

# Environmental and Waste Management Group

## September 2017 Newsletter



### GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

#### **HSE sets out waste sector priorities**

The HSE has published (18 September) its priority areas for the [waste and recycling sector](#) in a major new publication outlining their focus over the next 3-5 years on 19 industry sectors.

Alongside a continuing focus on industries that create “major hazards” and those subject to “statutory permissioning regimes”, the majority of HSE’s elective resources will be focused on agriculture, construction, logistics and transport, manufacturing, public services, and **waste and recycling**. “These are sectors where the health and safety challenges are greatest and where our interventions can have the greatest impact,” the report states.

(Read more: [ciwm-journal.co.uk](http://ciwm-journal.co.uk) & HSE’s [Sector Plan for Waste & Recycling](#))

#### **New waste FAQs published by HSE**

HSE has recently published (August) a new list of responses to ‘frequently asked questions’ on waste issues, on topics ranging from the hazards associated with waste & recycling, to the safe stacking of bales of waste materials.

Of particular interest, a new ‘FAQ’ explains how and when LOLER thorough examinations apply to plant & equipment commonly used within the Waste & Recycling Industry. (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk))

#### **EA to consult on ‘risk-based’ regulation in 2018**

Planned changes to the way that fees for compliance with environmental permitting regulations are assessed have been pushed back to 2018, the Environment Agency has confirmed. The Agency has been considering changes to its Operator Risk Appraisal (OPRA) scheme after launching an ‘informal’ consultation on the system in April this year.

The EA has been using ‘risk-based’ appraisals to help it target resources at sites thought to pose the greatest threat to the environment for a number of years. Under the system, the fees and charges a site pays for environmental regulation are linked to its risk, performance and complexity.

(Read more: [letsrecycle.com](http://letsrecycle.com))

#### **SEPA consultations on Charging and Compliance schemes**

SEPA has launched (14 August) a [consultation outlining the planned changes to the Environmental Regulation \(Scotland\) Charging Scheme 2016](#) in more detail. The planned changes to the current 2016 scheme were initially outlined in SEPA’s 2015 Charging Scheme consultation.

SEPA are also running a further [consultation on their 'Compliance Assessment Scheme'](#) (CAS), with a view to making CAS '*simpler, fairer, more useful, more relevant*' (their words).

Both consultations close on 3 November 2017, and include on-line surveys.

### **Updated on-line Asbestos Essentials for non-licensed work with asbestos**

HSE have published (18 September) updated editions of their '[Asbestos Essentials](#)' on-line task sheets provide information for those in the building maintenance and allied trades on safe work with asbestos.

The suite of free-to-download task sheets provides information for those in the building maintenance and allied trades on safe work with asbestos. There is more emphasis on the importance of appropriate information, instruction and training. (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk))

## **INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS**

### **Two men injured in gas explosion at AD plant**

Two men have been hospitalised following a gas explosion at an anaerobic digestion (AD) site in Colwick, Nottingham.

Emergency services were called to Bio Dynamic on 20 September following a gas explosion where a "tanker had collapsed", according to [reports by the BBC](#). The fire service said there had been a gas explosion and a tank had collapsed, but there was no fire.

The company, which converts food waste into energy, said the "accident was not as a result of any failure in the normal operation of our plant". (Read more: [ciwm-journal.co.uk](http://ciwm-journal.co.uk))

### **Fire crews attend incident near Hunterston nuclear power station**

Fire crews were called to a substation near Hunterston nuclear power station after an electrical failure. ScottishPower said a component had failed in the Western Link plant during a commissioning test. Emergency services attended as a "matter of routine" but were not needed, the company added.

The converter station is used to change electricity from subsea and underground cables for use in the existing electricity transmission system. (Read more: [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk))

### **Bo'ness recycling centre blaze started deliberately**

Police are appealing for witnesses after a fire was started deliberately in a recycling plant in Bo'ness. Officers said the blaze caused about £4,000 worth of damage at the Kinneil Kerse recycling centre on Grangemouth Road.

The fire was started at about 19:10 on Monday on a compost pile and continued throughout the night. At its height more than 30 fire fighters attended the incident and were at the scene for more than 12 hours. (Read more: [falkirkherald.co.uk](http://falkirkherald.co.uk))

## **Waterbeach recycling centre fire left to 'burn for days'**

A fire at a recycling centre has been left to burn itself out. About 500 tonnes of waste caught fire at about 01:00 BST at the Amey plant in Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire. People and businesses affected by the smoke were advised to keep their doors and windows closed.

The Environment Agency and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue attended. The blaze was left to burn itself out under "controlled conditions". A similar fire at the same site involving 15,000 tonnes of organic waste material occurred in July 2015. (Read more: [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk))

## **Huge fire breaks out at recycling centre in Bolton**

An investigation has been launched into a large industrial fire at Viridor's thermal recovery facility in Bolton on 17 September. The facility, which opened in the 1970s, processes up to 100,000 tonnes of waste per year.

Ten fire engines and two aerial appliances attended the fire at the facility at Raikes Lane, which, upon arrival, covered an area measuring around 20m by 50m, across three stories of the building. (Read more: [manchestereveningnews.co.uk](http://manchestereveningnews.co.uk) & [letsrecycle.co.uk](http://letsrecycle.co.uk))

## **EA and DVSA to target illegal waste carriers**

The Environment Agency has announced an agreement with Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) on steps to stop illegal waste carriers and improve road safety in England. Sir James Bevan, EA chief executive, and Gareth Llewellyn, DVSA chief executive, signed an agreement earlier this month (12 September) in London.

The EA and DVSA will share intelligence and carry out joint operations in England to stop waste being illegally transported, and target unsafe drivers and vehicles. As part of the agreement, enforcement teams will also be provided with up-to date and relevant intelligence about waste industry operators. This will all help to identify 'high-risk' or illegal goods vehicle operators who are involved in the transport of waste, and reduce the number of seriously and serially non-compliant waste industry vehicles on England's roads. (Read more: [letsrecycle.com](http://letsrecycle.com))

## **OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST**

### **"Waste sector's most urgent problem is crime"**

UK Environment Secretary Michael Gove has said that the most urgent problem facing the waste sector is crime – and links to criminals in the wider community.

Mr Gove was appearing before the Efra select committee which monitors the work of Defra. Labour MP John Grogan asked about his strategy for waste. Gove replied: "I'm taking a look at how we can move to a better policy on waste, a better policy on what's been called the circular economy. One of the things I want to explore is how we can generate less waste in the first place and then ensure that the waste we do generate is disposed of in the best possible manner." (Read more: [mrw.co.uk](http://mrw.co.uk))

## **Environment Agency trials use of body cameras**

Environment Agency enforcement officers in the North-East are wearing body worn cameras as part of a six-month trial. It is the first of its kind within the organisation and is aimed at assessing if cameras can help reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour, assaults and threats against staff, particularly those working with regulated and illegal waste sites.

If successful, body-worn cameras, which are now the norm among many enforcement agencies, could be rolled out to EA teams across the country. They could be used in a variety of ways, including at visits to poor performing sites, illegal waste sites, during fisheries and navigation patrols and even during incident response. (Read more: [gov.uk](http://gov.uk))

## **Cost of off-shore wind falls to record low**

[RenewableUK](http://RenewableUK) is highlighting the dramatic fall in the cost of offshore wind in the recently announced results of competitive auctions for new contracts to provide clean electricity (11 September).

Energy generated from offshore wind in the UK is set to be cheaper than that generated from nuclear power. Offshore windfarms will be built for a record low price, half of what they were in 2015, after developers bid more competitively than anticipated for the multi-million pound pot of Government subsidies.

Since 2012 the cost of building offshore windfarms has fallen by almost a third and, with the advancement of technology in the industry, developers are hopeful that bigger turbines will allow them to achieve further cost reductions in the future. (Read more: [cedrec.com](http://cedrec.com) & [renewableuk.com](http://renewableuk.com))

## **Scotland sets out environmental plans for 2017-18**

The Scottish Government has set out its Programme for Government 2017-18, which includes all of their intended actions over the coming year. This includes various proposals relating to the environment, including a proposal for a new Climate Change Bill. Details of the full programme, entitled '*A nation with ambition*' can be viewed on the [Scottish Government website](http://Scottish Government website).

## **Generator says UK will need to boost capacity**

Britain will need to boost its generation of electricity by about a quarter, Scottish Power has estimated. The energy firm said electric cars and a shift to electric heating could send demand for power soaring.

Its chief executive also said there would have to be a major investment in the wiring necessary to handle rapid charging of car batteries. Keith Anderson was speaking as the firm reached the milestone of 2,000 megawatts of wind power capacity. That equates to about an eighth of the British total. (Read more: [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk))

## **Recycle Week 2017 begins**

The resource charity WRAP has announced that this year's theme will be "**Recycling – it's worth it**" and confirmed that Recycle Week will run from Monday 25 September to Sunday 1 October 2017.

The organisation said that the theme will give local authorities and others "the opportunity to bust some myths and really show the benefits of recycling". (Read more: [ciwem.org](http://ciwem.org))