

News Release

EA21019

13 September 2021

Environment Agency requires Newcastle under Lyme landfill operator to take action to remedy permit breaches

- Environment Agency requires Walleys Quarry Ltd to take action after permit breaches found
- Walleys Quarry Ltd has challenged aspects of the Environment Agency's assessment.
- Environment Agency has specified the actions Walleys Quarry Ltd must deliver quickly or face an escalation in enforcement response

The Environment Agency has issued Walleys Quarry Ltd with a series of remedial actions after an inspection identified further breaches of the landfill environmental permit.

In response to community concerns about gulls at the site, Environment Agency officers made an unannounced off-site visit, out of hours on Wednesday 18 August 2021. This visit, along with a subsequent site inspection identified apparent breaches of two permit conditions.

These breaches relate to:

- Insufficient covering of tipped materials at the end of the working day.
- Odour outside the site at a level likely to cause pollution, as perceived by an authorised officer, in the absence of appropriate measures to prevent or minimise the odour.

The permit does not require all waste to be covered at the end of the working day. However, sufficient cover is required, where appropriate, to control pests and vermin. On this occasion, an Environment Agency officer confirmed there was a breach relating to the pest control plan.

The Environment Agency has required the company to complete a number of actions to remedy these breaches, including:

- Covering waste sufficiently by the end each working day to avoid attracting vermin. There will be further assessments and inspections to check that the operator is taking this action.
- Urgently carry out a surface emission survey and make checks on the temporary capping layer and identify any necessary improvements.
- Install appropriate capping to prevent emissions of landfill gas outside the site boundary (due by 30 September).

Failure to carry out these actions in the specified time period could result in further action.

Since the failures in covering waste were identified, the operator is also taking action to implement seasonal bird control measures earlier than planned and is considering additional controls to scare gulls.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

"We are doing the best we can to bring the operator into compliance and will continue to hold Walleys Quarry Ltd to account to improve its management of landfill gas at the site."

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88

News Release

“Since February, we’ve demanded a considerable amount of action from Walleys Quarry Ltd to reduce the landfill gas escaping from the site and blighting the lives of the local community. We will continue to take action until landfill gas escaping from the site is appropriately managed.”

Walleys Quarry is an active landfill. The Environment Agency understands that many residents would like it to be closed. Closing the landfill would not stop the odours emitting from the site, and these odours would still need to be managed.

Ends

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Follow us on Twitter [@EnvAgencyMids](https://twitter.com/EnvAgencyMids)

Background information

Walleys Quarry Ltd is the company formerly known as Red Industries RM Ltd.

Walleys Quarry Ltd Limited has challenged aspects of the Environment Agency’s assessment of the breaches. This challenge will be considered within 28 days.

The Environment Agency must follow the Regulators’ Code; a framework for how regulators should engage with those they regulate.

Note, action around capping is not a new action, this deadline was given on 26 March 2021 and relates to the capping of the steep flanks of the landfill.

Walleys Quarry Ltd is now assessed as a Band E operator and subsistence charges will increase by 50%.

In response to the rise in complaints from the community, the Environment Agency has made 48 site inspections and audits and 57 odour assessments since 1 January 2021. Over this period the Environment Agency has now identified 17 instances of non-compliance and in each case we have required the operator to take immediate action to bring the site back into compliance.

The Environment Agency has been working with public health partners Public Health England (PHE) and Staffordshire County Council, along with Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council, to understand any risk that the site may pose and provide the right advice to the local community.

For more information, see: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/walleys-quarry-landfill-sliverdale/>

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88