

Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

19 May 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 are planning more engagement with the community to help answer questions and improve the way we tell them what we are doing. We are planning to hold Covid-secure virtual engagement sessions for community leaders and the wider community on Wednesday 26th May. More details on how to join a session will be posted on Citizen's Space later this week and in local media. We are also planning face-to-face sessions when Covid restrictions allow.
- A letter from Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council to Minister Pow circulating on Twitter quotes very high levels of hydrogen sulphide. We understand these are causing fear and distress amongst the community. We would like to be clear that the levels referred to are measurements taken inside the landfill gas management system pipes (in-pipe), not in the atmosphere. High levels of landfill gas inside landfills are exactly why we require landfill gas treatment. Our air quality monitoring stations continue to record the actual levels in the atmosphere and will do so until at least the end of August.
- We have completed our assessment of the surface emissions survey and the follow-up action plan submitted by the operator for reducing odour, as we reported in last week's update. It proposes to have this further work complete by 1 June. We have instructed the operator to implement the actions in the plan immediately and are considering whether further enforcement action is needed.
- We now require Walleys Quarry Ltd to check every load before disposal. As a result of our action, six separate waste loads were rejected between 30 April and 14 May on the grounds that the waste did not comply with the type allowed by their permit.
- We have received a number of calls from the community asking about a data breach. We want to be clear that there has been no data breach in the Environment Agency.
- We are also aware of an isolated report of an individual claiming to be from the Environment Agency, door knocking that was circulating on social media last

weekend. We're concerned this is a bogus caller. Environment Agency staff will always be carrying ID, which can be checked and will never ask to enter your home. We advise members of the community to follow the advice of the police and always check the identity of callers to their home. If in doubt they should call the police on 101.

- For the week 10 May 21 to 16 May 21, 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 20% of the week. During this week we received 1,194 odour reports in the Newcastle under Lyme area.
- See [Staffordshire County Council website](#) for the information on public health impacts of odours in the Silverdale and wider Newcastle under Lyme area.
- To assess health impacts of the odours from Walleys Quarry, our public health partners are asking people to complete a daily survey detailing health impacts, and build further evidence to support our regulation. The survey can be found: [here](#)
- 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.
- Walleys Quarry website: <https://walleysquarry.co.uk/>

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 this 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.

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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:

- Silverdale Cemetery 15%
- Silverdale Pumping Station 20%
- Newcastle under Lyme Community Fire Station 1%
- Galingale View Pumping Station 10%

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.