

Press release: Angler caught fishing with six rods in illegal fishing crackdown in Yeovil

On 23 March 2017, at Yeovil Magistrates Court, Ryan Hughes, of Fallowfield Drive, Newport, was fined £440 for fishing with an unlicensed instrument and fishing with more than 4 rods.

Costs of £170 and a victim surcharge of £30 were also imposed – a total penalty of £640 after a prosecution by the Environment Agency.

Magistrates heard that on 6 September 2016, an Environment Agency enforcement officer found Mr Hughes fishing at Pavyatt Mill Lakes, Yeovil, with an unlicensed instrument – namely rod and line – contrary to Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975. On 6 September, Mr Hughes also fished with more than 4 rods and lines at the same time contrary to Byelaw 8(3) of the Environment Agency National Byelaws. Mr Hughes was convicted in his absence.

Richard Dearnley, of the Environment Agency, said:

The majority of anglers fish legally and purchase a rod licence. We invest the money from rod licences back into fisheries improvements, fish stocks and fishing, this is essential for the future of the sport.

The minority of anglers that fail to buy a rod licence are cheating their fellow anglers and the future of the sport. In addition rod licence cheats risk a criminal conviction, a significant fine and could lose their fishing equipment.

During 2015-16 the Environment Agency checked more than 62,000 rod licences and prosecuted more than 1,900 anglers for rod and line offences resulting in fines and costs in excess of £500,000.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report them directly to the Environment Agency's incident hotline 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

You need a valid Environment Agency fishing licence if you are aged 12 or over and fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England.

Corporate report: Scrutiny of Radioactive Waste Management: annual report 2015 to 2016

The Environment Agency and Office for Nuclear Regulation's (the nuclear regulators) joint publication about their scrutiny of RWM's work relating to geological disposal of radioactive waste.

The nuclear regulators provide regulatory advice to RWM about implementing geological disposal.

This report explains what the regulators looked at and the main comments provided to RWM. It also highlights areas for RWM to improve.

RWM is making progress towards being an organisation capable of holding an environmental permit and nuclear site licence for a geological disposal facility.

The regulators will make sure that any future geological disposal facility meets their high standards for environmental protection, safety, security, radioactive waste transportation and safeguards.

For more information email the Environment Agency at geological.disposal@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Research and analysis: Effects of run-of-river hydroelectric power schemes on small in-stream animals

This project explored the effects of existing run-of-river hydroelectric power (HEP) schemes across England and Wales on communities of small freshwater animals (macroinvertebrates). The research found a very small but statistically significant reduction in the proportion of invertebrates of different families (called evenness) after the HEP schemes were built. It's unclear whether a change in evenness is ecologically important or just a reflection of adaptation to changing conditions.

The aim of the study was to see whether macroinvertebrate communities associated with HEP schemes have changed in a different way from unaffected but similar sites over the same time period. The research highlighted the wide variability in invertebrate communities in streams and rivers at a given

site over time and between sites at the same time. The study also demonstrated the value of looking at as many sites as possible to detect the presence or absence of effects from site-based interventions where other drivers of change may be present.

Research and analysis: The early stages of implementing geological disposal: regulatory use of geoscientific information

This study reviewed how regulatory bodies in 5 countries have used geological information to make decisions on proposals for the geological disposal of higher activity radioactive waste. The report's findings on the use of generic site safety assessments, site-specific investigations and pre-permitting discussions will inform the Environment Agency's preparations for any geological disposal facility that might be proposed or developed in England.

The review considers lessons learnt from radioactive waste disposal programmes in France, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA, all of which are at different stages of development. These countries have similar regulatory regimes to the UK and represent a range of geological environments.

Research and analysis: Understanding eel and fish behaviour to improve protection and passage at river structures

This project studied the behaviour of fish and eels to find better ways to protect them at flood control structures, weirs, hydropower sites and other intakes.

The study showed significant impacts of some river structures on migrating eels, but also that understanding eel behaviour at such structures and

intakes in relation to flow could help improve their passage.