

Press release: Boaters warned to register vessels or face court

Boat owners are being urged to make sure their vessels are properly registered – or face paying thousands of pounds in penalties.

The call comes after inspectors found 4 boats moored without their registration plates on the river Great Ouse. The rivers are part of the Anglian Waterways network managed by the Environment Agency.

The discovery resulted in the vessels' owners being prosecuted and ordered to forfeit almost £2,500 between them.

It is a legal requirement for boaters to register any craft they keep, use, or let for hire on Environment Agency waterways, and to clearly display a valid registration plate.

Howard Kirtley of Barkers Lane in Bedford, James O'Brian of Church Road in Hitchin, Stephen Jaskolski of Ridgehill in Hereford, and William Warnock of School Lane in Buckden, all failed to register their vessels as required by law.

Their cases were heard at Luton Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 4 April, and resulted in fines and costs totalling £2,445. Mr Kirtley was ordered to pay a total penalty of £635, Mr O'Brian £855, Mr Jaskolski £635, and Mr Warnock £465.

Nathan Arnold, Partnerships and Development team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

Our historic and precious waterways are an important part of our nation's heritage and are enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people every year," says

A significant part of caring for them, protecting them, and ensuring people continue to enjoy them is funded by boaters paying their way. Those who don't contribute as they should are threatening the future of our waterways – and we won't hesitate to take action against them.

As well as not contributing to the upkeep of waterways, unregistered boats can be unsafe, hazardous to other river users, and a pollution risk to the local environment and wildlife.

The Environment Agency looks after 353 miles of navigable waterways in the Anglian network, which includes the Ancholme, Black Sluice, Glen, Welland, Nene, Great Ouse and Stour, as well as associated locks and navigation facilities like moorings, showers and toilets.

More information about boating and waterways, including registering vessels, is available at www.gov.uk/ea. If you suspect a boat is illegal, please contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 or email our [waterways team](#).

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- Howard Kirtley of Barkers Lane, Bedford, pleaded guilty by post and was fined £350. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £35. The total penalty was £635. His vessel, called Roovin Moon, was found on the Great Ouse at Priory Marina, Bedford.
- James O'Brian of Church Road, Hitchin, was proved guilty in absence and was fined £550. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £55. The total penalty was £855. His vessel, called Happy Days, was found on the Great Ouse at Kelpie Marina, Bedford.
- Stephen Jaskolski of Ridgehill, Hereford, was pleaded guilty by post and fined £350. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £35. The total penalty was £635. His vessel, called Isadora, was found on the Great Ouse at Priory Marina, Bedford.
- William Warnock of School Lane, Buckden, pleaded guilty and was fined £195. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £20. The total penalty was £465. His vessel, called Happy H, was found on the Great Ouse at Priory Marina, Bedford.

[Press release: Jail term for Scunthorpe waste operator](#)

Yesterday, Nessa Anne Thompson, of Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd was sentenced at Hull Crown Court in relation to two charges relating to waste site operations in Scunthorpe. This followed as a result of the defendant pleading guilty to both offences.

Ms Thompson from Scotter Road, Scunthorpe was sentenced to a total of 6 months in custody. She was also disqualified from being a director for a period of 7 years.

The charges were brought by the Environment Agency contrary to section 33(1)(c) and section 157(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and one

contrary to Regulation 12(1)(a) and Regulation 41(1) of the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2010.

Ms Thompson operated an illegal waste operation for the company that had previously held a permit until it went into administration before liquidation. The permit at this point was formally disclaimed.

The site at Winterton Road in Scunthorpe continued to be used and waste was stored in large quantities and in such a manner that it presented a human health and fire risk.

When the site did catch fire on 6 May 2014, firefighters attending the scene were even advised not to re-use the firewater due to the risk of waterborne diseases linked to the number of rats on site.

As a result of inadequate fire breaks at the site efforts to prevent the spread of fire was hampered, causing a greater impact to the adjacent businesses and the wider community.

Speaking after the case, an Environment Agency officer involved with the investigation said:

This site posed a risk to property, the local environment, and people's health because our advice was ignored.

This prosecution demonstrates that we take cases such as this very seriously and will not hesitate to prosecute if necessary, to protect the environment and local communities.

In mitigation, the court heard that the defendant had pleaded guilty to both offences and she was given credit for that. It also heard that her partner was in poor health and that they were both suffering from significant financial hardship.

In passing sentence, the judge said there had been a deliberate flouting of environmental regulations by the defendant. He commented that as the Technically Competent Manager for the site, she would have been well aware that there was no permit in place at the site. He found that there had been attempts to conceal the illegal activity. The judge noted that Ms Thompson has previous convictions for breaches of environmental legislation, for which she was under investigation at the time the current offences were committed. He said that this amounted to a significant aggravating feature.

-ends-

Notes to Editors

Charges

Count 1

PERMITTING THE TREATING, KEEPING OR DISPOSING OF CONTROLLED WASTE IN A MANNER LIKELY TO CAUSE POLLUTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OR HARM TO HUMAN HEALTH contrary to Section 33(1)(c) and Section 157(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990

NESSA ANNE THOMPSON as director of Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd, on or before 6 May 2014 Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd Thompson Yard, Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 0DH, did treat, keep or dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution to the environment or harm to human health on land at Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 0DH, namely mixed waste that was being brought onto the site, processed and stored in a manner which posed a fire risk and which did result in two fires on site, and the said offence was committed with your consent, connivance, or attributable to your neglect, as director.

Count 2

PERMITTING THE OPERATION OF A REGULATED FACILITY WITHOUT AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT contrary to Regulation 12(1)(a) and Regulation 38(1)(a) and Regulation 41(1)(a) and (b) of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010

NESSA ANNE THOMPSON, as director of Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd, between 18 March 2014 and 13 August 2014 Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd of Thompson Yard, Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 0DH, operated a regulated facility, which was not authorised by a permit, namely a non-exempt waste operation, on land at Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 0DH, involving the deposit and processing of waste at the site and the said offence was committed with your consent, connivance, or attributable to your neglect, as director.

Press release: Fish stocks boost for endangered pearl mussel

Thousands of sea trout have been released into rivers in Northumberland to stock rivers for anglers and help protect the future of a critically endangered species, the freshwater pearl mussel.

Pearl fishing and water pollution from industry have led to worldwide decline of the pearl mussel.

A healthy population of endangered freshwater pearl mussels is important for water quality – each mussel filters 50 to 70 litres of water. They improve the quality of the habitat, increasing the ecological diversity, which includes juvenile trout and salmon numbers.

The Environment Agency's Kielder Salmon Centre staff Richard Bond and Jess

Anson have developed a technique to enable pearl mussel larvae to attach to the fish gills, replicating their natural life cycle in the wild.

The larvae will drop off the sea trout gills towards the end of May where they will settle on to the river bed. Given the right conditions, these juveniles could survive into adulthood and live for up to 100 years.



Close up of pearl mussel larvae (white dots) attached to the sea trout gills

Around 12,000 one-year-old sea trout, which have been bred at Kielder Salmon Centre, were released this week into North Tyne tributaries of the River Tyne.

The larvae attached to them were harvested from 80 adult mussels which are cared for at the centre.

Kielder Salmon Centre breeds 360,000 salmon and between 10,000 and 20,000 sea trout every year to stock rivers.

Complex life cycle

Richard said:

The pearl mussel has a complex life cycle which begins as larvae. These larvae, called glochidia, requires salmon or sea trout to host them for the first stage of their development.

They attach to the gills of trout in the River Tyne between late

July and early August, where they remain until the following spring when they drop off the fish's gills. They need clean water and gravel, and well oxygenated water where they continue to grow.

The survival rate for juveniles has declined over the years, which has led to an ageing population, with few mussels under 50 years old.

This means they are a critically endangered species with only around 30,000 adult mussels in the wild in the North Tyne area, and 500,000 across the country.

This work at the hatchery is to try to increase the numbers of juveniles in the river, boost future numbers, natural reproduction and survival rates in efforts to halt the population decline.



Water quality improvements

After considerable investment, water quality has improved dramatically across the UK and rivers in England are the healthiest they have been for 20 years.

The improvements in water quality of the River Tyne and its tributaries has been excellent, and along with the continued work of the Environment Agency and partners, has resulted in improved conditions for natural breeding in the rivers, and a flourishing ecology.

[Kielder Salmon Centre pearl mussel project](#)

Richard added:

In 2010 we first managed to successfully get freshwater pearl mussel larvae to attach to the gills of sea trout. Since then we have released sea trout every spring to the River Tyne tributaries.

Over the next two years we will be carrying out surveys, looking for the first of these juvenile mussels that were released to see if or where they have survived.

Even at 7 years old they will be less than 3cms long, most of which will be buried under the river bed. In another 7 to 10 years they should be old enough to breed.

Press release: Appeal for information following pollution in Hampshire

The Environment Agency were alerted to a pollution of oil on the River Anton close to Andover College on 4 April.

Since then, Environment Officers have been working on site to determine the source and reduce the impact on the environment, and booms have been deployed across the river to contain the pollution.

Adam Fulton, Area Duty Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

Our Environment Officers are working hard at the site to manage the environmental impact, and at the moment we have had no reports of dead fish.

We will continue to investigate the source of pollution, and are asking anyone who might be able to assist our enquiries to call our Incident Hotline on 0800 807060.

Press release: Applications for

permits received at Holmwood oilfield

These applications are for 1 bespoke Environmental Permit and 2 Standard Rules Permits. They have been submitted by the site Europa Oil and Gas Limited to begin exploration drilling for oil or gas at the site.

In deciding whether or not to issue the permits, the Environment Agency will take into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements.

You can view and comment on the [application](#).

An Environment Agency spokesperson said:

An environmental permit sets out stringent conditions that a site must adhere to. We will not issue an environmental permit for a site if we consider that activities taking place will cause significant pollution to the environment or harm to human health.

We are in the process of determining the applications to permit this site and we want to hear from the public and understand peoples' views. Everybody has the chance to see what the bespoke permit may look like and to raise any additional concerns before we make any final decision.

For all media enquiries please contact 0800 141 2743 or email Southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk