

# Environmental and Waste Management Group



## July 2017 Newsletter

### **EWMG ANNOUNCEMENT**

EWMG will be offering a full-day seminar on 3<sup>rd</sup> October in the Coventry area. Entitled “[Hear, then see – tackling the wet, windy and explosive](#)”, the morning sessions will feature 4 guest speakers covering different, diverse subjects from demolition to wind farms, while a wide selection of site visits has been arranged for the afternoon - all with an Environmental slant, of course.

So, this event really should offer something of interest to everyone with EH&S responsibilities – see our [Group Events](#) page for details of this and other upcoming Group event.

### **GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS**

#### **Maximising re-use in construction**

Resource Efficient Scotland (RES) have published a guide to [‘Maximising the re-use of materials on construction sites’](#). Re-using such materials can save project costs, by avoiding use of building materials and reducing waste disposal costs.

RES produce a range of free materials, guides and tools specifically for the construction industry. For details, [‘Construction & the built environment’](#) pages on the [RES web site](#).

#### **WISH updates Guidance of reducing fires**

The Waste Industry Safety & Health ([WISH](#)) Forum has updated their guidance on [‘Reducing Fire Risk at Waste Management Sites’](#).

This provides waste operators with the information and guidance they need to reduce the risk of fires on their sites and, where fires do occur, to reduce their impacts. Updates have been made to the Guidance to take into consideration the findings of waste burn trials carried out during 2015 & 2016 to test the properties of waste materials. A full list of WISH guidance docs can be found [here](#).

### **INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS**

#### **Fatalities in Waste Sector almost double, HSE report finds**

The HSE has released its [annual figures for work-related fatalities](#). The number of fatalities in the waste sector has almost doubled in 2016/17 when compared to the national average. 14 people died from fatal injuries in the waste and recycling sector in 2016/17. This is almost double the annual average for the past five years (8), and compares with 6 deaths in 2015/16.

While fatalities for the sector have fluctuated in recent years, this increase in the current year is largely explained by a [single incident which resulted in 5 deaths](#) in 2016/17. (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk), and [ciwm-journal.co.uk](http://ciwm-journal.co.uk))

### **Company and director fined after worker fell from height**

Eco NRG Solutions Ltd and its director Jon Luke Antoniou have been fined after a worker fell from height at a farm in Cornwall.

Taunton Magistrates Court heard how Lewis Harding, 28, had been fitting solar panels on a fragile roof at Venn Farm on the 19 May 2015. He fell more than three metres through a fragile skylight and broke his back in three places.

An HSE investigation found that the company had failed to take adequate precautions to prevent workers falling from height. There was no edge protection, under-roof netting or boarding provided on site. The company instead relied on an ineffective use of harnesses. (Read more: [hse.gov](http://hse.gov))

### **Refuse collection vehicle involved in fatal collision**

A schoolgirl has died in a collision between a minicoach and a Birmingham City Council refuse collection vehicle (RCV) on 7 July.

Emergency services were called around 9am to Kingsbury Road where the 14-year-old was pronounced dead at the scene. Three teachers and 20 other pupils were also on board the coach. One pupil was taken to hospital with superficial injuries and several others were treated at the scene for minor injuries. (Read more: [letsrecycle.com](http://letsrecycle.com))

### **Water pollution incidents on the rise**

The [Environment Agency has reported](#) a rise in the number of water pollution incidents. In 2016, the number of incidents rose by 160 to a total of 1902. A study conducted by the EA found that despite the majority of UK water companies being close to or in some cases exceeding their targets in relation to improved water quality, the number of pollution incidents increased. This is the first time in the last five years the level of reported incidents has risen.

The report also found there was a small increase in the most serious types of sewage spills. The highest number of sewage spills was recorded by South West Water, with the EA commenting that the water company need to make "significant improvements to their environmental performance". Wessex Water and United Utilities were found to be the top performing water companies. (Read more: [cedrec.com](http://cedrec.com))

### **Demolition company fined for illegal waste site**

A North East demolition company has been fined for operating without a permit, following an Environment Agency prosecution. The charges brought by the EA relate to the company's attempts to reduce costs by starting its own waste transfer station.

PTS Demolition and Dismantling Ltd, which operates out of Hackworth Industrial Estate, Bishop Auckland, was prosecuted for operating a waste transfer station without a permit at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates' Court on 5 July 2017. The court ruled it was a deliberate offence and ordered the firm to pay a fine of £3,500 and £2,680.46 costs. (Read more: [gov.uk](http://gov.uk))

## **OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **City of London trials safety system that could benefit RCVs**

The City of London Corporation is trialling the latest Van Overload Protection System on a tipper vehicle, with a view to installing the technology to its entire fleet in the city, including RCVs. The system can be fitted to most types of commercial vehicle ranging from 3.5t GVW, and helps to prevent overloading from occurring. Load sensors are installed between the axle and the body of the vehicle to detect the load applied to the axles. (Read more: [ciwm-journal.co.uk](http://ciwm-journal.co.uk))

### **Wrong wood waste, wrong place**

According to the Environment Agency, treated waste wood ending up in the wrong place can lead to negative health and environmental consequences.

The problem? Wood is often treated with chemicals, which can include inorganic substances, such as arsenic, or organics, such as cresols. EA evidence shows treated waste wood is being used for unsuitable purposes, including unabated fuel burners and composting. The unregulated presence of chemical treatments in wood waste can also add costs to the recycling process, potentially undermine recycled product quality, and large stockpiles of waste wood increase the risk of fires. (Read more: [ciwm-journal.co.uk](http://ciwm-journal.co.uk))

### **First floating wind farm to settle off coast of Scotland**

In a move hailed as an indicator that the oceans are the next avenue of energy generation, a £200 million floating windfarm is ready to be towed to the mooring post off north-east coast Scotland.

The Hywind project uses a 78 metre tall underwater ballast and three mooring lines, attached to the seabed to keep the turbines upright. The developer is Norwegian Statoil, which is currently attempting to diversify away from fossil fuels. (Read more: [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com))

### **Defra review backs the PRN system**

A review of the PRN and packaging recycling system in the UK has found in favour of retaining the current scheme. The review, which was carried out by Defra and published on 7 July 2017, recommends “to keep” the Regulations. The review into legal recycling requirements imposed on businesses is carried out every few years in line with review measures built into the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007. (Read more: [letsrecycle.com](http://letsrecycle.com))

### **Northern Ireland agencies partner over waste site fires**

Three organisations in Northern Ireland have joined together in a bid to reduce fire risk at waste facilities. The three hope that a programme being developed by them will also help to minimise the risk to firefighters when attending incidents in the waste and recycling sector.

To mark the beginning of the partnership between the three organisations, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) took part in a one day exercise with the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS) and the Health & Safety Executive NI (HSENI). This involved a desktop study of a sample of waste sites, followed by joint visits to four individual sites. (Read more: [letsrecycle.com](http://letsrecycle.com))