

Walleys Quarry weekly update – 5 May 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 – 5 May 2022

Capping work and gas infrastructure progress

On Friday 29 April, our officers carried out a site inspection to assess progress with gas well installation and capping works. They also carried out an off-site odour assessment. All proposed gas extraction wells have now been installed in the phase one area of the landfill. A survey of gas emissions shows that the gas well installation has led to a significant reduction in the escape of landfill gas from the surface. Latest figures record that gas capture and direction to the gas utilisation plant has reached 3000 cubic metres per hour.

During May we expect a geotextile membrane, which is the final element of permanent capping in phase one, to be installed on top of the clay formation layer. The membrane will have the effect of sealing the waste mass from the atmosphere and prevent the entry of rainwater. The capping is expected to further improve the containment, capture and destruction of landfill gas.

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.

Facebook update

Many thanks to everyone who has joined, commented and posted within the new Environment Agency Walleys Quarry Landfill Site Facebook Group. We currently have around 300 members. Please encourage anyone you know who has an interest in Walleys Quarry and how the Environment Agency regulates this site to join us. They must accept the group rules to be admitted.

This week we have opened the first of our monthly questions threads within the group. This is your chance to ask the Environment Agency a question ahead of our first LIVE Q&A (date tbc after the local elections have taken place in Staffordshire). There may be some questions that we cannot answer for legal reasons. We may also group themed questions together to avoid duplication. Due to the number of questions received it may not be possible to answer them all in this first LIVE Q &A. We may be able to answer questions which we do not have time for on this occasion at future FB LIVE Q&As. More information will follow.

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 runs 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 25 April – 1 May 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 lower than levels seen last week at all locations.

MMF ID & Location	% of time the monitoring location recorded H ₂ S above the WHO annoyance guideline level %	Change
MMF1 Silverdale Cemetery	5.1	▼ on previous week
MMF2 Silverdale PS	0	▼ on previous week
MMF6 Fire Station	1.5	▼ on previous week
MMF9 Galingale View	9.0	▼ 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 25 April – 1 May 2022, the Environment Agency received a total of 213 odour reports from local people. This is a decrease compared to the previous week. The peak day was on 30 April, when we received 52 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 25 April 2022



Odour Reports/complaints w/c 25 April 2022

Correspondence

Other than by means of the Facebook Group mentioned above, we are unable to answer questions through social media. If you have a question you can [email](#) us.

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>