



Municipal waste management in Geneva – The pathway of your plastics and other wastes

The environmentally sound management of municipal waste is very important in reducing plastic wastes entering the environment. Central to minimising waste is tackling waste generation at the household level.

The backbone of the waste system in the City of Geneva is the collection of different wastes types, sorted by households. These different waste types are then collected through two main systems: either through garbage vehicles, which collect the wastes at source (e.g. the household), or through regional collection sites which may service many communities. In a second step, those wastes are transported to transfer stations or directly to treatment and disposal facilities.

Take a moment to imagine where the plastic packaging for your sandwich ends up...



From the CICG to Cheneviers

The canton of Geneva has very good traceability of municipal waste disposed of in garbage bags. First, the bags are transported to the basement and stored for some days in a container. This container will be cleared using vehicles from the city administration. The vehicles bring the bags to “**Jonction**” situated on the confluence of the rivers **Rhone and Arve** next to the city center. They are loaded **onto barges** and transported via the Rhone to the site of “**Cheneviers**” in Aire-la-Ville about 12 km from Geneva city center. Shipping the waste avoids around 28,000 additional truck journeys every year, and thus helps to **reduce CO₂-emissions**.

Within the incineration plant

In “Cheneviers” stands the Geneva incineration plant, where the bags will be burned at approximately 900 degrees Celsius. The plant incinerated approximately 237,000 tonnes of waste in 2017. The heat is used to produce both thermal and electric energy, which together generates around 250,000 MWh of energy which is used by the canton of Geneva. This represents about 6% of the overall energy consumption of the canton of Geneva.



Sur Crusilles

And the ashes?

The journey of our original plastic packaging is not over yet, as there are still ashes: The half of the ashes are landfilled in Bernex, Geneva within the landfill of Châtillon near to the incineration plant, the other half in the neighboring canton of Vaud in the landfill "sur Crusilles" near to Yverdon-les-Bains (about 90 km north of Geneva). Each landfill stores about 16.000 tonnes of ashes every year.