

News story: New emission controls will help improve air quality

Restrictions on air pollution from combustion plants and generators were passed by parliament this week, as the government continues to take action against poor air quality.

Air pollution is the biggest environmental risk to public health in the UK, and currently unregulated medium sized combustion plants (MCPs) and generators, commonly used to heat hospitals, hotels, offices, prisons and other large buildings as well as powering some industries, are a significant source of pollution.

A statutory instrument was debated and passed in the house of Commons and House of Lords on Monday and will come into force shortly, implementing a new Medium Combustion Plant Directive.

However, the government is going even further by introducing additional domestic emission controls on generators to tackle pollution from small scale, flexible generators which not covered by the Directive but are highly polluting and have been increasingly used in recent years.

The new regulations are expected to provide 43% of the sulphur dioxide emissions reduction, 9% of the reduction for particulate matter, and 22% of the nitrogen oxides emissions reduction needed to meet the UK's 2030 targets.

Environment Minister Therese Coffey said:

Air pollution has improved significantly since 2010, but we recognise there is more to do which is why we have put in place a £3.5 billion plan to improve air quality and reduce harmful emissions.

These regulations will help deliver further substantial reductions in emissions, while minimising the impact on energy security and costs to businesses. Poor air quality affects public health, the economy, and the environment, which is why we are determined to do more, and later this year we will publish a comprehensive clean air strategy which will set out further steps to tackle air pollution.

These regulations will require new medium combustion plants to reduce emissions from 20 December 2018 and existing medium combustion plants from 2025 or 2030, depending on their size – larger plants must comply sooner than smaller plants.

Additionally, newer generators will need to comply with a nitrogen oxides

emissions limit from 1st January 2019. Older generators, operating prior to December 2016, and those providing certain services to the National Grid will need to comply from a later date, depending on their size, emissions, operating hours, duration of their agreements with National Grid and whether they sign up to new agreements.

Dr Penny Woods, chief executive of the British Lung Foundation, said:

Breathing in toxic pollutants increases all our chances of getting lung cancer, it can worsen symptoms for people who have a lung condition and it can stunt the growth of children's lungs. We therefore welcome these restrictions on generators that will see a reduction in the invisible but deadly pollutants harming our health.

We need action on all sources of pollution, from traffic emissions to generators, if we are truly going to clean up the air in our towns and cities.

[Corporate report: Sellafield Magazine: issue 8](#)

Sellafield Magazine takes you behind the scenes at the Sellafield site and the work of Sellafield Ltd.

In this issue:

- Safe storage: Providing safe containment for nuclear waste for centuries is going to involve the manufacture of containers on a scale never before seen in the UK.
- Safety, delivery and value: 2017 review
- Maximising our social impact
- Evaporator D
- What is Transformation?
- Thorp: The final countdown

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Press release: Crackdown on illegal waste and fishing activities

During 2017 the Environment Agency successfully prosecuted 108 individuals and companies for flouting waste and fishing laws in the North East resulting in almost £170,000 in fines and costs.

There were 16 prosecutions of individuals or companies for waste offences, amounting to total fines of £62,763 and costs of £40,493.

There were also two custodial sentences, three suspended sentences, two community orders and two rehabilitation orders. The courts also awarded a total of £14,735 in compensation to those affected by the crimes, which included a landowner left with costs of £100,000 to remove 585 tonnes of waste dumped on their land.

In addition, the Environment Agency revoked two environmental permits from waste companies who continually failed to meet their permit conditions.

Courts imposed a further £19,162 in fines and costs on an individual and company for twice polluting a protected water course.

In fisheries enforcement, there were three serious offences resulting in £1115 in fines, costs and victim surcharge, plus two 12 month conditional discharges.

There were a further 87 offenders prosecuted for 119 rod licence offences, including 77 offences for fishing without a licence. This resulted in total fines, costs and victim surcharge of £29,461, with three offenders also given conditional discharges.

Enforcement activity has taken place right across the North East in Teesside, Tyne and Wear, County Durham and Northumberland.

The Environment Agency's enforcement teams work alongside other specialist teams to support businesses in abiding by their permit conditions, but take tough action against those who deliberately flout regulations.

Fisheries enforcement officers carry out regular patrols and act on information and intelligence to target illegal activity on our rivers.

Jamie Fletcher, Environment Manager at the Environment Agency in the North East, said:

We take illegal waste and fishing activity very seriously. We have had some excellent results in court over the last year and will continue to work hard in the coming year to ensure enforcement action is taken against those who flout the law.

Waste crime can cause serious pollution to the environment, puts communities at risk and undermines legitimate businesses, impacting on investment and economic growth.

Similarly those fishing illegally are cheating other anglers and putting the future of the sport and quality of our rivers in jeopardy.

We have specialist teams that work hard to target those suspected of being involved in illegal activity and to ensure any necessary action is taken against them.

We work closely with a wide range of partners including local authorities, police and the fire service, and I'd like to thank them for their continued support.

To report information about illegal activity contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. To report a crime ongoing dial 999.

[News story: Top accolade for nuclear record-keeping](#)

'Place of Deposit' (PoD) status was granted by The National Archives at Kew (TNA) and National Records of Scotland in December 2017, on schedule, after a comprehensive assessment of all operational aspects at the £20 million facility near Wick. It is one of the largest repositories outside London to be accredited by the TNA.

This means Nucleus (The Nuclear and Caithness Archives) has met all the UK's stringent criteria for the safeguarding, preserving and cataloguing of important public information on behalf of the government.

Martin Robb, Programme Manager for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's (NDA) Information Governance Programme, which is responsible for records management, said:

Our specialist contractor, Restore Ltd, has worked incredibly hard to secure Place of Deposit status and we're extremely proud of their achievement.

The news comes just weeks after the facility's sleek, angular lines impressed judges in the annual Architects' Journal awards, collecting two of the top trophies: Editor's Choice and Public Building of the Year. Edinburgh-based

Reiach and Hall Architects feature the stunning design on the home page of their website.

Nucleus, located next to Wick airport in Caithness, Scotland, opened its doors for business early in 2017 and a programme is currently under way to transfer records from all the NDA's sites across UK, estimated to take four years. This painstaking 'sift and lift' process requires millions of documents to be examined before being either destroyed or carefully indexed and packaged for the move north.

Eventually, decades-worth of NDA records, both digital and hard copy, will be housed at Nucleus where they will be available for ongoing research. Importantly, Nucleus is also the central repository for the vital waste records associated with delivering a geological disposal facility and deferred decommissioning.

Dounreay's photographic collection was the set of first nuclear records transferred to Nucleus, followed by the industry-wide epidemiological records.

Martin added:

With PoD status now secured, we can really begin the full-scale transfer of records. The collection from Harwell is next in line, followed closely by Dounreay records and then the stored material from Hinton House and other stores in Warrington.

Each collection of records requires a full programme of careful examination, destruction where appropriate – duplicates for example – and then indexing, packaging, transfer, preservation if required and cataloguing at Nucleus.

Sellafield alone has more than 130,000 boxes of archived records in off-site storage, plus material on site and in various offices. Magnox Ltd, with 12 sites, has a similar-sized collection in storage – estimated as stretching, if laid out, to more than 120km worth of paperwork. The number of electronic records held across the estate, meanwhile, is believed to number hundreds of millions.

[NDA archive: Nucleus \(the Nuclear and Caithness Archives\)](#)

[Notice: Unlocking the Severn \(Diglis,](#)

Lincomb, Holt, Bevere): Compulsory Purchase Orders

Updated: An additional map added to complement previous version. Environment Agency (Unlocking the River Severn) (Lincomb) Compulsory Purchase Order 2018 – revised August 2018.

These documents have been submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation of the Environment Agency's making of the Compulsory Purchase Orders in relation of land by the River Severn at Diglis, Lincomb, Bevere and Holt, Worcestershire