

Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

8 April 2021

We recognise the ongoing difficulties that odour has caused in Silverdale, Newcastle under Lyme and surrounding areas. We take all reports and complaints very seriously and are working with other organisations to do everything we can to reduce odours.

We continue to regulate Red Industries, the operator of Walleys Quarry landfill, and have issued them with an enforcement notice requiring them to put solutions in place to minimise odour from their operations.

LATEST INFORMATION

- To complete the necessary capping of parts of the landfill, Red Industries will be accepting waste on to the site from Wednesday 7 April. This is not a return to normal operations. This is general waste that is needed to complete the capping, as required by the enforcement notice we issued the company on Friday 26 March.
- The waste being taken onto the site for use in the capping work is the type of non-recyclable waste found in skips.
- We will visit the site today (Thursday 8 April), to check on the Red Industries' progress of the capping work required by our enforcement notice issued on 26 March 2021.
- At the site visit, we will check the amount and type of waste that is currently being accepted on site in order to complete the capping work.
- Red Industries have until 30 April 2021 to carry out the actions in the enforcement notice. Until then, we will continue to visit the site regularly to check on progress.
- Red Industries have upgraded their gas pre-treatment on site and now have 2 blue silos, for treating hydrogen sulphide and siloxanes.
- Alongside our regulation of Red Industries' operations at Walleys Quarry landfill, we are prioritising the investigation into other potential sources of odour.
- We are currently waiting for the results from samples taken at the time of the discharge from a leaking pipe to the Silverdale Brook on Saturday 27 March.
- Please continue to report by email any problems with odour to ics@environment-agency.gov.uk or click the 'contact us' link on this webpage.
- See [Staffordshire County Council website](#) for the latest on public health impacts of odours in the Silverdale and wider Newcastle under Lyme area.
- We are updating the information on this webpage every week. To receive notifications when these updates happen email your contact details to: Engagement_WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk and we will add you to our mailing list.

Compliance assessment and enforcement notice – update on the capping work

Capping creates a seal with the lining of the landfill and so allows improved gas capture as the waste decomposes. One section of the landfill site is now full and, following the addition of necessary waste to achieve the landform required to enable effective capping to be progressed, the area will be sealed permanently. Another section is not due to receive more waste for some time so we have required Red Industries to improve the temporary cap on this area as well.

Our enforcement notice means the company is now legally required to make these improvements by 30 April 2021. If it does not we will take further regulatory action. Red Industries has extended its voluntary suspension of landfill operations to make completing this work its top priority. However, as agreed, some waste will continue to be accepted from their own internal waste transfer sites, as well as additional waste for the final capping operations to be completed (as described above).

No landfill will ever be completely odour free, as to capture all the gas generated from the landfill would be extremely difficult. However, the level and type of odour arising from such operations should not be causing offence. The current work on capping will significantly improve the seal of the site and should therefore reduce the amount of landfill gas escaping from the site surfaces which has the potential to cause odour.

Discharge to Silverdale Brook

Further to a report of a pipe discharging into the Silverdale Brook on Saturday 27 March, we attended the same day and found that a section of pipe from one of the on-site lagoons was leaking. Red Industries repaired the leak on the Saturday evening. Our officers made a further visit to the site on Sunday 28 March and found the discharge had ceased.

The water that was leaking from the pipe was from a lagoon that stores groundwater. The site's environmental permit allows water from this lagoon to routinely discharge to the brook, although Red Industries had temporarily agreed to stop discharging while they were working on one of their lagoons.

We took precautionary samples of the discharge and we are still awaiting all of the results from these tests.

Red Industries' groundwater investigation

We are continuing to work with partners such as the Coal Authority, Severn Trent Water and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council to investigate Red Industries' statement of 25 March about hydrogen sulphide odour coming from other sources.

Alongside regulating the operations of Red Industries, investigating another potential source of odour is a priority.

Air quality monitoring data

Our two air quality monitoring units, located at Galingale View and Silverdale Road continue to collect information 24 hours a day until at least the end of May.

The units monitor air samples to identify potential risks to health from gases in the atmosphere, including methane, particulates and hydrogen sulphide. We share the data with Public Health England, who are the experts in interpreting what the data mean for health and explaining that clearly. We also share the data with Staffordshire County Council

and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council. This information is used to inform our regulation of the landfill.

Multi-agency roles and responsibilities

- The Environment Agency regulates the two environmental permits held by Red Industries RM Limited ('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.

Where possible, we ask residents to report odours in the local area surrounding Walleys Quarry via email. To report an odour issue related to Walleys Quarry, please [Click Here](#). This will open a template email for you to complete and send to our Incident Communications Service (ICS).

Our incident hotline is primarily there to help people report new things about which we do not know and are not yet acting on. The volume of calls we are receiving on this issue is leading to a very real risk that we will miss a call on a different, new and urgent issue. We understand the odour issues that are being experienced at Walleys Quarry and that your ability to report them to us is important. We are taking this very seriously and reporting via email will ensure that we continue to capture and log all submitted odour reports.