

# Press release: Scrap yard licence revoked for illegal activity

The Environment Agency took the action against Robert Wright (snr), the former Company Director of Robby's Auto Dismantling Ltd in Stanley, County Durham, following a series of breaches of licence conditions after his son took over the business.

The decision means that Robby's Auto Dismantling Ltd will no longer be authorised to accept and treat waste metals from 15 July 2017.

Environmental permits ensure the protection of the environment and local communities from the risk of pollution caused through the carrying out of waste activities.

Under the regulations, the permit must be in the name of the person who has overall control of the facility and the site must employ an industry qualified technically competent manager to provide waste management advice and guidance.

## **No application received**

The permit for Robby's Auto Dismantling Ltd was in the name of Robert Wright (snr), meaning he is legally responsible for ensuring the site is compliant. In 2006 he retired and his sons Ian and Robert Wright (jnr) took over. In January 2013 Ian Wright took sole control of the business.

Throughout this period, Environment Officers repeatedly advised Ian and Robert Wright (snr) of the legal requirement to transfer the permit to Ian. No application was ever received and officers were unable to take action against Ian Wright for a number of permit breaches on site because the permit was not in his name. Environment officers deemed these permit breaches to be a result of lack of technical competence.

In addition, the permit holder had failed to pay subsistence fees since 2013.



## **Permit revoked 'to protect the environment'**

Andrew Rothery from the Environment Agency said:

The Environment Agency has revoked the environmental permit for Robby's Autos to protect the environment and ensure a level playing field for legitimate businesses. It is clear that the permit holder is not in a position to ensure compliance with permit conditions.

It is vital that waste companies comply with the law so that communities and the environment are not put at risk. We work with operators to help them meet their obligations, but where significant or repeated breaches occur, we will take appropriate action to protect the environment.

The revocation requires all waste is removed from the site and disposed of legally by 31 July 2017. Failure to do so may lead to legal action by the Environment Agency.

Anyone who experiences problems from this or any other waste site is urged to report the matter to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 807060 or CrimeStoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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## [Notice: The Eden Rivers Trust: application made to impound water](#)

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

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## [Press release: Environment Secretary explores the future of farming at the Royal Norfolk Show](#)

Farmers across East Anglia could produce, sell and export more than ever before following the UK's exit from the EU with the help of cutting edge technology and innovation, the Environment Secretary said today.

On a visit to the Royal Norfolk Show on 28 June 2017, Environment Secretary Michael Gove met with researchers and businesses at the 'Innovation Hub' to find out more about the latest research and emerging agricultural technologies.

From a 'FitBit for cows' that provides real time information on the health of a herd, to a demonstration of how 'agrimetrics' data can support farmers and boost food production, pioneering agricultural technology (agri-tech) on display at the show could provide new opportunities for East Anglia's farmers.

Speaking at the show, Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Emerging technologies will play a vital role in boosting productivity and growth, unlocking the full potential of our farming industry as we adapt to a rapidly changing world and maintain our leading role on the global stage outside the European Union.

The East of England is a real hotbed of agricultural innovation and the enthusiasm and passion of the region's farmers, who exported a

record £1.6bn of food and drink last year, is truly inspirational.

Agri-tech contributes £14.4bn to the UK economy every year, underpinning the UK's food and drink industry, our largest manufacturing sector. The government has already invested £160 million through the [Agri-Tech Strategy](#) to help develop innovative solutions from the laboratory through to the farm.

Dr Belinda Clarke, Director of [Agri-Tech East](#), an independent membership organisation supporting the development of the agri-tech cluster, said:

Innovation is most effective when it is focussed on solving clearly defined problems. By bringing progressive farmers, who are willing to pilot new approaches, together with those who have potential solutions, Agri-Tech East is facilitating a step-change in agri-food production that is productive, profitable and sustainable.

The Innovation Hub is a good showcase for the agri-tech cluster, showing how collaboration can accelerate innovation based on sound science.

The Environment Secretary also visited the show's food hall, meeting with food producers from across the east of England, and visited the 'Broads Village' which showcases the importance of the National Park to industry, culture and landscapes.

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## **[Press release: Water abstraction lie costs farm business £5,500](#)**

Lakenheath farming business N&M Sizer lied about how much water it abstracted, fearing it would lose its licence or have its abstraction limits reduced.

In doing so, the company falsely stated that it had extracted more water than it was allowed to under the licence which resulted in an investigation by the Environment Agency.

The company had actually taken very little of the allowance as its crops at the time did not need spray irrigation, Ipswich Magistrates' Court heard today (30 May).

It fined the company £3,000 for the deception and ordered it to pay £2,531 costs.

Mrs Megan Selves, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court the

company had been worried that as it had not taken much water it would lose the right the following year to take what the licence allowed.

However, she said that any reduction in future abstraction or any revocation of licence would not be done without looking at about 10 years of records and without discussion with the licence holder.

Any assessment would only be carried out when the licence came up for renewal or if there was evidence that the licence is causing environmental damage. The licence for N&M Sizer Ltd expires on 31 March 2027.

Mrs Selves said that water meters at the company's site, Bedford Fen in Sedgfen, had been re-calibrated to corroborate the figures submitted to the Environment Agency in a 'determined effort to mislead'.

She said the company's actions had been deliberate and a 'flagrant disregard for the law' and although there had been no environmental impact, the company had falsified its figures giving a false impression of how much water had been taken from the environment.

Mrs Selves said the company had shown remorse and co-operated with the investigation.

N&M Sizer Ltd pleaded guilty to:

Charge: On or before 30 November 2015 you furnished information to the Environment Agency pursuant to section 201 of the Water Resources Act 1991, namely the water abstraction return for 2014 to 2015 for licence 6/33/39/\*S/0496/R01 for abstraction points A, C, D, E and F, and in the said information made a statement which you knew to be false or misleading in a material particular, namely that you had abstracted 153,360 cubic metres of water.

Contrary to section 206(1) and (5) of the Water Resources Act 1991

Media enquiries: For East Anglia press office please contact (24 hours): 0800 917 9250

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## **Press release: Environment Agency saves thousands of fish in Ampthill Reservoir**

Over the hot weekend of 17 to 18 June, Environment Agency teams saved thousands of carp, roach and rudd from Ampthill Reservoir Lake, an amenity fishery in Bedfordshire.

The angling club reported seeing huge shoals of fish gasping at the water's surface throughout the fishery. A dedicated Fisheries Incident Officer was in touch within the hour and quickly on-site to monitor oxygen levels.

Recent hot weather and very high water temperatures encouraged algae blooms which had reduced oxygen levels in the fishery to a potentially fatal level for fish. Environment Agency fisheries officers dosed the lake with hydrogen peroxide into the early hours of Monday (19 June). They were then back on the scene first thing to monitor recovery. There are now no fish in distress, and the huge shoals of fish seen gasping have returned to normal behaviour.

Kye Jerrom, Fisheries Officer said:

Specialist officers are on duty 24 hours a day to respond to fish kills and fish in distress, all funded by rod licence income. Our team was able to respond quickly and we'd like to thank the angling club for knowing what to do.

The club suffered a similar incident 30 years ago and lost every fish in the lake. The scene when I arrived was very worrying and I am sure that our efforts have saved the fishery from a huge fish kill, which is great news for such a hardworking club, and for those who fish it.

We have provided advice and management options and will continue to work with the club to prevent a similar, and potentially devastating, event in the future. If anyone spots fish in distress then please call our incident helpline on 0800 80 70 60.

Summer can see Environment Agency staff responding to many reports of 'fish in distress' due to naturally occurring environmental changes causing lower oxygen levels in the water. Hot, sunny weather can lead to low flows in rivers and stillwater fisheries (ponds and lakes) starting to warm up. Small stillwaters are particularly susceptible.

As well as encouraging people to call them on 0800 80 70 60, the Environment Agency is encouraging private fishery owners to manage fish stocks to appropriate levels and install aerators.

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