

Walleys Quarry weekly update – 7 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 – 7 April 2022

Operational update

This week we have carried out six off-site odour assessments and an on-site inspection. The on-site inspection focussed on current management of landfill gas and the planned works detailed below.

Capping work and improved gas collection

In last week's update we reported that Walleys Quarry Ltd had confirmed that capping will begin in April. Its press release about this can be read online: [Read more here](#)

This week, Walleys Quarry Ltd began installing a 300mm thick clay formation layer to phase 1 of the landfill as part of permanent capping works. The capping process will also involve the installation of up to 18 additional gas wells. This will require boreholes to be drilled into the waste. 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 to be used has local exhaust ventilation. This should help to reduce excessive escape of landfill gas during the drilling operations. Drilling work is expected to begin from 11 April 2022.

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. This step 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.

These works are taking place on the largest open phase of the landfill. Once completed, the largest mass of waste at the site will be permanently capped. Subsequent planned phases are much smaller in size. We expect these to be completed more quickly, reducing the potential for odour nuisance.

Facebook Group

Our new Facebook Group has gone live today. We started the group following feedback from residents during our doorstep conversations, about how they prefer to access information. You can find us on Facebook by searching 'Environment Agency - Walleys Quarry Landfill Group'.

This will help us keep you updated with news about our regulatory activity at the site. We also plan to hold Q&A sessions on Facebook after the local elections in May. Details of the sessions will be published in upcoming Weekly Updates and via the Facebook Group itself.

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 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 28 March – 3 April 2022.

Levels of hydrogen sulphide during this week remained above the World Health Organisation’s 24-hour average health guideline level (150µg/m³ or 107ppb) to protect against short-term health effects, but were lower than levels seen last week.

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	9.3	▼ on previous week
MMF6 Fire Station	18.8	▼ on previous week
MMF9 Galingale View	25.2	▼ 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 28 to 3 April 2022, the Environment Agency received a total of 1,072 odour reports from local people. This is a decrease compared to the previous week. The peak day we saw reports was on Saturday 2 April 2022 where we received 277 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 28 March 2022



Odour Reports/complaints w/c 28 March 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>