

Managing disposal of waste upholstered domestic seating containing POPs

Following recent guidance from the Environment Agency (EA) regarding the disposal of upholstered domestic seating which often contains Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other hazardous chemicals. From 1st of January 2023, this waste cannot be disposed of in a landfill, and it is required to be incinerated. POPs remain intact in the environment for long periods and if not disposed of properly become widely distributed geographically. They accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife and have harmful impacts on human health and on the environment. The Law requires that POPs are destroyed. This means waste containing POPs must be incinerated and must not be re-used, recycled or landfilled.

Upholstered seating or any item of soft furnished seating from any household or businesses that includes any part made of or containing leather, synthetic leather, soft furnishing, fabric or foam. For example:

- sofas
- sofa beds
- armchairs
- kitchen and dining room chairs
- stools and foot stools
- home office chairs
- futons
- bean bags, floor and sofa cushions

**Mattresses, curtains, blinds and beds are not domestic seating and are not covered by this guidance*

Please note following items are unlikely to contain POPs:

- items that are not upholstered, for example, a wooden chair without a cushioned or textile back, seat, or arms
- deckchairs
- wastes from manufacturing new domestic seating that the manufacturer can demonstrate do not contain POPs

How to dispose upholstered domestic seating?

You should not dispose your upholstered domestic seating in your black sack or dispose of it by any other method.

Essex County Council has advised that residents will be able to use the skip provided for POPs containing upholstered domestic seating waste at their Household Waste Recycling Centre from 1st January 2023. Please contact the HWRC you are visiting and ask for advice on the waste you are disposing before visiting.

Bulky Waste Collection service have resumed. Due to EA guidance, we can no longer collect POPs contaminated upholstered domestic waste seating with other bulky waste. The new bulky waste collection charges are as follows:

- a. Upholstered domestic seating bulky waste - Minimum charge of £39 for up to 3 items, each additional item is £6 (with a maximum of 10 items). More than 10 items by negotiation
- b. Any other bulky waste - Minimum charge of £39 for up to 3 items, each additional item is £6 (with a maximum of 10 items). More than 10 items by negotiation

Please see the regular updates on our social media posts and website.