

Press Release: 5th December 2007

Surrey on the front line of business waste reduction

Surrey County Council today announced the launch of a major business focused initiative - 'There are 3Rs in Surrey: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' - designed to help companies in the county go greener, save money and comply with tough new waste treatment legislation.

Businesses are responsible for almost half (45 per cent) of the UK's carbon emissions and in Surrey the Environment Agency estimates that businesses produce over 1 million tonnes of waste per year. As such, every company in the county has a vital role to play in reducing the volume of material sent to landfill.

Peter Martin, Surrey County Council Executive Member for the Environment commented: "As well as the environmental benefits there are also compelling financial reasons to cut down on what goes in your company's dustbin. Landfill Tax will increase by at least £8 per tonne a year for the next three years meaning significant additional costs to businesses."

"In addition, as of 30 October 2007, businesses in the UK can no longer send untreated waste to landfill. These measures have been introduced to increase waste recycling and recovery and cut down on potentially harmful emissions from landfills. Companies will be expected to separate waste into different recycling categories or have a waste contractor do this on their behalf."

However, independent research from YouGov has revealed that fewer than 20 per cent of senior directors of small businesses are aware of these changes to the law, which will directly affect them.

Surrey County Council is using these new requirements as an opportunity to remind all businesses in the county of the environmental and economic case for thinking twice about rubbish. 'There are 3Rs in Surrey' is a pioneering campaign managed by Surrey County Council in conjunction with Surrey's district and borough councils that will tackle the issue of waste management - in the workplace and the home - by addressing the root cause and reducing the amount of waste generated in the first place.

Surrey County Council is also working with partners to offer free waste audits to companies who are keen to improve their systems to reduce the amount of waste they produce. Advice and support is also available to manufacturing companies to reduce the amount of packaging they use.

Matt Smyth, Waste Minimisation Manager at Surrey County Council, commented: "As individuals, as a county and as a country we are all guilty of throwing too much away. Businesses are a major contributor to the county's waste issues, generating over one million tonnes of waste every year. Changes in government legislation and increasingly stiff penalties for landfill mean that we must all work together to combat waste."

"The 3Rs campaign will show Surrey businesses just how easy it can be to make small, practical changes in waste habits that will lead to great positive differences to our businesses, homes, environment and economy. Adopting the 3Rs will help keep our green and pleasant land a great place to live and work."

Ends

For more information on the report and the campaign, please visit www.surreywaste.info or contact Arthur Browne on Arthur@3-monkeys.co.uk.

Notes to editors:

Objectives of the campaign

The campaign is designed to educate and raise awareness amongst Surrey residents and businesses of the environmental and financial impact of waste, and to help them manage their waste by applying the 3Rs - reduce, reuse and recycle - in their everyday lives.

About Surrey

- Surrey has a population of around 1.1million people
- Per square mile, it is the most densely populated shire county in England
- The county is run by a two-tier system comprising the county council and 11 district/borough councils
- The average age of Surrey residents is 39
- The most densely populated area is Epsom & Ewell, with an average population of almost 20 people per hectare of land
- The least populated area is Mole Valley, with three people per hectare
- The last two census reports (1991 and 2001) showed that, in 10 years, the population grew by almost 5%*

For more information on the 3Rs please contact:

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