

If telephoning ask for:
John Shaw
01786 455925

Dear

CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO AMEND CHARGES FOR THE SPREADING OF ORGANIC WASTE ON LAND

The purpose of this consultation

This consultation seeks your views on proposals to reduce charges for the registration of farms for the spreading of organic waste.

Background

The Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 1994, exempt some waste activities from the requirement to have a waste management licence and instead they attract only a SEPA registration fee. These exemptions include the spreading of organic waste on land, including land used for agriculture. Currently the maximum area on each exemption is 50 hectares. As a result, land managers with greater than 50 hectares must make several separate registrations.

Spreading activities must be registered with SEPA and are subject to an application and annual renewal fees. There are currently about 360 such registered activities. Approximately 90 farms have made multiple applications.

The Minister for the Environment Roseanna Cunningham MSP spoke at the Royal Highland Show in June 2009 about the key achievements of Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services (SEARS) partnership in the last year. The Minister highlighted the opportunity to reduce bureaucracy by registering a whole farm in a single registration ("one farm, one form") as a simpler and quicker process which would result in a time saving to customers.

We therefore propose to rationalise and simplify the regulatory approach for these waste exemptions by removing the 50 hectare restriction and allowing all organic spreading activities, taking place on the one farm, to be registered as one. The registration of associated 50 hectare treatment areas on the one farm will take proportionately less time for SEPA to process and we propose a corresponding reduction in fees.

Fees and Charges

Currently the application and renewal fees for registration are £569 and £431 respectively. A farm applying to register 5 treatment areas of up to 50 hectares would currently pay £2,845 in application fees and an annual renewal fee of £2,155.

Proposed amendments

The application and renewal fee for the first registered treatment area will remain the same however we propose to reduce the application fee for each associated 50 hectare treatment site on the same farm to £210 and the renewal fee for each associated site to £180.

As a result, a farm applying to register for example 5 registered treatment areas, which isn't untypical, would pay about 50% lower application fees and 47% lower annual renewal fees.

The average times for each element of the registration and renewal processes and how we calculate the above proposed charges are detailed ANNEXES 1 and 2

Financial Impact of the proposals

This proposal will reduce the number of registrations by almost 50% and reduce customer annual renewal charges by about £29,000.

Charges approval process

Any significant changes to a charging scheme are subject to approval by the Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers. Before submitting proposals to the Scottish Ministers we must consult with interested parties.

The consultation period will be 12 weeks from the date of issue and subject to Ministerial approval; we are aiming to implement the revised charges in June 2010.

The Scottish Government and the Scottish Ministers will consider the comments received on the consultation, while having regard to our requirement to set charges to recover relevant costs and expenses. They will place copies of the consultation responses in their library and SEPA publishes a summary of comments received on the SEPA website.

How to respond

We would like your views on these proposed amendments. We are particularly interested in the reasons behind your views and, where possible, any evidence you have that supports them.

The consultation period closes on 21 May 2010.

Please send your written responses and the completed form in writing or by email to:

Susan Scott

Scottish Government
SEPA Sponsorship and Pollution Team
Victoria Quay
Area 1-J (N)
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Email: SEPATeam@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

We would be grateful if you could clearly indicate which parts of the consultation document you are responding to, as this will aid analysis of the responses received. Please also submit the enclosed Respondee Information Form with your response (ANNEX 3).

All responses will be made public, unless a respondent specifically asks for their response to be treated confidentially. Though, confidential responses may still be included in any statistical summary of numbers of responses received or views expressed.

If you know of others with an interest who have not received a copy of the consultation, please refer them to our website or ask them to contact us, Tel: 01786 455925.

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours sincerely

John Ford
Director of Finance and Corporate Services

ANNEX 1

Calculation of time and cost to process and issue a Registration

	Estimated time in hours to process an application for				
Evaluation/ Registration	One 50 hectare site	2 x 50 hectare site	3 x 50 hectare site	4 x 50 hectare site	5 x 50 hectare site
Step 1 Form assessment	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Science assessment*	1	1	1	1	1
Step 2 Field assessment	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Step 3 Risk Assessment	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Step 4 Administration	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Sub Total	4	5	6	7	8
Inspection	3.5	5.5	7.5	9.5	11.5
Data Collection	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total	8	11	14	17	20
Charges	£569	£785	£990	£1,206	£1,422
	0-50 ha	51-100 ha	101-150 ha	151-200 ha	200 ha +

* Only certain registrations will require science input but this is likely to require more than one hour of time. As the input generally relates to a specific issue, e.g. the pH or composition of the waste or the nutritional benefit of the waste, this is not likely to increase as the land area increases. We estimate that the average of the time spent by science, spread over all applications, is one hour.

Recommended Charging Option

Rather than applying variable increases for each added treatment area, as in the table above, it is proposed instead that a standard increase of £210 be applied for each additional 50 hectares (or part 50Ha), which will be simpler (as below).

Up to 50 hectares: £569 (stays the same)
 Additional blocks of 50 hectares charged at £210 each

No. Hectares	Revised application charge	Current application charge
51 - 100	£779	£1138
101 – 150	£989	£1707
151 – 200	£1199	£2276
201 – 250	£1409	£2845
251 – 300	£1619	£3414
Etc.		

ANNEX 2

Calculation of time and cost to process and issue a Renewal

		Estimated time in hours to process an application for				
		One 50 hectare site	2 x 50 hectare site	3 x 50 hectare site	4 x 50 hectare site	5 x 50 hectare site
Evaluation/ Registration						
Step 1	Form assessment	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Step 2	Field assessment	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Step 3	Risk Assessment	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Step 4	Administration	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Sub Total		4	5	6	7	8
Inspection		3.5	5.5	7.5	9.5	11.5
Data Collection		0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total		7	10	13	16	19
Charges		£431	£612	£802	£982	£1,164
		0-50 ha	51-100 ha	101-150 ha	151-200 ha	200 ha +

Recommended Charging Option

Rather than applying variable increases for each added treatment area, as in the table above, it is proposed instead that a standard increase of £180 be applied for each additional 50 hectares (or part 50Ha) which will be simpler (as below).

Up to 50 hectares: £431 (Stays the same)

Additional blocks of 50 hectares charged at £180 each

No. Hectares	Revised renewal charge	Current renewal charge
51 - 100	£611	£862
101 – 150	£791	£1293
151 – 200	£971	£1724
201 – 250	£1151	£2155
251 – 300	£1331	£2586
Etc.		

ANNEX 3

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note that this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

Please tick one of the following boxes

I confirm that I am content with the proposals

I confirm that I am content with the proposals subject to my attached comments

I confirm that I am **not** content with the proposals for the reasons in my attached comments

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr Please tick as appropriate

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

Postcode	Phone	Email
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3. Permissions

I am responding as...

Individual

/ Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Yes

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Yes

No

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No