

Walleys Quarry weekly update – 13 October 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 – 13 October 2022

Regulatory activity

On 5 October 2022 officers carried out a site inspection, which focussed on waste acceptance criteria and sampling, together with an off-site odour assessment.

Officers carried out a further unannounced site inspection on 10 October 2022. They focussed on surface water management, the revised submitted capping and phasing plan proposals, and gas management. The average landfill gas collection rate remains steady.

Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council Abatement Notice – Odour Nuisance

Following last week's press release regarding the withdrawal by Walleys Quarry Ltd of its appeal against the Abatement Notice served by Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/news/article/122/walleys-quarry-abatement-notice> the Environment Agency recognises that both parties have agreed that implementation of operational procedures required by the environmental permit currently represents the best practicable means to prevent, or to counteract the effects of odour nuisance from activities at the landfill.

As part of its ongoing regulatory work, the Environment Agency required Walleys Quarry Ltd to revise its operational procedures, including the phasing and capping plan and landfill gas management plan, to address the risk of odour pollution outside the site boundary.

In October 2021 the Environment Agency published its plan containing the measures it has required and will continue to require Walleys Quarry Ltd to implement to bring about a sustained long-term reduction in exposure to hydrogen sulphide in the community. The plan is underpinned by three key objectives, to Contain, Capture and Destroy landfill gas emissions. The plan was reviewed for a second time in September 2022 and the Environment Agency is satisfied, based on recent data, that its strategy remains effective.

We continue to actively regulate and assess Walleys Quarry Ltd's compliance with its environmental permit. Our officers regularly conduct site inspections and complete remote audits to ensure that the company remains on track to deliver on its obligations.

We remain committed to working with partners, including Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council who will be responsible for enforcing its abatement notice, if necessary.

Facebook Group

Thanks to everyone who submitted a question to us via October's designated questions thread. It's good to see new members joining the group and asking questions.

As a reminder, we open a new questions thread in the first week of each month. This is the best place to ask us anything relating to our regulation of Walleys Quarry Limited. The Communications Team manage the Facebook Group and source answers from officers in the Regulatory Team.

There may be some questions we can't answer for legal reasons, some may fall outside our remit as the regulator of the environmental permit and some we may group together if they are on a common theme.

We are currently working on the October Q&A and will let you know when it will be available to view. We will also upload a transcript here for non-Facebook users.

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 3 October – 9 October 2022. They were the same at two locations, with an increase at MMF2 and a decrease at MMF9.

MMF ID & Location	% of time the monitoring location recorded H ₂ S above the WHO annoyance guideline level %	Change
MMF1 Silverdale Cemetery	0.0%	— on previous week
MMF2 Silverdale PS	0.4%	▲ on previous week
MMF6 Fire Station	0.0%	— on previous week
MMF9 Galingale View	3.7%	▼ on previous week

It is important to note that this is raw data and may change slightly as results are verified.

It's important to note that there will always be short-term fluctuations in the concentrations of hydrogen sulphide leaving the site especially given the low concentrations we are monitoring. The causes can include factors such as the impact of improvement works being carried out on site and changes in the weather.

Concentrations of landfill gas emissions generally increase during periods of colder weather and still wind conditions. With less ability for the landfill gas emissions to disperse, there is a greater potential for these emissions to cause an odour nuisance in the local area. By contrast, during periods of 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 in the Winter and Spring.

However, it is important to note that despite temporary increases, the overall trend in the levels of hydrogen sulphide concentrations in the ambient air continues to reduce.

Odour Reports

In the week 3 October – 9 October 2022 the Environment Agency received a total of 102 odour reports from local people. This is an increase compared to the previous week. The highest number of odour reports was on Monday 3 October, when we received 35 reports.



Number of odour reports/complaints to the Environment Agency
03 – 09 Oct 2022



Hydrogen Sulphide 30 minute average odour annoyance: % of time above WHO guideline level
03 – 09 Oct 2022



Hydrogen Sulphide Level. 24 hour World Health Organisation guideline to protect against short term health effects

Correspondence

Other than by means of the Facebook Group mentioned above, we are unable to answer questions through social media. If you have a question, you can [email](#) us.

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>