



Wood Recycling

It is estimated that each year up to 420,000 tonnes of waste wood is produced by households, or deposited at civic amenity sites in the UK.

Packaging (pallets and crates) produce a further 670,000 tonnes, and construction and demolition 750,000 tonnes. The Earth Summit in June 1992 recognised the unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, especially the excessively high consumption of wood and paper products.

In the "developed" world, this is a major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment.

Although wood is only 5% of the average household waste, it has some features that mean it should not be ignored:

1. It is biodegradable and so can contribute to greenhouse gas production if allowed to rot in landfill sites. This makes it subject to the EU Landfill Directive which stipulates that an increasing percentage of biological municipal waste (BMW) must be diverted away from landfill.
2. Often it is in excellent condition and would therefore make ideal material for re-use, rather than simply 'being binned'.
3. The growing, harvesting and processing of virgin timbers uses energy and water, natural resources which are not as renewable as timber.
4. Disposal costs. More relevant to the commercial sector but, as with any other waste material, reusing or recycling will eventually save a company money as the cost of disposing through landfill rises.



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