

## Walleys Quarry weekly update – 21 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 – 22 April 2022

#### Leaking pipe

Officers visited Walleys Quarry on Saturday 16 April 2022 following reports of a leaking pipe. This pipe connects to the odour management system, which runs on mains water with an added fragrance to help mask low-level odour from the site. The volume of fluid leaking was very low, and was soaking straight to the ground with no run-off. No contaminated surface water was detected in the vicinity. The pipe has now been repaired.

#### Capping update

Preparations for capping works on the largest open phase of the landfill are ongoing, with the drilling work that started last week continuing. 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 minimise 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, which is the final element of permanent capping in this area. 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 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.

### 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 11-17 April 2022.

Levels of hydrogen sulphide during this week remained below the World Health Organisation's 24-hour average health guideline level (150µg/m<sup>3</sup> or 107ppb) to protect against short-term health effects. They were higher than levels seen last week at three locations, and lower at the fourth.

| MMF ID & Location        | % of time the monitoring location recorded H <sub>2</sub> S above the WHO annoyance guideline level % | Change             |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------|
| MMF1 Silverdale Cemetery | 11.9  | ▲ on previous week |
| MMF2 Silverdale PS       | 6.6   | ▲ on previous week |
| MMF6 Fire Station        | 9.6   | ▲ on previous week |
| MMF9 Galingale View      | 19.7  | ▼ 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 11-17 April 2022, the Environment Agency received a total of 752 odour reports from local people. This is a decrease compared to the previous week. The peak day we saw reports was on 14 April where we received 290 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 11 April 2022



Odour Reports/complaints w/c 11 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>