

Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

17 June 2021

We have developed this weekly update to help us keep the community of Newcastle under Lyme up to date with developments around our regulation of Walleys Quarry.

We are sorry the community is continuing to live with the distress that odour causes, and we are challenging Walleys Quarry Ltd (formerly Red Industries RM Ltd) every step of the way to take action on the odour levels produced from their operations and the impact these are having on local people.

News in brief

We have assessed monitoring data submitted by the operator for Quarter 1. As part of this process we have recorded three minor breaches. These include:

- Breaches of the permitted limits for leachate levels within the landfill. The company submitted an application in July 2020 to increase their permitted leachate level limits. We are currently considering their application.
- The methane limit was exceeded at two boreholes. This was a minor exceedance of the limit which is 1%. The recorded level was 1.8%. Additional monitoring has been instigated to monitor this.
- The company failed to monitor all the leachate points as required by their permit and one groundwater point which was reported as blocked.

In response to these breaches we have issued the company with a compliance assessment report (CAR) that details action that they need to take by 25th June 2021.

- We are holding our third engagement session for residents impacted by the odour from Walleys Quarry on Wednesday 23 June from 6 - 8pm. To join the call dial 0800 368 2321 and enter the pin 7656997#. We would appreciate it if you could join the call 5 minutes before the scheduled start time as it will start promptly. If you are unable to attend the session there will be a recording and transcript available. A written transcript and audio recording from the previous sessions on 26 May and 9 June are available in [Section 3](#) of this page detailing our Community Engagement
- We are aware of a number of photographs of drums containing wastes at Walleys Quarry circulating on social media. Some of these have also been sent to us for awareness and for an explanation. Walleys Quarry Ltd is not permitted to accept liquid wastes, however can accept waste in containers. Having previously reviewed waste within containers, we have found them to contain permitted waste only. The details of exactly what type of waste can be accepted on to their site can be found in their environmental permit which is available on our public register. We conduct regular waste acceptance checks at the site.

- If you would like to talk to someone about any mental wellbeing issues there are a number of sources of help on the [Staffordshire Council's website](#). Anyone experiencing significant mental health issues should see their GP for a referral to primary care mental health services. Please see [Section 6](#) of this page for more information.
- We know that some residents are concerned about the Lyme Brook turning a milky colour recently. Severn Trent's pollution response crew has investigated and we're satisfied that the cause of the discoloration was not from Walleys Quarry. This is because there was no discharge of water at all from the landfill at that time. Severn Trent's investigations did not provide the source of the pollution although they confirmed their sewage network was not responsible. The most likely explanation was that the flashy rainfall that occurred earlier that day washed surface pollution into the brook, which caused minor visual impact. We received no further reports and there has been no impact on the ecology in the brook. With storms and intense rainfall forecast over the next few days you might see more instances of discoloration. If you see pollution please report it to us by calling 0800 807060 at any time.
- We will be shortly undertaking continuous water quality monitoring in the brook to give us better information about any pollution that might occur from a range of potential sources in the Lyme Brook catchment. We will update you about what we find out in the coming weeks.
- We have now received the independent construction quality report of the permanent capping work we required the operator to carry out in the enforcement notice we issued on 26 March. Following a review of this work, we will be able to confirm if the requirements of the enforcement notice have been met. We have had a number of enquiries about the capping of cell one from concerned residents. We can confirm that this has been completed and cell one is capped. We are currently assessing the quality assurance detail of this to ensure it is to standard. There will be deposits around the edges of cell one which could appear to be part of that cell but actually form part of another cell. This is because as the cells are filled and capped they will overlap around the edges to ensure they are properly sealed. This overlapping allows for final levels to be completed across the site.
- For the week 6 - 13th June, hydrogen sulphide levels were below the WHO 24-hour average health guideline level to protect against short-term health effects, but were above the World Health Organisation's 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level between 1% and 19% of the week. During this week we received 938 odour reports in the Newcastle under Lyme area.
- Our public health partners are asking people to complete a daily survey detailing health impacts. This is so they can assess health impacts from Walleys Quarry and build further evidence to support our regulation. Please fill in the survey [here](#).

Where possible, we ask residents to report odours in the local area surrounding Walleys Quarry via email. To report an odour issue related to Walleys Quarry, please use [Section 7 of this page](#) where a template email for you to complete and send to our Incident Communications Service (ICS) can be found.

- If you are not able to email us please report your odour issues via 0800 807060. We have reduced the number of questions we need to ask you but your complaint will still be logged and you will be provided with an incident number.

Air Quality in the last week

We are committed to sharing with you the outcome of our monthly monitoring. However, we realise local people want to see more frequent information about recorded hydrogen sulphide levels. We will seek to bring you indicative information every week in this update.

This data will be compared against the World Health Organisation's 24-hour average health guideline level. Should the World Health Organisation's 24-hour average health guideline level be exceeded, Public Health England will be immediately informed as short-term health effects may be experienced by the public such as irritation to the eyes, nose and throat. Individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions may be more susceptible to these effects.

The data will also be compared to the World Health Organisation's 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level, i.e. above which there is likely to be complaints about odour annoyance.

The Environment Agency conducts its monitoring and data handling using approved standards and methodologies. As a result this weekly data is based on raw data that has not yet been subjected to quality assurance checking or calibration. As a result this data may change significantly once the quality assurance check and calibration has been carried out.

For the week 6 - 13th June, hydrogen sulphide levels were below the WHO 24-hour average health guideline level to protect against short-term health effects, but were above the World Health Organisation's 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level for between 1% and 19% of the week.

Data from our monitoring stations for the percentage of the week hydrogen sulphide were above World Health Organisation's 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level:

- MMF1 - Silverdale Cemetery = 1%
- MMF2 - Silverdale Road = 10%
- MMF6 - Newcastle-under-Lyme Fire Station = 10%
- MMF9 - Galingale View = 19%

We are updating the information on this webpage every week. To receive notifications email your contact details to: Engagement_WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk and we will add you to our mailing list.

See [Staffordshire County Council website](#) for information on public health impacts of odours in the Silverdale and wider Newcastle under Lyme area.

Walleys Quarry website: <https://walleysquarry.co.uk/>

Multi-agency roles and responsibilities

- The Environment Agency regulates the two environmental permits held by the operator for the landfill. The permit covers on-site activities with the aim of minimising the impact on the local environment in terms of air quality, noise, odour, dust, leachate and impacts to groundwater. We enforce that permit through monitoring and

undertaking site visits (both announced and unannounced) and where needed we take enforcement action to address compliance issues.

- Staffordshire County Council is responsible for determining planning permission across the area. The Environment Agency comments on planning applications. The Council also has responsibilities for traffic movement. This is part of planning permission for the site and is not included in the Environment Agency permit conditions.
- Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council is responsible for regularly monitoring air quality across the area, to ensure that it does not impact human health.
- Public Health England is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct organisation with operational autonomy. They provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific expertise and support. They have no statutory powers in relation to odorous sites and therefore work with multi-agency partners to ensure public health is protected.