

Press release: Environment Agency warns landowners in East Anglia about illegal storage of waste

The warning comes from the Environment Agency after a spate of incidents across the country.

Businesses are being targeted by waste criminals looking to dispose of waste by dumping it in warehouses, industrial units and some open spaces. They can be very convincing in persuading landowners to allow them to use their properties and are able to fill the sites with waste which would cost hundreds of thousands of pounds to clear, ultimately leaving the landowner with an expensive clearance bill.

The Environment Agency is urging all landowners to use reputable agents and brokers, carry out suitable checks and due diligence before allowing potential criminals to use buildings or property.

Kevin Rutterford, Environment Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

It's crucial that all businesses understand their duty of care responsibilities for the waste they produce, who they allow to transport it and ultimately where it goes.

Too often, when these responsibilities are misunderstood or ignored, we see the impact of waste crime where waste is deliberately dumped on land illegally. This can cause serious pollution, put communities at risk and undermine legitimate businesses that are doing the right thing.

Even if the landowner has no involvement, legally they may still be responsible for that waste and that could mean a large clear up bill.

Waste stored inappropriately can create issues for neighbours through smells and pests. It can also have a detrimental effect on the environment and impact on rivers and streams. There is a high risk of waste fires due to the waste not being stored correctly.

Recent survey statistics released by the Right Waste Right Place campaign <http://www.rightwasterightplace.com/news/> show that agricultural businesses and rural land owners throughout the UK are bearing the brunt of waste crime. More than a third of those in the East of England (39%) have suffered incidents of fly-tipping on their land in the past 3 years with almost half (48%) of them disposing of the waste themselves at their own cost.

In recent years a man was sentenced to prison for dumping hundreds of

thousands of tyres at sites he had leased across the country, including in Essex and Norfolk, which he failed to clear.

Fires involving mixed baled waste can be hard to extinguish and pose a risk to public health and the environment as they often contain hazardous materials. In extreme cases this can lead to the loss of the property in which the material is being stored.

Dumping commercial waste like this is a crime. Individuals involved in such illegal activity can be hostile and the Environment Agency urge members of the public not to put themselves in any danger if they encounter any such activity and to avoid any direct contact with the culprits.

Anyone suspecting any illegal waste activities, who has been approached to store waste or may currently be storing such waste are urged to contact the Environment Agency via a 24 hour incident hotline 0800 807060. Alternatively they can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Press release: Waste scam warning for Lincolnshire farmers and landowners

In the last week the Environment Agency's environmental crime team have dealt with two new incidents where farmers have been approached and asked if they want tarmac road planings that can be used to repair roads and farmyards on their land. After accepting the offer and cash they found bales of landfill waste dumped on their land instead of the expected road planings, leaving them with an environmental liability and a bill to transport and remove the waste to an authorised disposal site.

Farm insurance policies often do not cover poor business ventures. The first farmer had 25 bales deposited on his land this week, including transport and disposal of the waste to a permitted disposal site; this could cost the farmer approximately £3,000.

The second farmer had approximately 2,500 bales deposited on his land. The cost of disposal at a permitted disposal site could result in a bill of approximately £300,000.

The Environment Agency is urging all landowners to be wary and not become the next victim of illegal waste disposal and dumping.

Advice from the Environment Agency includes:

- use reputable agents and brokers
- carry out suitable checks and due diligence, i.e. get the individuals details, vehicle registration, ask where the waste is coming from

(address, permit number, waste carriers registration)

- inform them you'll be contacting the Environment Agency or call us whilst they are there
- don't agree to accept any waste until you have carried out some checks and had a cooling off period to fully consider the offer

Peter Stark, Senior Enforcement Officer, said:

Criminals operating in and around the waste industry can be very convincing and persuasive, sometimes offering thousands of pounds in cash up front. Don't be tempted by quick money, you could end up with an environmental risk, flies, polluting liquids running out of bales of waste and even fire risks alongside the massive disposal bill.

We will investigate these two illegal waste incidents fully and take enforcement action if we can. However these farmers and landowners may have to pay significant sums to remove the waste legally. Waste crime is a serious issue diverting as much as £1 billion per annum from legitimate business and treasury.

Although these specific incidents occurred in Lincolnshire, we would not be surprised if this scam was attempted in neighbouring counties due to convenient transport links.

The Environment Agency provides impartial advice to customers, individuals and businesses to help them grow, our local officers will be happy to talk to you, can make public register checks whilst you are on the phone or you can make checks on our [website](#) for free, or you can call our Customer Contact centre on 03708 506 506.

The Highways Agency and county council's highways department and their contractors will always use legitimate waste carriers and sites for the reuse or disposal of waste. They may approach farmers and landowners to see if they want to reuse tarmac road planings or crushed rubble and concrete to repair road and yard areas but farmers need to register the [U1 waste exemption](#) with the Environment Agency and abide by the rules.

The vast majority of waste sites we regulate are well run and provide essential waste management services. The Environment Agency are here to help the legitimate businesses.

Waste stored inappropriately can create issues for neighbours like smells and pests. It can also have a detrimental effect on the environment and impact on rivers and streams. There is a high risk of waste fires due to the waste not being stored in the correct manner.

Everybody has a part to play to help solve the waste crime problem and make sure waste is managed responsibly. If you see or suspect illegal waste

activities, report it anonymously to [Crimestoppers](#) or call 0800 555 111.

Press release: Environment Agency takes a stand on illegal waste

Farmers, landowners, big and small business, and members of the public are being asked to be more vigilant after a number of incidents where large amounts of processed or baled waste has been dumped across the West Midlands.

Over the last 12 months the Environment Agency in the West Midlands has seen an increase of illegally dumped waste on public and private land. Fly-tipping is the responsibility of the local council however the Environment Agency becomes involved when the waste is more than 20 tonnes (about 20 cubic metres); more than 5 cubic metres of fibrous asbestos or 75 litres of potentially hazardous waste in drums or containers; or if it is linked to criminal business activity or organised crime.

What is being done to tackle waste crime

Through the Government Spending Review 2015, nationally the Environment Agency secured an additional £23m to tackle waste crime in England, up to the end of March 2020. This is being spent across the country, targeting priority areas. £20m of this is from the landfill community's tax fund. It has been used locally to fund additional temporary staff to further target illegal waste operators and high risk sites of concern.

The Environment Agency are determined to make life hard for criminals and support legitimate business, proactively supporting these businesses by disrupting, and stopping, the criminal element backed up by the threat of tough enforcement action and prosecution. The new Disruption and Prevention team – part of the Environment Agency's National Enforcement Service – is leading the way in finding new approaches to disrupt waste crime and stop it happening. Working in partnership with law enforcement agencies, HMRC, DVLA and Companies House, as well as employing a number of techniques to track and trace vehicles and waste from different sites.

What businesses and the public can do

Everybody has a part to play to help solve the waste crime problem and make sure waste is managed responsibly. The Environment Agency is asking members of the public to be vigilant; to contact them with information on anything suspicious as long as it is safe for people to do so. Dumping commercial waste like this is a crime. Individuals involved in such illegal activity can be hostile and we would urge members of the public to not put themselves in any danger if they encounter any such activity and to avoid any direct contact with the culprits.

Lisa Pinney, Environment Agency Area Manager for West Midlands, said:

It's crucial that all businesses understand their duty of care responsibilities for the waste they produce, who they allow to transport it and ultimately where it goes. Too often, when these responsibilities are misunderstood or ignored, we see the impact of waste crime where waste is deliberately dumped on land with no permit. This can cause serious pollution, put communities at risk and undermines legitimate businesses that are doing the right thing. And even if the landowner has no involvement, legally they may still be responsible for that waste and that could mean a large clear up bill.

Waste stored inappropriately can create issues for neighbours through smells and pests. It can also have a detrimental effect on the environment and impact on rivers and streams. If you see or suspect illegal waste activities, report it anonymously to Crimestoppers [online](#) or by calling 0800 555 111. Alternatively report it to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Notes to editors

We all create waste, and all have a responsibility to ensure our waste is handled correctly. Whether you're a business, local council or householder you must make sure you know where your waste goes so it doesn't end up in the hands of operators who break the law and dump it to avoid paying for its legal disposal. Illegal waste sites undercut legitimate business, can cause severe damage to the environment and misery for local residents. Many businesses don't realise they have a legal Waste Duty of Care and could be committing an offence if their waste is dumped by an illegal operator. Hauliers are at risk of unwittingly becoming involved in waste crime by not asking the right questions about the loads they're collecting.

Make sure you know what your legal responsibilities are: [manage your waste responsibly](#)

Check the [public register](#) to see if a site is permitted or a waste carrier is registered

You could be breaking the law if your waste isn't managed properly. Visit [Right Waste Right Place](#) to help you comply with the law. You can also refer to the Defra [waste duty of care code of practice](#)

News story: South West Water fined for Devon sewage spill

South West Water has been ordered to pay £86,000 in fines and costs for discharging sewage into Dawlish Water over a bank holiday weekend. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

On 28 August 2015 an automatic alarm was triggered in Brook Street after a blockage in a pipe caused sewage to leak into nearby Dawlish Water, a stream that runs through the centre of the town.

The alarm sounded at 8.15am, but the water company didn't dispatch an emergency crew to deal with the problem until 11.40am. Instead of going to Brook Street, it went to Brook House in another part of Dawlish and reported nothing was wrong. It wasn't until a second team arrived, some 6 hours after the alarm sounded, that the discharge was discovered and steps were finally taken to stop the pollution.

The problem was caused by a brick which had somehow entered and blocked the sewer causing it to overflow.



This combined sewage overflow pipe was blocked and discharged into Dawlish Water

Dawlish beach was busy with holidaymakers at the time of the incident. Bathers were advised by an official from Teignbridge District Council to stay

out of the sea and wash their hands . The Environment Agency declared an 'abnormal situation' and the bathing water was closed for more than 24 hours.

Levels of E.coli bacteria in Dawlish Water increased significantly as a result of the discharge, from 990 per 100ml upstream of the sewer pipe to 4,800,000 at the point of discharge. Further downstream in the walled section by the viaduct the level had reduced to 70,000, however children had been seen playing in the water in this area. Dilution in the sea meant there were safe levels of E.coli in the town's bathing water.

South West Water said it had tried to get a team to Dawlish as soon as possible, but their response time was increased because a crew was unavailable having attended sewer flooding of a property elsewhere overnight. A second crew was unable to attend due to technical problems with their vehicle.

Nigel Thomas-Childs, for the Environment Agency, said:

Water companies must respond promptly to emergencies to minimise any pollution or harm to the environment. This discharge occurred over an August bank holiday when Dawlish was particularly busy. South West Water lost valuable time and took too long to find the blockage and deal with the overflow to the brook.

Appearing before Exeter Crown Court, South West Water Ltd was fined £80,000 and ordered to pay £6,202 costs after pleading guilty to discharging polluting material into Dawlish Brook, an offence under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

[Press release: Company owner jailed for 15 months](#)

A waste criminal whose actions resulted in the closure of the M60, polluted a river and blighted communities has been disqualified from being a company director for 6 years and sentenced to 15 months in prison.

Barry Kilroe, Shareholder and Director of J25 Recycling Ltd, Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd and Asset and Land Group Ltd was sentenced at Manchester Court (on Friday 31st March).

Transport Manager and Company Director, Jane Williams was fined a total of £500 and Richard James Davies, Financial Director, was given a conditional discharge for 12 months.

Mr Kilroe pleaded guilty to ten charges relating to the unlawful operation of

three waste sites, in Stockport, Salford and Warrington Docks.

Ms Williams pleaded guilty to 2 charges; 1 relating to the Salford site for storing waste in excess of its 10,000 tonne capacity, the second charge was for operating the Warrington site without an Environment Agency permit.

Mr Davies pleaded guilty to a charge relating to the Stockport site where he failed to provide and implement an adequate environmental management system.

Environment Agency investigation

The Environment Agency brought the case against Mr Kilroe and the other directors after a lengthy investigation. The investigation identified the unlawful operation and mismanagement of the 3 sites. Excessive amounts of waste were imported on to the sites, which breached their environmental permits, and the defendants failed to comply with Enforcement and Suspension Notices.

A major fire broke out in August 2013 at the J25 Recycling Ltd site in Bredbury, Stockport that lasted for 41 days. The manner in which the site was managed increased the impacts the fire caused to the environment and local community. The fire resulted in the closure of the M60 Motorway and 3 weeks of disruption to traffic as well as significant disruption to local residents and businesses. A nearby river was polluted by the fire-fighting water run-off.

A fire also broke out in March 2014 at the Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd site in Salford. This led to Network Rail closing the railway line in Salford. Local roads and main routes to Manchester City Centre were also closed. The manner in which the site was operated increased the impacts of the fire, which lasted for 19 days. It caused severe disruption to local residents and businesses, which were affected by smoke and ash. Mr. Kilroe failed to remove the waste following the fire, leaving the landowner to remove more than 14,000 tonnes.

Further waste was also transferred to Asset and Land Group Ltd at Warrington Docks, adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal. The Environment Agency's modelling also advised that a fire at the site would have affected the Ship Canal, West Coast Railway, and also flights in and out of Manchester and Liverpool airports. There would have been a significant effect on UK PLC because industry from Manchester to Liverpool would have shut. There is still a significant financial impact to the landowner who now has to pay to clear the site which has an estimate of 75,000 tonnes of waste to clear with a cost in excess of £10 million to send to landfill.

Case results in 'significant financial impacts'

Lee Rawlinson, the Environment Agency's Area Director for Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire, said:

This is one of the biggest cases the Environment Agency has

prosecuted, we have been committed to do so because of the severity of the offence and cost and impact on the environment, communities and business. It has resulted in significant financial impacts to legitimate businesses.

The Environment Agency would like to thank partners including Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) and United Utilities as the impact would have been even greater had it not been for their tireless effort and cooperation to get the fires under control.

We would also like to thank Excalon, Salford who assisted GMFRS at Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd. The Environment Agency has also been offering advice and support to the landowner at Warrington Docks.

Following this case GMFRS has invested in an Aerial Imagery Reconnaissance (AIR) unit. Now working in partnership with the Environment Agency Enforcement Team they use the remote controlled AIR unit to take pictures and videos of waste sites and to detect elevated heat sources within waste piles.

During Barry Kilroe's sentencing Judge Driver said Mr Kilroe whilst on bail acted for financial gain and failed to comply with the Environment Agency's warnings. Summing up, Judge Driver thanked the Environment Agency for all its help with a complex case.

Anyone who believes any illegal waste activities are taking place is urged to report the matter to our incident hotline on 0800 807060 or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555111 so that we can investigate.

Illegal waste activities pose a significant threat of harm to the environment and local communities, so it is important that everyone plays their part in stamping out waste crime.