

RPS 361 – EXCEEDING WASTE STORAGE LIMITS AT PERMITTED SITES

BRIEFING NOTE FOR WOOD RECYCLERS/PROCESSORS

[RPS 361 Guidance](#) was introduced on 16th December 2025 - see [Exceeding waste storage limits at permitted sites: RPS 361 - GOV.UK](#).

Please find below a list of Points to be aware of and Recommendations for wood recyclers/processors:

1. National Impact and Guidance Consistency

EA Local Officers have been advised to consider significant reductions in off-take as valid grounds for RPS use – not just full plant closures. They are aware that the issue is having a national impact across the supply chain.

2. RPS vs LEP Pathways

While there is an alternative route via a Local Enforcement Position (LEP), which some wood recyclers/processors have already used, companies are encouraged to continue to use the RPS route. This ensures national visibility and consistency, even though decisions will still rest at the local level.

3. Timeframe Concerns

Please note that the 31 July 2026 end date is the RPS review point not the automatic end date of any individual RPS request or enforcement position. When you submit a request for extended storage under RPS352 or a Local Enforcement Position, please include a realistic end date. This will ensure that the EA can align their support and permission to your actual site conditions and capacity.

4. Use of Exemptions to Create Temporary Capacity

The EA does recognise that there are challenges in terms of waste wood movement, so wood recyclers/processors are also encouraged to consider applying for waste exemptions as an additional route to managing material overflow. Exemptions can be used for areas on a site which are not currently permitted, providing the usual exemption conditions are applied. They can also potentially be used by a supplier or customer who has the space on their site to store material on behalf of a wood recycler/processor.

5. Panel Board Sector Position

Unlike with the previous RPS (RPS 352), wood destined for panel board plants is now included in the scope of RPS 361. Therefore if wood recyclers/processors who supply this end market have evidence that they have been impacted by the current supply situation and therefore need

temporary additional storage, they can apply for RPS 361, a Local Enforcement Position or an Exemption.

6. Recommendations for Wood Recyclers/Processors

- Use the RPS route with clear justification on demand reduction and mitigation actions as previously highlighted.
- Ensure your case demonstrates environmental responsibility – not financial opportunism. In other words not just taking advantage of high gate fees and proving that you have a plan to remove the wood . Be aware that if you don't get an extension, then you could incur extra cost in removal later if you don't get agreement of a longer storage period.
- If the RPS is not a suitable route, look at Local Enforcement Positions or Exemptions as described above.

While the EA has said that any application to increase storage must still follow legal requirements, they are encouraging creative, compliant proposals and will aim to be supportive where possible. The EA has also confirmed that they remain open to finding flexible, short-term solutions as the sector continues to face limited offtake capacity and constraints.

If you have any queries or would like to provide additional information/evidence to help further in our discussions with the EA on this, please email technical@woodrecyclers.org or director@woodrecyclers.org or call 0330 325 0490