



environmental  
services  
association

## PRESS RELEASE

# Temporary suspension of HGV testing will help keep waste sector's wheels turning during pandemic

**LONDON, 23 March 2020 – For immediate release**

The Environmental Services Association (ESA), has welcomed new guidance issued by the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) that it will suspend MOT testing for all Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV), trailers and Public Service Vehicles (PSV) for up to three months.

From Friday (March 20), all HGVs, trailers and PSVs with an annual safety test due to expire in a particular month (ie rolling from March) will be issued with a three-month certificate of exemption (CTE) until further notice – although for some vehicle categories, this will not happen automatically and will need to be applied for.

This measure will provide some small relief for the recycling and waste management sector, which operates large fleets of these vehicles to provide vital waste services to society, and will ensure that otherwise road-worthy vehicles can remain deployed, and not in the garage.

Licence tests for new drivers have also been widely suspended, except for identified key-workers, which includes those working in the recycling and waste industry. This means that trainee HGV drivers for our sector, who may be waiting to take their tests in the coming months, should still be able to do so.

More information about the announcement can be found [here](#)

**Executive Director of the Environmental Services Association (ESA), Jacob Hayler, said:** “This sensible, pragmatic, approach taken by the DVSA is very much welcomed and will help to keep recycling and waste operators, including ESA members, focussed on keeping our homes and streets free from waste during this challenging period.

Of course, ESA members will continue to keep all of their vehicles in a safe, roadworthy, condition and will operate within the terms of their operators' licence conditions, but this extension does provide temporary relief to a vital sector that will undoubtedly be under increasing pressure in the coming weeks and months.

The ESA is working with Government to try and address multiple regulatory areas where temporary common-sense flexibility like this will help operators to keep the wheels turning on waste services. Last week, we were pleased to see that the Government listened to calls from the ESA and others, which saw waste disposal identified as an essential sector, and its frontline employees given key-worker status.”

**ENDS**

### **Notes to editors – COVID-19**

The ESA is still calling on Government to:

- Allow some short-term **flexibility around planning and permitting conditions** to allow recycling and waste services to continue in the event of a reduced workforce, or inability to move recyclable or waste material to its normal destinations. ESA members need written assurance from regulators that temporary breaches will not be penalised.
- Prioritise the sector as a **critical industry** to ensure the continuation of supplies necessary for it to keep operating, such as fuel and sector-specific consumables, like chemicals and equipment.
- Ensure that temporary provision is in place to **relieve operators from contractual performance penalties** with the local authorities it serves, during this pandemic. For now, the industry must focus on keeping services running, and not on meeting contractual targets.

The public has been asked by Defra to ensure that any waste produced in a non-medical setting, associated with a person who has symptoms of COVID-19, is double-bagged, tied securely and left inside for at least 72 hours before being placed in the bin, after which time the virus is no longer viable. This is to prevent the transmission of infection and helps protect waste workers. Furthermore, ESA members urge the public not to put tissues and other sanitary items in their recycling – they should be disposed of in the general waste.

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