

Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

15 October 2021

We have developed this weekly update to help keep the community of Newcastle under Lyme, and wider area, up-to-date with developments around our regulation of Walleys Quarry landfill.

Walleys Quarry Ltd are responsible for the hydrogen sulphide emissions escaping from their site. As regulator we are committed to making sure the operator tackles the problems at Walleys Quarry, to improve things for everyone, as quickly as possible. Our team of regulators continues to put pressure on the operator to take the necessary measures to resolve the hydrogen sulphide issues.

News in brief

- **Reducing hydrogen sulphide emissions from Walleys Quarry**

We have published our plan to reduce hydrogen sulphide emissions at Walleys Quarry.

We've re-evaluated our regulatory approach following the outcome of the Judicial Review, taking into account the impact of the measures that we have already required Walleys Quarry Ltd to undertake. This plan builds on this extensive regulatory action taken to date and outlines the latest measures we've designed and applied, which Walleys Quarry Ltd is required to implement in the coming months to further improve control of hydrogen sulphide emissions.

Walleys Quarry Ltd are required to act in three key areas to manage landfill gas and hydrogen sulphide emissions outside the site boundary: contain the gas, capture the gas, destroy the gas. Our actions have and will continue to focus these measures aimed at controlling hydrogen sulphide.

Walleys Quarry Ltd is responsible for the hydrogen sulphide emissions escaping from its site. This plan shows our continuing work to rigorously require the operator to resolve the issue of unacceptable levels of those emissions.

Read our [plan](#) and [press release](#).

- **Future Legal Proceedings**

The Environment Agency has applied for permission to appeal the Judgment in relation to the appropriate role of the Court when considering judicial review and remedies involving regulatory decisions. The Environment Agency is responding to the requirements in the judgement and is doing all it can to get the operator to resolve the issues at the landfill as quickly as possible – and with the timescales in the Judgment firmly in mind.

- **Face to face multi-agency engagement sessions**

We were really pleased to see many of you at the multi-agency drop in event that happened on Tuesday. All organisations valued the opportunity to have face to face conversations, to be able to hear from you, the concerns and experiences you have had and for us to be able to explain what we are continuing to do in dealing with this situation.

We've now had virtual sessions and face to face sessions, and multi-agency partners are now planning how best to talk to as many people as possible about how Walleys Quarry Landfill impacts you and how all organisations are working together to improve the situation.

- **Feedback from social media**

We have received several questions via social media this week and have provided answers below:

On closing the site

Suspending the operator's permit would not prevent hydrogen sulphide escaping from the site.

The Environment Agency does not have grounds to suspend the permit and stop waste coming onto the site. This is because the hydrogen sulphide escaping the site is coming from waste already in the landfill that is now decomposing. The Environment Agency does not believe high levels of hydrogen sulphide off site are being caused by waste deposited since Walleys Quarry Ltd made changes to their waste acceptance procedures. A permit can only be suspended where the activity is the cause of the problem. Should fresh evidence indicate that there is a problem associated with current waste being deposited at the site, we will immediately review these measures once again.

Drums that are visible on the site

Walleys Quarry Ltd can accept drums (can be known as Intermediate Bulk Containers or IBCs) for disposal at the landfill as long as they were used for non-hazardous materials or have been correctly decontaminated prior to disposal. These should be empty and preferably washed out. The drums are crushed on site before being incorporated into the waste.

At recent site visits, we have checked drums (IBCs) on site and, as part of our regulatory work checking waste coming into the site, have requested the waste transfer details of where they have come from. Through our checks we do not have reason to suspect any inappropriate waste has been used in these drums.

As part of our regulatory duties we routinely check drums on the site and the waste transfer information to make sure waste has been correctly described and disposed of, this also involves checking the site where the waste came from.

- **Online reporting**

Between the 25 August and 14 September 2021 we identified that 248 reports made on our online reporting system had been assigned with the incorrect date and time of when the incident was reported to us.

We're sorry this happened, this error was due to a part of the automated system adding an incorrect date and time for when the report was added into our National Incident Recording System. We have re-entered all 248 reports with the correct date and time of when they were reported to us. We've investigated thoroughly into what caused this error and have corrected the issue so that this does not happen again.

- **Latest hydrogen sulphide levels**

For the week from 3-10 October, hydrogen sulphide levels were below the World Health Organisation's (WHO) 24-hour average health guideline level to protect against short-term health effects but were above the WHO 30-minute average odour annoyance

guideline level between 0% and 5% of the week. During this week we received 164 reports from local people.

- MMF1 - Silverdale Cemetery = 0%
- MMF2 - Silverdale Road = 0%
- MMF6 - Newcastle-under-Lyme Fire Station = 0.3%
- MMF9 - Galingale View = 5%

We have instructed Walleys Quarry Ltd to make substantial improvements to reduce hydrogen sulphide levels to those assessed to be safe by Public Health England. We are seeing lower levels of hydrogen sulphide escaping from the site, and whilst this is good news, we know the problem remains. You have our commitment on continuing to use our regulatory powers, as allowed by Government, to require Walleys Quarry Ltd to bring hydrogen sulphide emissions under control.

We are updating the information on this webpage every week. To receive notifications, email your contact details to: Engagement.WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk and we will add you to our mailing list.

See [Staffordshire County Council website](#) for information on public health impacts of odours in the Silverdale and wider Newcastle under Lyme area.

Walleys Quarry website: <https://walleysquarry.co.uk/>