

## Street Works UK: Material Classification Protocol

*This document sets out the newly approved Street Works UK Material Classification Protocol and provides guidance and examples.*

### Who are Street Works UK?

Street Works UK is the trade association representing utilities and their contractors on all street works issues. Our membership comprises around 70 companies across all five utilities: water, wastewater, gas, electricity and telecoms/broadband. Our members include leading utility companies like Cadent Gas, United Utilities, National Grid, Virgin Media O2 and Openreach, with strong representation also within the devolved nations. On average the annual collective capital investment by our members in the UK is £14 billion.

### **Why the change in how utilities classify excavated waste material**

The Environment Agency requires all excavated waste to be classified before disposal / treatment. Utilities have been able to do this in two ways previously, unplanned works followed RPS 211 and Planned works followed WM3. A solution was required to better deal with waste generated from unplanned works and the Environment Agency expressed an openness to industry, through Street Works UK, developing a solution that would work for the street works sector. A risk assessment based approach was trialled by Street Works UK members was subsequently approved by the Environment Agency for use to classify excavated waste for qualifying work.

### **1. Qualification to use the protocol**

The following works qualify for use of the protocol.

- **Immediate Urgent**
- **Immediate Emergency**
- **Minor**
- **Standard**
- **Major Works when the permit/notice is only required due to Traffic Management purposes\***
- **Or equivalent notice periods for works on private land**

\* Major Works for traffic management purposes only relate to works that would take less than 10 days duration but a 'Major Works' permit is required due to the disruption to road users because of the works e.g. a road closure to repair an asset in the centre of a road.

## 2. Desktop Risk Assessment

Only version-controlled desktop risk assessments are to be used to ensure all users are completing the same question sets thus providing consistency across the country. A trained party completes the desktop risk assessment aligned with any company waste classification procedures. To aid completion, Street Manager holds a central register of known results which will continually be updated with results from any UKAS material classification testing.

## Utilities Excavation Waste Assessment

### Desktop Risk Assessment

This risk assessment is to be completed before the site risk assessment is undertaken.

<b>Activity Type:</b>	List of Assessment	
<b>Location of work:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<b>Personnel:</b>	Work Order ref	
<b>Location Ref Number:</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		
<b>Post code:</b>		
<b>Highway Authority:</b>		
<b>Work Type:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor
	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Major (See Note)
<b>Surface Location:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Carriageway	<input type="checkbox"/> Footway / Footpath
	<input type="checkbox"/> verge	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<b>Approved - when does work start:</b>		

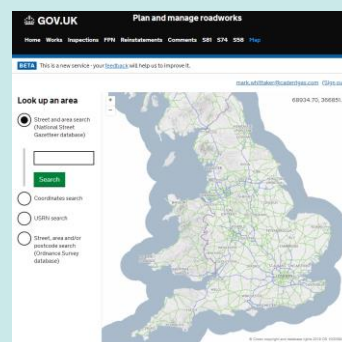
<b>Is there a previous complete record recorded for this activity within this site of where work is required?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Environmental</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Red
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Red
<b>Public</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Red

Table 1 - Screening Summary, this screen relates to the presence of certain risks within the disturbance area.				
Site Type	Answer			
	No	Yes - action		
Industrial / manufacturing	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Use border crossing	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Mining (incl. metalliferous)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Manufacturing / Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Storage / transport / Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Energy / transport / Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Landfills	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Water site - Landfill & treatment / Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Water site - Storage / Mineral storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Water site - Storage / Mineral storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
	<b>L</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>MF</b>	<b>V</b>

Table 2 - Screening risk assessment outcome	
<input type="checkbox"/> Low risk	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium risk
<input type="checkbox"/> High risk	
Reasons Notes:	

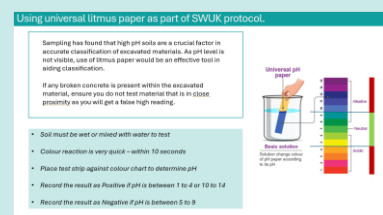
Rev05

Rev 2024



### 3. Site Assessment

Only version-controlled site assessments are to be used to ensure that all users are completing the same question sets thus providing consistency across the country. A trained party completes the site assessment aligned with any company waste classification procedures. Each Bituminous and Sub-base layer needs to be segregated and assessed individually on site. The use of PAK spray and Litmus paper indicators are encouraged but not mandatory. If any questions are answered 'Yes', the classification outcome for the material being assessed should be Red. Refer to guidance documents when assessing PAK and Litmus results.

[illegible]

## 4. Waste Movement

The excavated waste material is ready for collection once the site assessment has been completed and the material(s) have been classified. Information on material classification must be shared with those collecting the material to ensure that Red and Green classified materials continue to be segregated from one another during transfer to a location where it will be managed (or treated).

**Utilities Excavation Waste Assessment**

**Site Risk Assessment**

This risk assessment is to be completed after opening the excavation and once relevant utility asset is exposed / ready for installation.

Utility type	Street Works Example	
Year of assessment	2023/2024	
Location of work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
Work order number	123456789	
Excavation site number	1	
Excavation	Street Works Close	
Plant make	JCB 320S	
Excavation authority	Street Works UK	
Work type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor
Surface location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carriageway	<input type="checkbox"/> Footway / Footpath
Ground - What Three Words	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Street	<input type="checkbox"/> Water
Country	UK	

Question	Answer	Notes
Q1: Are there any signs of asbestos fibres in asbestos containing materials in the excavation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	If asbestos / signs of asbestos are identified the excavation does not qualify for a risk assessment.
Q2: Is the bottom clean, sticky to touch and is there an organic odour?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	All three (slits, sticky and odour) required for a "Yes".
Q3: Have you taken the profile (depth) of asphalt / bitumen. Does the point change colour to black or grey?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Refer to sign 2 that shows the full depth of the bituminous layer. Refer to test colour chart.
Q4: Is the soil material an organic colour (such as orange, black, blue, brown)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Compare the documentation of soil to other parts of the excavation.
Q5: Is there a water / moisture in the excavation - is there a yellow stain / colouration in the water?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Looking for signs of oil in the excavation.
Q6: Are there any pungent odours in the material?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	These include: petrol, oil, hot, gas, pungent, sweet, smelt. Refer to test colour chart.
Q7: Are there any signs of oil or gas in the excavation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Refer to test colour chart.

Assessment result(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Bituminous	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Sub-base	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

## 5. Sampling

A percentage of work needs to be sampled to continually check the accuracy of the protocol. Samples should be taken from segregated materials as per procedures used in SWUK Phase 3 trial (refer to sampling guidance). The frequency of sampling will start at 1% for all users and is subject to change based on the accuracy performance of individual organisations each year. Sampling results must be uploaded to the central register in Street Manager and recorded in your SWUK sampling results log. Results logs should be returned to SWUK every quarter to [info@streetworks.org.uk](mailto:info@streetworks.org.uk), mark the subject of the email as **"Sample Return"** alongside your company name.

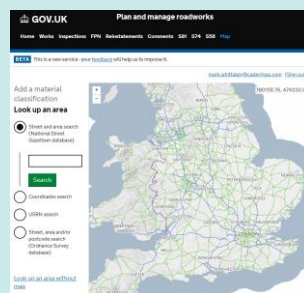
Volumes of testing will be assessed at the end of each calendar year and new sampling frequency assigned based on accuracy performance, >93% accuracy = 1% sampling, 85-92.99% accuracy = 2% sampling and <85% accuracy = 3% sampling.

**Utilities Excavation Waste Assessment**

**Sampling and Results**

Example how to use for testing, please provide details below.

Material	Bituminous	Sub-base
Location	123456789	123456789
Year	2023/2024	2023/2024
Material	Bituminous	Sub-base
Location	123456789	123456789
Year	2023/2024	2023/2024



File	Name	Page	Version	Date	Size	Author	Help	Table Design	Comments
1	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			
2	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			
3	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			
4	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			
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48	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			
49	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			
50	123456789	1	1	2023/2024	1000000	123456789			

Sample Banding		
>93%	1.0%	
85-92.99%	2.0%	
<85%	3.0%	

## 6. Results / Performance







UKAS Results from any sampling must be uploaded into Street Managers central register. All sample results must also be added to your SWUK results log, along with the supporting assessment outcomes and details of the lab analysis including any concentrations of hazards found. Results logs must be returned to SWUK every quarter to allow accuracy of the protocol to be measured and performance shared with the EA.

Performance will be monitored by the Environment Agency and any organisations that have two combined quarters back-to-back in the Red zone will be suspended from using the protocol until they can demonstrate they can perform at the required level of accuracy. Green = >80% accuracy, Amber = 70%-79.99% accuracy and Red = <70% accuracy.

Performance Banding	
	>80%
	>70-79.99%
	<70%

2025 Q4, 2026 Q1 Combined		2026 Q1, Q2 Combined	
Q1 EA Review	Q1 Volume of Samples	Q2 EA Review	Q2 Volume of Samples
70.0%	10	66.7%	9
70.0%	10	70.0%	10
68.8%	64	75.4%	65
66.7%	9	66.7%	9
66.7%	9	77.8%	9
60.0%	10	90.0%	10
60.0%	10	60.0%	10
60.0%	10	77.8%	9
60.0%	10	50.0%	10

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Description of file	Document Number	Document
Desktop Risk Assessment	DRA1	 DRA1_SWUK_Desktop_Risk_Assessment
Site Assessment	SRA1	 SRA1_SWUK_Site_Assessment 29.
Sampling Requirements	SR1	 SR1_SWUK_Sampling_Requirements 11.
Quarterly Results Log	QRL1	<a href="http://streetworks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/QRL1_SWUK_-_Results_Capture-28.01.2026.xlsx">http://streetworks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/QRL1_SWUK_-_Results_Capture-28.01.2026.xlsx</a>
PAK testing guidance	PAK1	 PAK1_SWUK_PAK_Guidance 21.01.2025.
Litmus testing guidance	LIT1	 LIT1_SWUK_Litmus_Guidance 21.01.2025.
Reporting calendar	EAT1	 EAT1_SWUK_Reporting_Timeline 10.01.2