Procedure for transboundary movement of hazardous waste - Notification Procedure

What to do

The generator or exporter shall notify the Competent Authority (EMA) in writing, of any proposed transboundary movement of hazardous waste or other waste.

Where to get forms

Forms can be obtained from:

- EMA’s website, www.ema.co.tt
- Hard copies are available at EMAs head office
- Basel Convention website, www.basel.int AND
- Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean Region
  #8 Alexandra Street
  St. Clair,
  628-8369

Where to send Notifications & Supporting Documents

The notification should be submitted to the EMA's head office.
History of the Convention

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal was adopted on March 22, 1989 by the 116 States participating in the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Global Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes. The Conference was convened by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and held in Basel at the invitation of the Government of Switzerland. The Basel Convention entered into force on May 5, 1992; the first two meetings of the conference of the Parties were held in December 1992 (Piriapolis, Uruguay) and March 1994 (Geneva, Switzerland), respectively.

Trinidad and Tobago accede to the convention on February 18, 1994.

Goals of the Convention

The main objectives of the Convention are:

- To reduce transboundary movement of hazardous waste to a minimum, consistent with sound environmental management
- To treat and dispose of hazardous wastes and other wastes as close as possible to their source of generation in an environmentally sound manner
- To minimise the generation of hazardous waste and other waste

How it works

The Basel Convention regulates the transboundary movement of hazardous and other wastes applying the “Prior Informed Consent” procedure (shipments made without consent are illegal). Shipments to and from non-Parties are illegal unless there is a special agreement.

The Convention obliges its Parties to ensure that hazardous and other wastes are managed and disposed of in an environmentally sound manner.

What is Transboundary Movement?

Transboundary movement refers to any movement of hazardous waste or other waste from an area of national jurisdiction of one State to or through an area under the national jurisdiction of another State, provided at least two States are involved in the movement.

Examples of wastes regulated by the Basel Convention

- Biomedical and healthcare wastes
- Used Oils
- Used Lead Acid Batteries, Lithium Batteries, Nickel cadmium Batteries
- Persistent Organic Pollutant wastes, chemicals and pesticides that persist for many years in the environment
- Polychlorinated Biphenols (PCBs), compounds used in industry as heat exchange fluids, in electric transformers and capacitors, and as additives in paint, carbonless copy paper, sealants and plastics
- E-waste

Focal Point

The Focal Point is the conduit through which Parties transmit to and receive information from the Secretariat and other Parties. It is also responsible for receiving notices of meetings of Convention bodies.

The Focal Point in Trinidad and Tobago is the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources.

Competent Authority

The Competent Authority is the entity responsible for receiving and responding to notifications of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes. Upon receipt of a notification, the Competent Authorities of the countries of import and transit will have to decide whether to allow the proposed shipment of wastes into or through their respective territories.

The Competent Authority in Trinidad and Tobago is the Environmental Management Authority (EMA).

Requirements for exporting Hazardous Waste

1. Completed transboundary notification form
2. Application statement providing the details of the reason for export
3. Copy of insurance policy/policies as evidence of financial coverage
4. Copy of contract(s) between the exporter and the disposal/recovery facility
5. Documentation about the disposal/recovery facility’s waste management practices
6. For applicants who intended to ship Used Lead Acid Batteries, an export licence is needed from the Ministry of Trade