

Press release: No waste permit costs driver

Caught driving a tipper truck full of waste without being registered with the Environment Agency has today (Mon 18/9) cost Patrick Egan £965.

Egan of Grange Road, Grays was convicted in his absence by Basildon magistrates of driving the truck without being registered as a waste carrier nor being employed by a registered waste carrier.

The court fined him £660 and ordered that as well as the fine he should pay a victim surcharge of £66, Environment Agency costs of £85 and compensation of £154.

The tipper truck was stopped by police in Gumley Road, Grays in the course of an investigation into fly-tipping.

When the vehicle was stopped in January this year it was loaded with rubble, bricks and plasterboard.

Don't ignore advice

Egan told them the vehicle belonged to a friend called James whom he sometimes did favours for, such as driving lorries, and was paid £100 to drive it.

He said he did not check the load.

After the hearing an Environment Agency officer spokesperson said: "People driving tipper trucks such as Mr Egan drove have a responsibility to check the load and to be properly permitted by the Environment Agency. It is not good enough to ignore this advice as the court decision has shown today."

The cost of registering with the Environment Agency in 2017 is £154. The registration is valid for 3 years.

Press release: Explore the wonders of the Witham in free Wyndham Park event

Habitat improvements at Grantham's Wyndham Park are the stage for a day of free activities helping everyone enjoy the nature on their doorstep.

Environment and conservation experts will be on hand at the award-winning location on Sunday 24 September, offering games, competitions, crafts,

wildlife spotting and more.

All activities have been designed to show how easy and fun it is to get closer to nature – and play a part in protecting it.

The event marks the official unveiling of improvements to Wyndham's Park's natural habitat, and a 100m-stretch of the River Witham that flows through it.

Enhancements include an area of stepped decking enabling safe access to a shallow part of the river and new wetland habitat to attract rare species.

All were funded using fishing licence money from the Environment Agency, which is re-invested into rivers, helping to improve facilities for anglers, tackle illegal fishing and encourage more people to take up the sport.

The event will offer a chance to explore the changes to the park's habitat, and discover how they benefit both visitors and wildlife.

Matt Parr, geomorphology technical specialist at the Environment Agency, said:

Few things beat the great outdoors but that doesn't mean you have to escape into the wilderness. Natural wonders can be found right in the heart of your town.

We'll be on hand to help you spot the opportunities, using the beauty of Wyndham Park – and our improvements to the river there – to show how easy and fun it is to get closer to nature.

Organisations taking part in the event include the Environment Agency, South Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire Rivers Trust, Anglian Water and Rivercare.

It takes place from 12noon to 4.30pm on Sunday 24 September. The date coincides with World Rivers Day, a global celebration of rivers, their value to local communities and the importance of looking after them.

Press release: Salmon in Derbyshire river a first since Industrial Revolution

Atlantic salmon have been discovered on the River Ecclesbourne, a tributary of the River Derwent, Derbyshire for the first time since the Industrial

Revolution following work carried out by the Environment Agency and its partners.

The discovery comes following the installation of fish passes on the River Derwent by the Environment Agency and Trent Rivers Trust which have helped to improve fish migration and allow the salmon to move upstream through the river.

The installation of fish passes is just one of a programme of actions carried out by the Environment Agency and its partners to remove barriers to migration and help restore salmon stocks throughout England.

Fisheries Specialist at the Environment Agency, Matt Buck, said:

Salmon is an important species and after two decades of work to improve water quality and the habitat for fish in the Trent catchment area, we now have a recovering population of salmon.

We are particularly excited to have found juvenile salmon in the Ecclesbourne for the first time in living memory, which indicates the success of salmon in this part of the river.

Poor water quality and weirs on the River Derwent constructed in the Industrial Revolution acted as a barrier to fish migration and left them stuck in unsuitable water. Weirs not only stop fish migrating, but trap fish spawning gravels and create ponded areas upstream which are not suitable for riverine fish species.

Over the past seven years, the Environment Agency has worked with partners and developers on the construction of fish passes on a number of weirs in the area. These passes have enabled adult salmon to swim freely further up the river, where they have access to more varied habitats providing suitable conditions to spawn, shelter and feed.

Matt continued:

Thanks to the work we have carried out with our partners, we are, for the first time ever, witnessing a recovering population of salmon on the River Derwent and other local rivers which is an excellent result. Last year we saw a record number of sightings of adult salmon, including a salmon found at Belper weir for the first time in over 100 years.

We are committed to ensuring that salmon numbers continue to increase within the catchment by working with partners to enable fish passage on the remaining barriers and to improve the quality of river habitats for this fascinating species. If salmon are thriving we know the river is doing well for all fish and wildlife.

Press release: Have you checked your heating oil tank?

With an autumnal nip in the air, the Environment Agency is urging anyone with a domestic heating oil tank to check their tank is in a good state of repair before getting heating oil delivered for the winter.

Leaks and spills from a domestic heating tank can be difficult and expensive to clean up; leaked oil can end up in groundwater supplies and drains, many of which lead directly into rivers, streams, lakes and even garden ponds.

If oil does get into drains it could pollute watercourses; harming livestock, wildlife and plants. Our vital drinking water can also come from the same surface and groundwater supplies so protection is important.

Oil is poisonous to fish, other wildlife and smothers plants – just two litres of oil could seriously pollute the volume of fresh water needed to fill an Olympic-size swimming pool.

Steve Brown from the Environment Agency said:

Heating oil can cause serious problems if it gets into the water environment.

The clean-up costs could be tens of thousands of pounds; and these costs fall to the owner of the leaking tank. These costs are not always covered by household insurance policies. A serious case of land contamination from a leaking oil tank could also severely affect the value of property in the area.

This is why it's vital that oil is only ever stored in tanks that are in good condition. Both the tank and its pipe work should be regularly inspected and people should never buy more oil than they can safely store.

If anyone does find a spill, please contact us straight away so that we can reduce the impact on the environment.

To report an oil spill people should contact the Environment Agency's 24-hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Press release: Illegal Waste Carriers to be stopped in their tracks

The Environment Agency and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) have officially agreed to carry out joint operations across England to cut the transportation of illegal waste and to improve road safety.

The memorandum of understanding signed today by chief executives, Sir James Bevan and Gareth Llewellyn will see the Environment Agency and the DVSA using their combined enforcement powers to tackle the transportation of waste to illegal or poorly-performing permitted sites.

The agreement will involve:

- DVSA staff located within EA teams to ensure a coordinated and effective approach,
- sharing of information to increase the effectiveness of roadside enforcement on waste industry vehicles up and down the country;
- providing enforcement teams with intelligence relating to waste industry operators
- identifying high risk or illegal goods vehicle operators involved in waste transport
- reducing the number of seriously and serially non-compliant waste industry vehicles on England's roads.

The Environment Agency and DVSA have worked together for a number of years to stop waste crime, making sure companies are operating legally and vehicle safety is improved. This agreement will enable the two organisations to tackle waste crime more efficiently by intervening earlier in the waste chain and using prevention tactics.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive, Environment Agency said:

We want to protect people and communities from the impact that vehicle and waste crime can have and create a level playing field for all operators.

This Memorandum of Understanding with the DVSA will help both organisations work with the waste industry to improve compliance and vehicle and driver safety standards.

To help us with this, we are encouraging people to check with the Environment Agency if the company they are employing to take their waste away is a fully registered waste carrier.

DVSA's Chief Executive, Gareth Llewellyn, said:

DVSA priority is to protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles. I am delighted that we will be working with the Environment Agency to tackle those who illegally transport waste. By combining our enforcement powers and intelligence we'll be able to work with those who break the rules more effectively.

DVSA traffic examiners will issue fines to those waste carriers we find to be operating in an unsafe manner. These operators are putting themselves and other road users at risk and pose a danger to our environment.

Anyone who suspects that an operator is transporting waste in an unsafe manner should report their concerns to DVSA on 0300 123 9000 or enquiries@dvsa.gov.uk.

Members of the public can check if a waste company is registered with the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 and at www.gov.uk/waste-carrier-or-broker-registration.