder comments, these have been reviewed and being re-gazetted for another 30 days from the 10 August 2012.

The above listed draft documents are available and can be accessed on the DEA website: <http://www.sawic.org.za/?menu=302>. Any comments or queries regarding these documents may be sent to: Ms Christina Masimula at cmasimula@environment.gov.za or Ms. Nomphelo Daniel at ndaniel@environment.gov.za

OFFICE PAPER AND WASTE PAPER MANAGEMENT

Paper has become a very big part of our daily lives, primarily to assist us in carrying out tasks. Government departments, schools, and all kinds of businesses have come to almost depend on paper, though, as much as paper is important, we sometimes do not need to use it.

There are other systems and methods that can be used to achieve the same result without using paper or at least, by using less paper.



BENEFITS OF OFFICE PAPER AND WASTE PAPER MANAGEMENT

- Using less paper means less waste to be disposed of at landfill, you will be saving landfill airspace
- Your organisation will be reducing environmental degradation, by slowing down the use of natural resources
- Wood fibre can be recycled several times, so recycled paper can be recycled over and over again
- Assisting in employment creation through paper recycling
- Promoting a culture of recycling
- When people start looking at waste as a resource, littering is reduced
- Reduced paper costs through the reduction of paper use, thus ensuring purchase of less paper

One also needs to keep in mind the negative environmental impacts associated with the process of manufacturing paper and its disposal when it becomes waste. The good news is that YOU can do something about it! This article offers tips on how to minimise and manage paper usage at your workplace. Reducing paper decreases the overall amount of waste generated at your workplace.

1. GENERAL APPROACH

- Develop a policy for your organisation that will serve as a rule to guide decision-making and to ensure uniformity on how the whole paper minimisation process should be carried out. Request comments and ideas from staff within your organisation, they will after all, be responsible for implementing the policy.
- Produce an implementation plan for your policy to clearly outline your objectives, goals, and a breakdown of activities to be performed. This will assist in measuring your successes and identifying areas to improve on.
- Once the policy and implementation plan have been approved, the staff in your organisation will need to be trained on how to implement the policy in order to make it a success. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for all staff members.
- Be in contact with your nearest paper recycler(s) to make an agreement on the collection and possibly payment for the waste paper supplied to them by your organisation. The waste paper may also be supplied for free in support of community recycling initiatives.
- Keep things as simple as possible by making as few changes to daily routines for the recycling program, this will maximise chances for success.
- Do follow ups and monitor paper procurement trends. Also allow new ideas and suggestions from your colleagues that may assist with the overall program.
- Give recognition to those who are performing well to encourage them to continue to contribute more and to motivate others to support the program.
- For this program to be a success, commitment is required from everyone in your workplace, as well as support from top management.

2. TIPS TO MINIMISE AND MANAGE PAPER

Here are a few ways in which your office can reduce paper usage:

- Always separate waste paper from all other recyclables and non recyclables. You will need specialized bins for disposing your office waste paper because the recyclability of paper reduces when paper is stained
- Printing and photocopying Duplex/Double sided; this reduces the size of a document by half! Your IT staff may assist in showing you how to find this option on your printer.
- Printing A5 booklet documents where possible, other printers do not have this option.
- Use fax to e-mail where possible
- Increase the use of electronic messaging and document management by using e-mail to pass on documents, and other electronic document management system that is used by your organisation.
- Use paper that is printed on one side to scribble notes, print drafts or quarter it and use as notepaper
- Print ONLY when necessary; especially draft documents that still need to be commented on.
- Use paper with recycled content as a contribution to environmental sustainability.