



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

New Incentives to Reduce Waste and Encouraging Recycling

What is going on with the bin charges?

In June 2017 the Government made a decision to phase out flat fees for household waste collection. Over the period Autumn 2017 to Autumn 2018 all household customers should be moved to pricing plans which includes a charge based on usage when they go to renew their contracts. By October 2018 all household customers should have transitioned from flat fees.

What is a flat rate?

A flat rate fee is when a customer pays a single agreed price for waste collection. The payments can be monthly quarterly or annually. This does not change no matter how many times the bins are put out for collection or how heavy the bin is. No matter how much or how little you create, you pay the same price for collection.

Will it affect me?

Only if you are currently on a flat rate charge bin collection service. More than half of Irish households will not be affected by the changes as they are already using a pay by weight system or pay each time their bins are collected.

What will happen to the green bin or brown bin charges?

The Government has not introduced any changes to recycling or organic/food bin charges. These charges depend on your service provider. Some collectors charge separately for them, and some collectors bundle them in your collection fees.

If I am not already paying per weight or paying per collections what happens?

Since September 2017, when you are renewing your contract, you should be offered a plan which includes

- A charge based on usage (e.g. per-lift, per-kilogramme),
- Weight-band or weight allowance when you go to renew their contract.

Most companies also charge a set amount for standing/service charges.

When will my new charges start?

It depends when your current flat rate contract runs out. The first thing you should do is contact the company who collect your bins now and ask them when they plan to change. That way you can plan ahead.

Can my prices change even if I am already on an incentivised scheme?

Yes, that is currently the case. It is open to a bin collector to change the service pricing plan within the bounds of consumer and contract legislation. You should keep in contact with your service provider and do everything you can to reduce your waste in order to control costs and help the environment.

Is the Government monitoring prices being charged in the market?

The Minister has put in place a Price Monitoring Group to track monthly pricing developments in the market.

The group comprises representatives from:

- Waste Policy & Resource Efficiency Division
- An economist from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment,
- A statistician from the Central Statistics Office.
- Shelfwatch – an independent price monitoring group and
- Frank Conway, an independent consumer expert (Chairperson).

In addition, the Tánaiste and Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, have asked the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) to conduct a study on the operation of the household waste collection market. The CCPC has indicated that it hopes to finalise the study in early 2018.

The results from the Household Waste Collection Price Monitoring Group will be monitored and analysed and in conjunction with the study being undertaken by the CCPC, provide an evidence base regarding future monitoring or the potential need for additional regulation of the waste market.

Why is this happening?

Research shows that you generate significantly less waste by using one of these options. Therefore, the Government believes that the new system will help prevent greater waste problems for future generations while at the same time it can help you to control your own bin costs. It can potentially save households money and it will help us to deal with the growing problem of landfill waste.

Those, who are already recycling as much as they possibly can, cannot continue to pay for everyone else. We have to try to educate people and make individuals responsible for the waste they generate. Waste has an environmental and economic impact on our country and our planet. If you are doing all that you can in your household, perhaps you can help others to follow your example.