

Walleys Quarry weekly update – 14 April 2022

The Environment Agency has prepared this weekly update to help the community of Newcastle-under-Lyme and the wider area keep informed about developments concerning its regulation of Walleys Quarry Landfill.

Walleys Quarry Ltd is the operator of the landfill site and it alone is responsible for the hydrogen sulphide emissions escaping from the site.

The Environment Agency is the environmental regulator. We require Walleys Quarry Ltd to meet its environmental obligations and resolve the ongoing odour issues at the landfill as quickly as possible.

News in brief – 14 April 2022

Capping work progression

Preparations for capping works on the largest open phase of the landfill continue and drilling work started at the beginning of this week. Whilst it is unlikely, the drilling may cause a temporary increase in the escape of gas from the site. Walleys Quarry Ltd has informed us that the drilling rig it is using has local exhaust ventilation, which should help to reduce excessive escape of landfill gas during the drilling operations.

In May we expect a geotextile membrane to be installed on top of the clay formation layer. This membrane will have the effect of sealing the waste mass from the atmosphere. Permanent capping is expected to improve the containment and capture of odorous emissions, reduce the negative impact on neighbouring properties, and allow the capture of greater quantities of gas for destruction.

Once this work has been completed, the largest mass of waste at the site will be permanently capped. Subsequent planned phases will be much smaller. We expect these to be completed more quickly, reducing the potential for odour nuisance.

Further details about capping are available on the Walleys Quarry Ltd website. [Read more here](#)

Environment Agency Walleys Quarry Facebook Group

Our new Facebook Group went live last Thursday (7 April 2022) and started accepting members from that point. We added over 300 people to the group before 5pm on Friday.

Unfortunately, over the weekend the account was suspended by Facebook and we are investigating this with them. Apologies to everyone who had already joined.

We have built a new Facebook Group and are working on additional security to ensure this doesn't happen again. When this group is available we will share the link.

We have received many questions about the group and we have addressed the most frequently asked questions below.

- We have set the Facebook Group up following direct feedback from the community.

- It is intended as a further source of information and not a replacement for any existing social media channels.
- New intelligence from local communities is always welcome and we continue to review the information posted on Twitter about on-site activities and nuisance odours.
- The Facebook Group does not replace the need to report odours to us via our online reporting system.
- The Facebook Group is not intended to silence postings on Twitter.
- It is a closed group to protect users and Environment Agency staff alike. Anyone can request to join – just click the link above.
- You must accept the group rules to be admitted, for everyone’s safety. This is standard practice in most Facebook groups for any purpose. Read more about how the Environment Agency manages and moderates social media [here](#)
- The page is moderated during working hours, Monday – Friday 9-5pm, but not during weekends or public holidays.
- After the pre-election period ends, we will be hosting monthly Q&A sessions. There will be a questions thread opened shortly. Please add your questions there for submission.
- We are aware that several members/potential members are standing as candidates in the local elections in Staffordshire. The Facebook page is subject to certain rules, to ensure fairness for all. You can read about the pre-election period here: [Election guidance for civil servants - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Pre-election period 14 April – 5 May 2022

There are local elections in Newcastle-under-Lyme on 5 May 2022. In the pre-election period public bodies must limit engagement activities. This period will run from 14 April until shortly after 5 May 2022. More information about these restrictions can be found [here](#). We must follow the guidance and this will have an impact on some of our communications, including what we are able to share on Facebook.

Reporting odour

It is important that you continue to report odour to us. Reports from local people, along with our regulatory visits and monitoring from our mobile monitoring facilities help to create a picture which informs our enforcement and regulatory approach.

The easiest and quickest way to make a report is via GOV.UK at: <https://report-walleys-quarry-smell.service.gov.uk/>

If you do report odour to us via our incident hotline, please be courteous to our staff. They are working to deal with your reports as efficiently as possible.

Latest hydrogen sulphide levels

Our Ambient Air Monitoring Team continues to check air quality around Walleys Quarry landfill. It does this through a network of mobile monitoring stations (MMFs) that are positioned in communities around the site. These check for levels of hydrogen sulphide and methane, which are indicators of odour pollution.

The chart below contains a summary of the raw data collected from our ambient air mobile monitoring facilities (MMFs) in the period 4 April –10 April 2022.

Levels of hydrogen sulphide during this week remained below the World Health Organisation’s 24-hour average health guideline level (150µg/m³ or 107ppb) to protect against short-term health effects. They were the same or lower than levels seen last week at three locations, and only slightly higher at the fourth.

MMF ID & Location	% of time the monitoring location recorded H ₂ S above the WHO annoyance guideline level %	Change
MMF1 Silverdale Cemetery	1.8	— on previous week
MMF2 Silverdale PS	2.5	▼ on previous week
MMF6 Fire Station	6.1	▼ on previous week
MMF9 Galingale View	26.0	▲ on previous week

It is important to note that this is raw data and may change slightly as results are verified.

We do expect to see short term fluctuations in the concentrations of hydrogen sulphide leaving the site. The causes can include factors such as the temporary impact of improvement works being carried out on site and changes in the weather.

Odours associated with landfill gas emissions will increase during colder weather and still wind conditions. With less ability to disperse, the potential for causing odour nuisance is greater.

By contrast, in warmer weather the gases are naturally more diluted due to higher temperatures and rising air. This means improvements from measures implemented at Walleys Quarry Landfill to reduce odour could be less noticeable around this time of year. However, it is important to note that despite short term spikes, the overall trend in the levels of hydrogen sulphide concentrations in the ambient air continues to reduce.

Odour Reporting

In the week 4-10 April 2022, the Environment Agency received a total of 895 odour reports from local people. This is a decrease compared to the previous week. The peak day we saw reports was on Friday 8 April where we received 329 reports.



Hydrogen Sulphide Level. 24 hour World Health Organisation guideline to protect against short term health effects



Hydrogen Sulphide 30 minute average odour annoyance: % of time above WHO guideline level w/c 4 April 2022



Odour Reports/complaints w/c 4 April 2022

Correspondence

We are not able to answer questions fully on social media, so if you have a question, please [email](#) us and we may be able to answer in more detail.

Other sources of information

UK Health Security Agency public health messages and advice about the effects of odours from Walleys Quarry landfill are available online via Staffordshire County Council's website: [Frequently asked questions about the health effects of odours and emissions from Walleys Quarry: - Staffordshire County Council](#)

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