Earlier today, the Formentera Council's department of environment issued a review concerning the levels of waste generated locally so far this year. Since January, explained department head Daisee Aguilera, one in every four pieces of rubbish generated on Formentera has been recycled. She thanked the people of Formentera for their efforts separating waste at home.

“This”, she said, “is the good news. The bad news is there exists an all-too-frequent occurrence: illegal dumping. Residents, instead of taking certain rubbish to the municipal tip, simply leave it next to the street-side bins”. To tackle the problem, the department of the environment has created stickers to be placed on the abandoned rubbish, which, says Aguilera, “signal the need to initiate an investigation aimed at identifying the offending individual”.

Sixty offences

In fact, so far in 2015 sixty offenders have been caught and sanctioned – the same number as in 2014. As established in the local code of conduct, fines start at fifty euros and can go as high as three thousand. For that very reason, Councillor Aguilera took the opportunity of the press conference to “make a special appeal to the people of Formentera to take any special waste to the newly-opened rubbish tip”.

More recycling, more savings

Aguilera also spoke about the costs associated with waste management, emphasising that pretreatment and transfer costs are only applied to non-recyclable rubbish (whereas recycled waste is exempt from those charges). She concluded: “Recycling means a very real reduction of costs for taxpayers”. The councillor also underscored the importance of domestic recycling because “it permits a reuse of old material”.

Raising awareness among youth of the island

Staff specialist of the office, Diego Ojeda, spoke about the figures reflecting waste collection at the local level. He pointed out the island experiences a boom in waste generation in the summertime and that Formenterers generated 2.5% more trash this October than the same month last year. He noted recycling figures had remained more or less unchanged: up 0.90 points to 24.9% from 24%. To get the number even higher, Councillor Aguilera spoke of the need to raise awareness among the island's youth and said Formentera needs “informational campaigns and beach-cleaning outings for schoolchildren”.

Furniture and large waste collection

Ojeda indicated that this year “we have carried out 260 free home pick-ups (scheduled by phoning 900 102 656) of furniture and other large-items”.

He also referred to the opening this May of the island's rubbish tip and said the site —designed for the drop-off of items not fit for disposal in normal bins— has received 4,065 visits this year. He cited more than 600 tonnes of household waste and approximately 5 tonnes of hazardous waste materials have been collected as well. Encouraging a mindful use of the facility, Ojeda reminded Formentera's residents of the site's opening hours: Monday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and Monday through Friday 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.