

Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

26 August 2021

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

We don't want the community to continue to live with the distress caused by landfill gas being released from the operations at Walleys Quarry landfill. We are challenging Walleys Quarry Ltd (formerly Red Industries RM Ltd) every step of the way to operate in line with their permits.

News in brief

- **Improvements in the management of landfill gas, to stop it escaping from the site**

We are pressing Walleys Quarry Limited hard to plan and deliver significant improvements to its gas infrastructure that captures and destroys the landfill gas (and hydrogen sulphide) produced as waste breaks down.

We have required Walleys Quarry Limited to make these improvements, and we are now assessing the proposed plans. As part of this, we need to see a significant reduction in landfill gas escaping from the site, so we are demanding they quantify, by how much, the changes will improve the situation. We are already seeing an increase in the volumes of gas being collected as a direct result of these improvements.

- **Reducing levels of hydrogen sulphide**

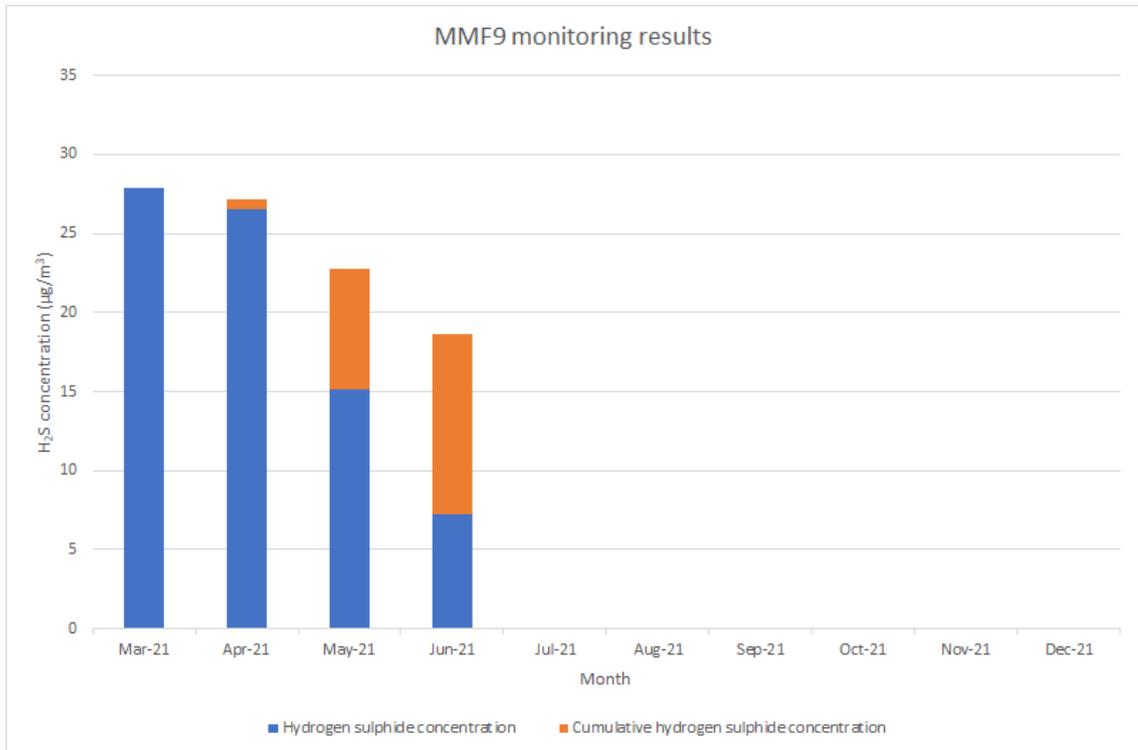
We don't want the community to continue to suffer from impacts of landfill gas escaping from Walleys Quarry. That's why we have been, and will continue to do the best we can with the powers we have to bring the odour under control.

Since March, we have demanded Walleys Quarry Limited take a significant amount of action to reduce the level of landfill gas (hydrogen sulphide) escaping from the site and impacting local people. This has included:

- Permanently and temporarily cap approx. 50% of the site (complete). This work now means an additional 500 cubic metres per hour of landfill gas is collected and managed, on top of the levels already being managed on the site. Previously this landfill gas may have been escaping off the site.
- Develop an action plan to improve the gas management and gas collection. This will see a further 22 gas collection wells drilled across the site over the coming months bringing the total to 77 gas wells.
- Further cap the steep flanks of the landfill. This will mean that nearly 70% of the site will be permanently or temporarily capped. Capping is important as landfill gas from the site needs to be better 'contained' on the site, rather than escaping off the site. Once contained, it can be processed and destroyed through the gas management system.

- Improve the effectiveness of the gas utilisation plant and ensure increased capacity to destroy hydrogen sulphide.

This chart shows hydrogen sulphide levels steadily reducing at the Galingale monitoring station since it peaked at the beginning of March.



Source, Public Health England

This shows the actual and average levels of hydrogen sulphide slowly reducing over time at the Galingale station. We've reflected the Galingale monitoring because, to date, it has measured the higher concentrations of hydrogen sulphide.

A note on reading the chart

The blue bar is the average for each month, the orange is the average since the beginning of the monitoring period. I.e. April orange is the average for March and April, the May orange is the average for March, April and May, and so on.

The work we are requiring Walleys Quarry Limited to do is making a difference and producing improvements that will significantly reduce the amount of landfill gas escaping from the site and reduce odour in the long-term.

There is however, still a long way to go and we understand that residents at the moment are continuing to be impacted by the escaping landfill gas.

- **Air quality monitoring**

In response to some questions on social media, we can confirm that the Environment Agency will continue air quality monitoring until the end of March 2022. Our monitoring may be extended beyond this time.

- **Concern over uncovered waste**

- Following reports from local people that waste was being left on the landfill overnight without being covered, we've visited the site and are investigating the circumstances.

When we investigate reports of possible wrong-doing, Environment Agency officers have to gather evidence that would stand legal scrutiny and assessment. Images submitted via social media cannot be used as evidence. Also, legally, we have to give an operator the chance to account for any issues. These are required by the regulatory framework and this is why an investigation takes time.

We understand that many residents want the landfill closed. Walleys Quarry is an active landfill and closing it would not stop emissions from the site, and these emissions would still need to be managed.

- **Online reporting form available**

Many of you asked for an online form to make it easier to report landfill gas odour from Walleys Quarry Landfill. An [online reporting form](#) is now available (see also the 'Contact us' part of this website). Like phoning us, you will receive a reference number, but as this is a new process, it may take a few days for the reference number to come through.

- **Mental wellbeing**

If you would like to talk to someone about any mental wellbeing issues, there are several sources of help on [Staffordshire Council's website](#). Anyone experiencing significant mental health issues should see their GP for a referral to primary care mental health services.

- **Latest hydrogen sulphide levels**

For the week 16 to 22 August, hydrogen sulphide levels were below the World Health Organisation's (WHO) 24-hour average health guideline level to protect against short-term health effects but were above the WHO 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level between 1% and 5% of the week. During this week we received 469 reports from local people.

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 are 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 16 to 22 August, 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 5% of the week (although final information is still being collated).

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

- MMF1 - Silverdale Cemetery = 1%
- MMF2 - Silverdale Road = 1%
- MMF6 - Newcastle-under-Lyme Fire Station = 4%
- MMF9 - Galingale View = 5%

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/>