Walleys Quarry weekly update – 2 March 2023

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

We are pleased to announce that our new website will be going live on Thursday 9 March. This will replace Citizen Space and will make existing information much easier to find. We will publish the link in next week's update.

Regulatory activity

We continue to actively regulate and assess Walleys Quarry Ltd's compliance with its environmental permit by reviewing data and conducting inspections.

The drilling work required to install 10 gas extraction wells we told you about last week has now been completed. The wells are currently being connected to the gas management system to further improve gas capture.

The extraction rate recorded at the gas utilisation plant (GUP) on 24 February 2023 was 3015 m^3 /hr. The recorded level of hydrogen sulphide at the GUP on 22 February 2023 was 1660 ppm. These results are within the normal operational fluctuations we expect.

Facebook Group

The February Q&A video has now been uploaded to the group and is ready to view.

For non-Facebook users we have supplied a transcript of the session. You can access it by clicking on the link here.

For anyone who wishes to become a member of the group, which allows you take part in the Q&A sessions, you can join by clicking on the link below. Please note you need to accept the rules for admission.

Environment Agency - Walleys Quarry - Landfill Site | Facebook

The next designated questions thread will open at 9 am on Monday 6 March. It will remain open until 5pm on Friday 10 March 2023. Non-Facebook users can email their question during this timeframe to enquiries_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk

Please note that there may be some questions we cannot answer for legal reasons, some which may fall outside our remit as the environmental regulator and some which we may group together, if they are on a common theme.

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 facilities (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 charts below contain a summary of the raw data collected from our MMFs in the period 20 February to 26 February 2023. During this period, they decreased at MMF1, and remained the same at MMF2, MMF6, and MMF9.

MMF ID & Location	% of time the monitoring location recorded H_2S concentrations above the World Health Organisation odour annoyance guideline level	Change
MMF1 Cemetery	**0.0 %**	▼ on previous week
MMF2 Silverdale Pumping Station	**0.0 %**	— on previous week
MMF6 Fire Station	**0.0 %**	— on previous week
MMF9 Galingale View	**0.0 %**	— 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 overnight, during periods of colder weather, and in still wind conditions with clear skies.

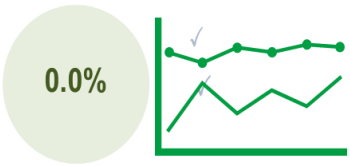
Hydrogen sulphide concentrations continue to be greatly reduced compared with the period when monitoring began, in both the source emission and ambient air measurements. Air quality monitoring data provides additional confidence that our ongoing regulation is ensuring the source emission of hydrogen sulphide from the landfill site continues to remain low.

We are not focusing on the monitoring data in isolation and recognise that people may still detect odour from the site. We continue to compare daily odour incident reports with air quality data and source emissions monitoring, looking for trends and issues which may require challenging Walleys Quarry Ltd to further improve site operations and the capture of fugitive emissions.

Odour Reports

In the week 20 February – 26 February 2023 the Environment Agency received a total of 15 odour reports from local members of the public. This was a decrease from the number received last week. The highest number of odour reports was on Wednesday 23 February 2023 when 6 reports were received.

Number of odour reports/complaints to the Environment Agency
20 Feb - 26 Feb 2023



Hydrogen Sulphide 30 minute average odour annoyance: % of time above WHO guideline level
20 Feb - 26 Feb 2023

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

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council: https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/walleys-quarry

Staffordshire County Council: https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Care-for-all-ages/Publichealth/Walleys-Quarry/Walleys-Quarry.aspx

Walleys Quarry Ltd website: https://walleysquarry.co.uk