



## EA Gypsum & Plasterboard Site Removal Guidelines

### Purpose of this EA Guidance Note

The EA have released an updated statement concerning Gypsum and Plasterboard. This statement summarises how they will regulate the landfilling of waste containing or consisting of gypsum in England and Wales. It explains that if such waste is disposed of with biodegradable waste it can lead to the production of odorous and toxic hydrogen sulphide gas. To reduce the impact of this waste they want to ensure that it is managed properly. This position supersedes all previously issued regulatory positions connected with the landfilling of gypsum waste. They are developing guidance with industry on the management of 'other high sulphate bearing waste' that will be available soon.

### Background

The Landfill Directive sets out the general conditions for the landfilling of waste with the aim of minimising the impact of landfill on the environment and to encourage waste minimisation and recycling. Regulations set out the criteria for the acceptance of gypsum and other high sulphate bearing wastes at landfill; 'Non-hazardous gypsum based and other high sulphate bearing materials should be disposed of only in landfills for non-hazardous waste in cells where no biodegradable waste is accepted'. Limits apply to organic carbon in waste to be deposited in such cells.

### The EAs' position

The landfilling of gypsum and other high sulphate bearing wastes with biodegradable waste has been prohibited in England and Wales since July 2005. Until April 2009, the EA had been taking a pragmatic view that separate disposal was not necessary where construction waste contained small amounts (up to 10%) sulphate.

This was a working guideline that was always planned to be reviewed in response to scientific research.

Sulphate bearing waste: Determination of a concentration limit for separate disposal, confirmed that the relationship between sulphate in waste and the production of hydrogen sulphide gas is complex. The EA concluded that they cannot set a practicable limit for gypsum wastes so they have revised their guidance to remove the 10% guideline value.

