

**Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Regulation and Enforcement Division**



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: DAERA/26-55

[REDACTED]

NIEA Regulation Unit
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Lisburn
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BT28 3AL

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[REDACTED]

Email: WRU.Queries@daera-ni.gov.uk

27 February 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

I refer to your request for information received by the Department on 27 January 2026 that sought the following information:

1) ENERGY RECOVERY VOLUMES AND LOCATION

Please provide any recorded information held showing, for each of the last five reporting years (or the longest period held):

- a) the total tonnage of local-authority-collected residual waste sent for energy recovery;
- b) the tonnage of that material treated:
 - within Northern Ireland, and
 - outside Northern Ireland (including Great Britain and/or other jurisdictions).

For the avoidance of doubt, this includes any residual waste streams recorded as local-authority-collected municipal waste that are processed into RDF or otherwise sent for energy recovery.

If figures are held only in aggregated or summary form, please provide them as held.

2) RDF EXPORT

Please provide any recorded information held relating to the export of refuse-derived fuel (RDF) from Northern Ireland, including:

- a) annual RDF export tonnages (as recorded);
- b) destination countries or regions (if recorded);
- c) whether RDF export is recorded, referenced or assumed within any official waste-management planning documents, policy papers, briefings, assessments or models held by the Department.

This request does not seek commercially sensitive contractual terms, pricing, or operator-specific arrangements. It seeks only recorded factual information on tonnage, destination category, and planning or policy assumptions as documented.

3) RELATIONSHIP TO LANDFILL CAPACITY

Please provide any recorded information, assessments, briefing papers or analyses that consider:

- a) the relationship between energy recovery (including RDF export) and landfill capacity requirements;
- b) whether continued RDF export is assumed when assessing landfill capacity or system resilience;
- c) how changes in energy recovery availability or RDF export would be expected to affect landfill demand.

I can advise that the Department has completed its search and can confirm that it holds some of the information you requested.

The information held which can be disclosed appears below.

The Department has decided not to disclose some of the information you requested under 2c, 3a, 3b & 3c as it considers Regulation 12(4)(d) to be engaged. In these instances, the Department is legislatively required to consider the public interest in disclosure. An associated Public Interest Test has been conducted and is attached for your information at **Annex A**.

Under 1) a) the Department is excluded from having to supply this information since it is already published – see the website links below

<https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/daera/northern-ireland-waste-management-statistics.html>

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-local-authority-collected-municipal-waste-management-statistics>

In relation to this last link, see especially the column titled 'LAC municipal waste energy recovery (mixed residual LACMW)' – most recently column F in Table 3 – in each of the Annual Report's data tables (an Excel spreadsheet).

Regarding 1) b) all these tonnages were treated to some extent in Northern Ireland (NI) before being sent to energy recovery as refuse derived fuel (RDF), however, not all underwent the energy recovery process in NI. The tonnages listed in Table 1 below are for that local authority collected municipal waste (LACMW) that did undergo energy recovery in NI but please note this data is only available from 2021-22.

<u>TABLE 1</u>	LACMW <u>residual</u> RDF undergoing energy recovery in Northern Ireland
Financial year	NB mixed residual waste only - no individual / specific wastes (Tonnes)
2021-22	48,515
2022-23	84,358
2023-24	80,235
2024-25	96,724

The tonnage of LACMW **residual** RDF undergoing energy recovery outside Northern Ireland can be derived by subtracting the values in Table 1 from the published ones referenced in 1(a) above.

In the context of 2) export is understood to mean a movement of waste from Northern Ireland to another country outside of the UK. Consequently under 2) a) and 2) b) the Department is excluded from having to supply this information since it is already published – see the website link below

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/export-records-rdf-shipped-northern-ireland>

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,

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NIEA Waste Regulation

ANNEX A

Public Interest Test

Reference Number

DAERA 26-55

Requested Information

Information relation to Energy recovery, RDF export and landfill capacity planning requested under 2c, 3a, 3b, 3c

Exception under consideration

Regulation 12(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion, unfinished documents, and incomplete data.

Reasons why the public interest would favour disclosure:

- Regulation 12(2) requires DAERA to apply a presumption in favour of disclosure and DAERA is committed to conducting its business in a manner that is as open and transparent as possible.
- Disclosure would lead to greater transparency and accountability.
- There is significant interest among the public in matters concerning the environment.

Reasons why the public interest would favour withholding:

- This exception has been engaged as it applies to material that is in the course of completion, incomplete data or information that relates to material still in the course of completion to unfinished draft documents.
- The Strategic Investment Board produced a draft report for the Department on future waste arisings to 2025, however due to unforeseen global events, including Covid 19, the assumptions used in drafting were rendered wholly inappropriate. The report was never verified and essentially remains in draft and incomplete and was never therefore published. To do so could risk putting inaccurate material into the public domain with stakeholders in the waste sector using incorrect data to make future policy and business decisions. Whilst the Department holds this information the report should not be released as it is incomplete.

Conclusion

Following consideration of the Public Interest Test the Department has decided that on balance, the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Strategic Investment Board draft report will not be disclosed for the reasons stated above.