

Press release: Tesco hit with major £8million fine for pollution incident

Tesco Stores Ltd has been ordered to pay over £8million in fines and costs after pleading guilty to a pollution incident.

The incident, which occurred in July 2014, sparked a huge multi-agency operation involving the Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council, United Utilities, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and Lancashire Police.

It had a massive impact on the local community and environment with residents having to leave their homes due to petrol odours coming from the sewer network.

The Environment Agency's joint investigation with partners found that the incident resulted from Tesco's failure to address a known issue with part of the fuel delivery system and an inadequate alarm system and was compounded by poor emergency procedures.

Tesco were fined a total of £8million – £5million for the health and safety offence and £3million for the environmental offence.

Between Wednesday 2 July and Thursday 3 July 2014 approximately 23,500 litres of petrol escaped from a petrol filling tank at a petrol station in Haslingden operated by Tesco.

Petrol entered the sewerage system with the odours affecting residents up to 1km away causing people to seek medical attention with headaches and sickness. The odours remained in the homes for a number of days.

Some of the petrol also entered Langwood Brook and the River Irwell causing a significant environmental impact killing fish and other aquatic life.

Samples taken from the River Irwell detected oil up to three miles downstream. Over 40 dead fish, including brown trout, were found within 1.5 miles of where the pollution entered. Anglers reported dead fish in Bury, over six miles downstream.

About 23,500 litres of unleaded petrol leaked from the tank over a 29 hour period. Around 7,000 litres was later recovered at the site and the remainder escaped into the sewer system and watercourse.

Mark Easedale, an Environment Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

This pollution incident had a dramatically negative impact on the local community and the environment with Langwood Brook and the River Irwell severely affected. A week after the pollution incident an investigation by Environment Agency officers found fish populations in the River Irwell immediately downstream of Langwood

Brook were around 90% lower than those found upstream.

The sentencing today sends out a clear message to anyone whose recklessness causes serious pollution to the environment – we will be relentless in our investigations and take action wherever needed.

Our staff work 24/7 to protect people and wildlife from pollution incidents and we encourage people to report such incidents to the Environment Agency's Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

This was a joint prosecution with Lancashire County Council and Tesco Stores Ltd also pleaded guilty to an offence under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

County Councillor Albert Atkinson, deputy leader of Lancashire County Council with responsibility for Trading Standards, said:

This was a major leak of fuel in a relatively built-up area and close to a busy superstore. The potential consequences are only too obvious.

The fact that the leak was allowed to continue for more than 24 hours undoubtedly contributed to a risk of harm to people living and working nearby, as well as emergency services and other professionals attending the incident.

- Tesco Stores Ltd were fined a total of £8million at Preston Crown Court – £5million for the health and safety charge and £3million for the environmental offence. They were also ordered to pay Environment Agency costs of £35,434.30 and (approx.) £22,000 to Lancashire County Council.
 - Tesco Stores Ltd pleaded guilty to causing a water discharge activity not under and to the extent authorised by an Environmental Permit, contrary to Regulation 12(1)(b) and 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2010. A guilty plea was entered at an earlier hearing at Burnley Crown Court on 12 September 2016.
 - There was a further indictment led by Lancashire County Council: Contravention of Regulation 6(8) of the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002 contrary to s.33(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. A guilty plea was also entered for this charge.
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Research and analysis: The contribution of shipping to the English economy

Requirement R100

Requirement detail

This requirement is to provide a fuller picture of the economic contribution of the ports and shipping sectors. It will do this by identifying datasets that could be combined, or used alongside each other to gain a fuller picture of the economic contribution of ports and shipping.

There are a number of data sets that have been used on a shipping sector basis, primarily: economics (attaching £ values to shipping activities and employment values); shipping activity (vessel types and number of transits); and ports activity (port traffic categorisation, volume and value). These all relate to parts of shipping trade flows – the movement of goods and services relating to shipping. Linking these up should give a clearer picture of the economic importance of ship-based trade and its use of space within a plan area. This would also allow for an improved understanding of the composition of activity of each port allowing the question ‘what proportion is for recreation and what is for commercial shipping?’ to be answered.

The requirement will need to explore what datasets are available to complete this task for example, economic datasets from the Office for National Statistics. It will then need to look at developing a method for combining them, bringing together spatial and non-spatial information. The method will need to be tested, possibly through stakeholder engagement, before a report is produced to highlight its limitations and capabilities for marine planning. For example, this will most likely include an assessment of how robust the outputs are and whether they could be used to justify marine plan policies that differentiate between various ports and shipping routes.

MMO use

Marine Planning:

This will improve delivery of marine plan policies relating to ports and shipping and their consideration alongside other uses of space in marine plan areas.

External interest

The ports and shipping industry

Delivery target

Q2 2018

Research and analysis: Marine species migration pathways

Requirement R014

Requirement detail:

Improved information on the migratory pathways, timings and relative conservation importance of marine species is required to inform balanced evaluation of the cost and benefits of protecting those pathways.

Though information on all migratory species would be useful, early work will be to identify the species that are of most interest (including migratory fish), particularly species that are subject to statutory conservation measures.

This requirement focuses on migration (predictable large-scale movement in space and time) rather than just mobility e.g. dispersal.

MMO use

Marine Planning:

This will improve identification of intensively used sites or times of year when a species uses an area to migrate. This will help Marine Planning to better understand compatibility with human pressures and to consider addressing current or potential impacts in the marine plans, therefore improving delivery of marine planning.

Marine Licensing:

This will improve the consideration of migratory species in licence applications and could influence the need for, or nature of, conditions reflecting the importance of that area for migratory species. Information on timings will be of particular importance to increase the accuracy of time based conditions applied to licences, potentially increasing the effectiveness of advice given to the MMO but also ensuring any burden placed on activities is proportionate to the risk identified.

External interest

Natural England, JNCC, Cefas, Scottish Natural Heritage

Delivery target

Q3, 2018

[News story: Heat health warning: 2017](#)

With hot weather on the horizon for all of England this weekend, some people will be heading outside and enjoying the sunshine. PHE is suggesting that people should also plan ahead and think about the best ways to beat the heat.

The Met Office said today that there is a high chance that all parts except the north west will experience temperatures of about 28°C during the day and around 15°C at night from tomorrow (Saturday 17 June 2017).

Experts at PHE say that this is the point where hot weather can impact public health.

Dr Thomas Waite from PHE said:

Much of the advice on beating the heat is common sense and for most people there's nothing to really worry about. But before the hot weather arrives, it is a really good time to think about what you can do to protect you and your family and friends.

For some people, such as older people, those with underlying health conditions and those with young children, the summer heat can bring real health risks. That's why we're urging everyone to keep an eye on those you know who may be at risk this summer. If you're able, ask if your friends, family or neighbours need any support.

There are lots of useful tips and guidance on [NHS Choices](#) website and more detail available in the [Heatwave Plan for England](#). Up to date forecasts are available at www.metoffice.gov.uk.

The top ways for staying safe when the heat arrives are to:

- look out for others, especially older people, young children and babies and those with underlying health conditions
- close curtains on rooms that face the sun to keep indoor spaces cooler and remember it may be cooler outdoors than indoors
- drink plenty of water as sugary, alcoholic and caffeinated drinks can make you more dehydrated
- never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals
- try to keep out of the sun between 11am to 3pm

- take care and follow local safety advice, if you are going into the water to cool down
- walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a hat, if you have to go out in the heat
- avoid physical exertion in the hottest parts of the day
- wear light, loose fitting cotton clothes
- make sure you take water with you, if you are travelling

Unusual levels of UV are also being recorded in the UK at the moment – with the strength of the UV in some spots being as high as that in Cyprus and Gibraltar. This has prompted warnings that people should take extra care in the sun at the moment and should keep an eye on PHE's [UV monitors](#).

Met Office Chief Meteorologist Frank Saunders said

With [high pressure](#) building from the south west and warm air being drawn up from the Azores, much of England will see very warm or hot weather this weekend and into early next week. Daytime temperatures will widely be in the mid to high twenties with some central and southern parts reaching the low thirties. It will also feel warm and humid overnight.