**New commercial vehicle permit scheme for re3 recycling centres**

A new commercial and commercial-type vehicle permit scheme is being introduced by re3, as part of a crackdown on the dumping of trade waste at recycling centres.

From 30th September 2016 residents driving commercial and commercial-type vehicles (e.g. vans or vehicles with larger trailers) will need to present a permit when visiting the re3 recycling centres in Longshot Lane, Bracknell, and Island Road, Reading.

Currently, vehicles like vans are allowed to enter the recycling centres, subject to assessment, between 2pm and 4pm Monday – Saturday, not including Bank Holidays. However, this system is open to abuse and taxpayers and trade waste compliant businesses are footing the bill for those firms who use it as a way to get rid of their commercial waste for free.

re3 has calculated that if even just 1% of what is deposited at the recycling centres comes from traders, it would cost the re3 partnership councils £68,000 a year to process it.

If you own, or are borrowing or hiring, a commercial (or commercial-type) vehicle and want to use it to bring your household waste to a re3 recycling centre, you will need to apply for a commercial vehicle permit before every visit.

An online application form for the free permits will be available shortly. It will allow you to check eligibility – pictured examples will help you to identify if you need a permit – before applicants are asked for a valid residential address within Bracknell Forest, Reading or Wokingham. You will also have to enter whether it is your own vehicle or a hire van, the type of waste you wish to bring to the recycling centre and to fill out a disclaimer.

When you’ve completed the webform, you will be provided with a single-use permit that you can either print out or store on your phone or other mobile device. When you come to the recycling centre, please bring your driving licence photocard or a council tax or bank statement, or a credit card or utility bill, confirming your re3 residency, and show the permit to staff at the entrance who will record it. We will review the number of visits made by individual residents and/or vehicles and we may contact you if it appears that the number of visits you or your vehicle make might suggest activity more like that of a trader than a householder.

Residents can request a date and time for each visit permit. A previously scanned permit cannot be reused.

Commercial vehicle permits do not entitle traders to dispose of trade waste at the recycling centres free of charge.

**Bracknell Forest’s Executive Member for Environment and Chairman of the Joint Waste Disposal Board, Cllr Mrs Dorothy Hayes MBE said:** “We see re3 as a non-profit making business and we have a responsibility to re3 area residents to provide the best value for money and effective waste management service possible. Commercial and commercial-type vehicle permits will allow us to take action on those unscrupulous firms who are currently abusing the system and depositing their waste for free.”

**Reading Borough Council’s Lead Councillor for Neighourhoods, Cllr Liz Terry said: “**By cutting trade waste abuses, we can consolidate recent recycling centre changes and provide a fairer and more cost effective service. Residents who have a commercial or commercial-type vehicle will still be able to use the recycling centres for their household waste and can order a permit online ahead of their visit, and companies wishing to dispose of trade waste can still use the weighbridge; there is one located at both the Bracknell and Reading sites.”

**Wokingham Borough Council’s Executive Member for Environment Cllr Angus Ross said:** “It is wrong to ask residents to subsidise trade waste. If a resident uses a contractor who dumps their trade waste at a recycling centre, it means that as a customer they may be paying twice – through their council tax bill and directly to the contractor doing the work to their home.

“By introducing the new permit system, we are cracking down on those rogue traders who cost us all money. It will mean a few changes to how residents with commercial vehicles access the re3 recycling sites, but we can all benefit from reduced waste management costs.”

Access to both the Bracknell and Reading recycling centres is being reconfigured to allow more room for commercial vehicle permit checks and non-household waste charging. The existing height restriction bars will be replaced by raisable barriers at both sites and the recycling centres will end the over-height time restrictions. These new measures are being introduced to help minimise queuing, and to allow residents with large vehicles to visit the recycling centres more conveniently.

The new permit scheme is bringing re3 in line with what is happening at recycling centres elsewhere, and similar van permit schemes are already running in neighbouring Councils including Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

Small charges for non-household waste, including soil, rubble, asbestos, hardcore and plasterboard, will be introduced at the same time as the commercial vehicle permits to help cover the cost of disposing of these kinds of items and to support efforts to reduce the amount of trade waste being deposited for free at the re3 recycling centres.

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