

# Importing hazardous waste into New Zealand

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If you wish to import hazardous waste into New Zealand, you must apply for a permit before the waste is shipped, or your shipment could be refused entry. Find out how to apply for an import permit for hazardous waste [here](#).

## Why you need a permit to import hazardous waste

It is illegal to import hazardous waste into New Zealand without a permit from us, the EPA. New Zealand law reflects a set of international agreements that New Zealand is a party to, which manage the movement of hazardous waste between countries (see figure 1 for details).

Obtaining an import permit ensures your waste shipment/s will not breach one of the international agreements or New Zealand law. Otherwise it may be seized or refused entry en route, or at the destination port in New Zealand, meaning you would need to pay storage and retrieval costs.

Note: even if you are experienced in applying for hazardous waste import permits, read this guide carefully to ensure you are familiar with the current process.

Use our checklists to make sure your application is complete.

Figure 1 International agreements and New Zealand law covering hazardous waste exports and imports

International agreements	Law and agreements covering exports and imports from and to New Zealand
	1988 New Zealand Imports and Exports (Restrictions) Act
<p><b>Basel Convention:</b> regulates international traffic in hazardous wastes. Requires prior approval for imports and exports of hazardous waste, and for exporting countries to ensure environmentally-sound processing of the waste.</p>	1989  1990  1991
<p><b>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Control of Transboundary Movements of Recoverable Wastes:</b> controls the movement of waste across borders for recovery in an environmentally-sound and economically-efficient manner, and allows shipments of recoverable wastes between countries who are OECD members but that have not necessarily ratified the other conventions.</p>	1992 New Zealand: an OECD Member country since 1973   1993
	1994 New Zealand ratified the Basel Convention
<p><b>Waigani Convention:</b> a regional agreement under the Basel Convention ensures that hazardous waste cannot travel from New Zealand or Australia to another Pacific country or to Antarctica.</p>	1995
	1996 New Zealand Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act  1997
<p><b>The Rotterdam Convention</b> established a system to ensure there is consent by all parties when certain hazardous chemicals are shipped across borders.</p>	1998  1999  2000
<p><b>Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants</b> bans the production and use of some of the most toxic chemicals.</p>	2001  2002
	2003 Rotterdam Convention ratified by New Zealand
	2004 Stockholm Convention ratified by New Zealand  New Zealand Imports and Exports (Restrictions) Prohibition Order (No 2)

## Things to do before you apply for an import permit

Please make sure you have organised the following before you apply for a permit. This is needed before we, the EPA, can process or issue a permit to export hazardous waste, and is also required under New Zealand law and the International waste management agreements.

- 1 **Ensure the exporter, importer and/or disposal/recovery facility discuss the application before it is lodged.**
  
- 2 **Check the country that you are exporting the hazardous waste from is a member country of the OECD or is a party to the Basel and Stockholm Conventions or the Waigani Convention** (figure 1). If not, you cannot import this waste into New Zealand.
  
- 3 **Make sure this is the right permit for the waste.**  
It is your responsibility to find out whether the waste is considered hazardous under New Zealand law, and whether it needs an import permit.
  
- 4 **Organise suitable insurance.** You will need to tell us about this.
  
- 5 **Make sure there is a signed agreement in place between the exporter and the disposal/recovery facility in New Zealand.** You will need to give us a copy of this agreement.

More detail about these requirements is included in the next section of this guide.

Note: We cannot process your application for an import permit until we hear from the Competent Authority<sup>1</sup> in the exporting country. They will confirm they have received an application from the exporting party and should send us the necessary supporting documenting for the proposed shipments, including a completed notification form. At the EPA, it is not our role to chase up the necessary information from other Competent Authorities or to clear transshipments en route. Therefore, you should coordinate with the exporting party to ensure this part of the process goes smoothly.

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<sup>1</sup> The Competent Authority is the government organisation in a country that is responsible for considering applications to ship hazardous wastes overseas.

# Preparing your application

While preparing your application and supporting documentation, please note:

- All supporting information must be provided at the time of application, and must be up-to-date and no more than 12 months old (from the date that the application is submitted).
- All completed forms must be in English, or with an English translation attached. Any supporting documentation must have the key parts relevant to your application translated into English. This translation might include an executive summary or an overview of the document’s content. The translation should be undertaken by a professional translator (please do not use an automated internet translation service).
- Please make sure you include all of the requested documentation, otherwise processing your application may be delayed.

## Step 1 Download and complete the Hazardous Waste Import application form

Fill in the application form to give us your contact details, some information about the import and to sign the declaration. You may choose to either: type the information straight into the application form and include a digital copy of the signature, or print the form out and complete it by hand, legibly.

[Download a copy of the Hazardous Waste Import application form from the EPA website \(Word format\)](#)

Note: if you have more than one type of waste, fill out one application form and include a schedule of what the waste is and the quantity (preferably by weight).

Example of the information to include in a hazardous waste import schedule

Tracking number*		Waste type	Basel code/s	Amount of waste
In New Zealand	In exporting country			
IM NZ 1/19	NC 1/19	Mercury waste	A1010	4 mt
IM NZ 2/19	NC 2/19	Lead waste	A1020	5 mt
IM NZ 3/19	NC 3/19	Asbestos	A2050	10 mt

\* Supply tracking numbers if available at the time of application. If not, please just supply the other information.

## Step 2 Arrange adequate insurance cover

You must include evidence to show that the shipments are adequately insured, as below. This section explains the level of insurance required in New Zealand only.

Please include a copy of the insurance policy/policies covering the import with all terms and conditions – and provide a letter from the insurance broker outlining the coverage of the policy. In addition to standard commercial and/or marine insurance, you must ensure the insurance:

- is appropriate for the type and amount of hazardous waste you are shipping
- is from an insurer with an 'A' Financial Rating at minimum
- is a specialist Environmental Liability product, with appropriate extensions for your shipment
- is sufficient to reasonably insure against risks, and/or discharge any liability that might arise relating to the hazardous waste
- covers damage to third parties, including the environment, for the whole time the insured is responsible for each waste shipment
- covers personal injury or damage to property, and the cost of remedying all contamination, spillage or pollution caused by a sudden, accidental event

If not covered elsewhere in the contract (see next section), ensure that the insurance covers the costs associated with the return of the shipment if it is not accepted into New Zealand.

If the Environmental Liability insurance cover is purchased on a single-transit basis, ensure that there is an option to buy return cover, in case the shipment must return for any reason.

The copy of the insurance certificate, and correspondence from the broker, should show the value of the cover and that the insurance applies to the countries and areas the shipments are passing through or going to.

We cannot approve your permit application unless you can demonstrate that your shipment is adequately insured.

## Step 3 Provide us with a copy of the contract(s) with the disposal/recovery facility

You must supply evidence of the contract(s) between the exporter and the disposal/recovery facility receiving the waste. This agreement may be different from a contract covering the commercial aspects of the transaction.

We are particularly looking for confirmation that the contract:

- is signed by you or an authorised representative and the disposal/recovery facility
- specifies the role of each party in the contract
- specifies the quantity (or estimated quantity) of the waste
- specifies who owns and takes responsibility for the waste, and when/to whom ownership and responsibility is transferred
- describes the waste, and the method of its disposal or recovery
- specifies that the waste will be disposed of, or managed by, the disposal/recovery facility in an environmentally sound manner, and in accordance with all relevant rules and legislation, and
- specifies that the exporter will take responsibility for the alternative treatment or return of the waste if it cannot be disposed of, or managed, in accordance with the terms of the contract.

Contracts for the shipment of waste should clearly set out the rights and obligations of each party.

## Step 4 Tell us about the destination facility's waste management practices

You must supply sufficient information to satisfy us that the facility receiving the waste has environmentally-sound waste-management facilities, whether it is recycling or destroying the waste. Please show that the hazardous waste (and the wastes arising from the processing of that waste) will be managed in a way that does not harm human health or the New Zealand environment. This is a part of our responsibilities under the Basel Convention.

If you don't supply us with enough information, this may cause delays in processing your application.

We recommend that you supply:

- a full description of the disposal/recovery process (including what wastes will be generated from the process, what the characteristics of these wastes are, how much of these wastes are generated, and how they will be stored and treated)
- if any of the wastes generated from the processing are to be disposed of by another disposal/recovery facility, including the landfill component, please provide a full description of their disposal/recovery process too
- a description of the regulatory framework applying to the facility, including maximum permitted levels of emissions or contaminants
- recent evidence that the facility complies with the regulatory framework, including holding relevant permits, and details of the monitoring and reporting programme
- recent evidence of an adequate response/emergency plan
- other relevant evidence of professional competence or accreditation in handling waste of this type (for example, the ISO 9001 and 14001 certificate).

Note: you may have already provided some of this information during previous applications. However, we may request further information to keep our records up to date.

## Step 5 Collate all of the required paperwork

We will not accept incomplete applications. Ensure you have collected all of the required information before you send your application to us. Your application should include:

- Completed EPA application form, including a statement providing details of the reason for import
- Evidence of insurance cover
- Copy of the contract(s) between the exporter and the disposal/recovery facility
- Information about the facility's waste management practices

## Submitting your application

Allow plenty of time – we cannot process your import permit application until the Competent Authority in the country of origin of the waste confirms that they have received an application from the exporting party, and have provided us with the necessary supporting documentation.

We prefer to receive hazardous waste import permit applications by email. Please scan your forms and supporting information into PDF format, each document as a single PDF file, and attach these files to the email. Please name your PDF files consistently, so that we can identify the application and see that they are for the same application. Please also ensure that the name of your file describes what it is (for example, insurance, copy of agreement etc).

All of the information for the application must be sent together, either in one email, or if file size restrictions prevent this, send us a set of emails. It is helpful if sets of emails could be numbered (for example, '1 of 3', '2 of 3', '3 of 3') so that we are sure that we have received all of your information.

Send your application to [importexport@epa.govt.nz](mailto:importexport@epa.govt.nz) with 'Hazardous waste import application' in the subject line.

Alternatively, you can send a paper copy of your application to: Hazardous Substance Applications, Environmental Protection Authority, PO Box 63002, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

## If we need more information

We will contact you if we need more information. When supplying additional information, please do not send the whole package again, as this may delay our processing of your application while we find the new information.

## What happens once we receive your application

Once we have ensured that you have provided all of the required information, and have received the required information from the Competent Authority in the country of origin, we will make a final decision about issuing a permit. Any permit issued will include conditions from the EPA.

## Once the import permit is granted

Once we approve the permit to import your hazardous waste, we will email the person who submitted the application, and include a copy of the permit as an attachment. Please contact us if you would prefer a paper copy.

Once you have received the permit, you are free to start importing the hazardous waste, following the permit conditions. These conditions are included with the permit.

We publish details of all approved permits on our website. This list is updated every few months. If you would prefer that we do not publish details of your permit, please contact us to discuss reasons for why this information should not be made public.

Please note that the information you provide in relation to your application is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). This act is an important part of New Zealand's constitution. It means that New Zealanders can ask for access to information that the government holds, and that the information should be made available unless there is a good reason for withholding it. Commercially-sensitive information must be marked as such and may be withheld in the event of an OIA request, if withholding it is permitted under the OIA.

## Follow the conditions on your permit

If you don't follow the conditions on your permit, we can revoke your permit. This means your shipment could be seized or refused entry at a New Zealand port. This could cost you time and money. You could also be prosecuted.

Please ensure that completed copies of the Movement form are emailed to us at the EPA: please use the original Movement form submitted as part of the application:

- when the shipment leaves the country of origin/exporting country
- once the shipment of waste is destroyed

## Further reading

Check that your waste is considered hazardous in New Zealand

- See the guidance on our website: [Shipping hazardous waste](#)

For advice while preparing your application, please contact us

Email us on: [importexport@epa.govt.nz](mailto:importexport@epa.govt.nz)

Freephone (within New Zealand): 0800 429 7827 (0800 HAZSUBS)