

National Statistics: Pesticide usage survey: arable crops in the UK, 2016

This report contains information on pesticide usage on arable crops including:

- wheat
- barley (spring and winter)
- oats
- rye
- triticale
- oilseed rape
- linseed
- ware & seed potatoes
- dry harvest peas
- field beans
- sugar beet

National Statistics: Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics report: April to June 2017

This report presents provisional information on the quantities of local authority collected municipal waste managed in Northern Ireland. It provides information on the quantities and rates of local authority collected waste arisings, sent for preparing for reuse, for dry recycling, composting, energy recovery and sent to landfill. Some of these measurements are key performance indicators. These are used to assess progress towards achieving waste strategy targets and where appropriate this is highlighted in the tables and charts.

Press release: Sellafield chemical

disposal – 25 October

Current status – Wednesday 25 October 2017 (15:45)

Preparations are continuing for the assessment of safe disposal options for chemicals identified during decommissioning work at our analytical services laboratory.

As we announced last night, we have requested the support of the Army's EOD team in doing this.

Update at Tuesday 24 October 2017

As part of work to prepare for the decommissioning and demolition of the historic analytical laboratories at Sellafield, we identified a number of chemicals requiring safe disposal.

Following the safe and successful controlled detonation by the army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team at the weekend we are now seeking further technical advice from the EOD to assist us with further chemical disposals. This work will take place in due course.

Disposal of historic chemicals is a common procedure. The EOD team deal with redundant chemicals including from schools, universities and hospitals, hundreds of times a year.

Operations in the laboratory complex have been stood down to enable these further technical assessments.

Employees should attend work as normal.

Key facts:

- Even in a worst case scenario, a release of radioactivity from the site is not credible.
- Our mission is to clean up and decommission the Sellafield site – the oldest and most complex nuclear site in the UK. We discover things like this because we proactively go looking for them.
- The chemicals we are dealing with at Sellafield are contained within a complex of laboratories.
- The chemicals are in sealed containers and the containers are in good condition.
- Sellafield Ltd has engaged with our regulators throughout this process and will continue to do so. Sellafield Ltd's investigation will be made available to them.
- We stood down the on-coming shift in the laboratory complex, in order to make it easier for the EOD team to come in and assess the situation.
- The rest of the Sellafield site (over 1,000 buildings, which are home to over 10,000 employees) is operating normally tonight, and will be tomorrow.

Press release: Are you aware of what you're burning this Guy Fawkes night?

Updated: Image added

Burning certain types of waste and setting fire to treated wood, tyres, plastics, rubber and oil can seriously harm health and pollute the environment.

Every year on November 5, bits of old furniture are used to build up bonfires and stuff the Guy with scraps of used foam or old clothing.

Organisers are being asked to be vigilant about the materials deposited on their bonfire, while preventing others from dumping illegal waste on them by keeping the location secure. People will also use Bonfire night as an excuse to burn old furniture, mattresses or even household rubbish.

Organisers and households should only burn clean, non-commercial waste, so if you're organising a bonfire night make sure you know where the bonfire material has come from and that it is suitable.

People face a fine of up to £50,000 for illegally managing waste. More information and guidance on materials which are safe to burn on a bonfire and further information for organisers of bonfire and firework events can be found on the GOV.UK website.

If the Environment Agency suspects illegal waste is to be burnt at an event, or there is a harm to the environment, they are able to issue a stop notice which will prevent an event from taking place.

Marc Liddeth, Environment Manager in the West Midlands, said:

We want people to enjoy themselves but the uncontrolled and excessive burning of the wrong waste can cause pollution and damage people's health.

We encourage people to make sure they dispose of their waste legally and safely, and be aware that their community bonfire could be targeted by unscrupulous waste businesses who want to find somewhere to dispose of waste, resulting in the illegal burning of commercial waste.

Organisers should ensure that they know where the bonfire material has come

from and it is suitable. If anyone sees any suspicious activities they should contact us on 0800 807060 or report it anonymously to Crimestoppers.

Press release: Enforcement Undertaking agreed with vegetable company

An enforcement undertaking (EU) has been agreed with a vegetable processing company after it grossly polluted Brook Drain in Wormegay, King's Lynn, Norfolk with water used to wash carrots.

The Environment Agency accepted the offer by Alfred G Pearce Ltd to put right any damage caused by the pollution and to donate to an environmental charity.

As part of the EU, the company has donated £12,000 to the Norfolk Rivers Trust to benefit the local environment and also paid the Environment Agency's costs.

Helen Blower, Environment Agency officer said:

Enforcement undertakings allow those who commit offences to restore the environment and to take steps to prevent a recurrence.

When appropriate, they allow a quicker resolution than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right voluntarily working with their local communities.

Formal sample results taken after the incident in February 2016 revealed a gross pollution of the water course.

The company told the Environment Agency that an inspection chamber which also acted as an overflow tank had been damaged by a reversing lorry and there had been no system in place to alert them of the damage and no procedure for checking the Brook Drain on a regular basis. This had led to a delay in rectifying the problem.

Since then the damage has been repaired, bollards placed to prevent a recurrence of the damage, installing bunded areas to contain spills and installing a new treatment plant.

The EU was offered in relation to an offence of pollution under regulation 38 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

The EU was completed in July 2017.