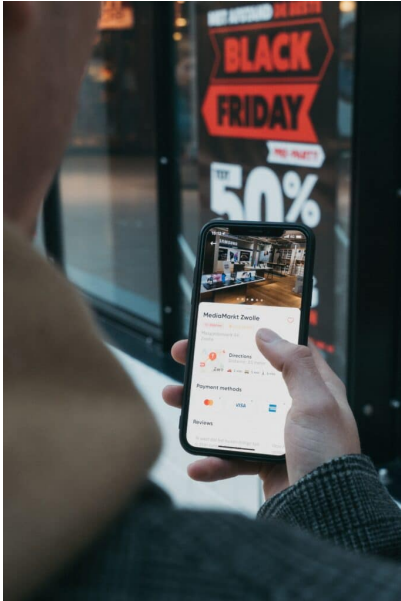


Black Friday's Hidden Cost: Shocking environmental impacts revealed by experts

2 years ago



With Black Friday 2024 sales already in full swing, industry-leading waste management company, [Waste Managed](#) is calling attention to the environmental toll of one of the biggest shopping days of the year.

While the event delivers massive discounts and a sales boost for businesses, the sustainability impact is undeniable, with shocking statistics showing the true cost of Black Friday sales.

Waste Managed is sharing some eye-opening statistics on the true impact it has on the environment:

- 80% of Black Friday purchases end up in landfills, are incinerated, or poorly recycled.
- 429,000 metric tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions are expected from product deliveries in 2024 alone equivalent to 435 return flights between London and New York.
- 1.4 million tonnes of electronic waste are sent to landfill annually, much of it driven by events like Black Friday.
- Black Friday spending in the UK is projected to increase from £221 per person in 2023 to £258 per person in 2024, marking the highest per capita spending since before the pandemic.
- Overall spending expected to reach £7.1 billion this year.

Black Friday promotes mass consumerism, often encouraging purchases of items that are seldom used and quickly discarded. This behaviour, akin to the fast fashion industry, creates enormous waste and carbon emissions.

The production and shipping of goods during Black Friday consume massive resources, while return

shipping adds further environmental strain.

Research by Optoro highlights that product returns alone account for the use of 1.2 billion gallons of diesel and the emission of 12 million metric tonnes of CO2 annually in the U.S.

Discussing the issue of Black Friday waste, sustainability expert at Waste Managed, Steve Traviss, said; “Black Friday drives overconsumption at an alarming rate. While it benefits businesses and offers savings for consumers, the environmental cost is staggering.

“While it’s a valuable opportunity for businesses to clear stock and for consumers to save money, the environmental cost is simply too high. The sheer volume of waste, from discarded products to the emissions generated by delivery and returns, is staggering.

“To address this, both businesses and shoppers need to make more conscious decisions—like prioritising recyclable materials, reducing overproduction and overconsumption, and exploring second-hand or eco-friendly alternatives. Small changes can collectively make a big difference.”

For more information on Black Friday waste and to stay updated on the latest from Waste Managed visit: <https://www.wastemanaged.co.uk/our-news/retail/black-friday-waste/>