

Ashford sites get early morning inspection in day of action

Press release

Multi-agency visits find Openreach and UK Power Network cables deposited at waste site.



Officers recovered 182 kilograms of telecom cable belonging to Openreach together with power cable owned by UK Power Network.

Waste sites around Ashford in Kent received surprise early morning visits from officers from the Environment Agency, Ashford Borough Council, British Transport Police, Kent Police Rural Task Force, Openreach and the Joint Unit for Waste Crime.

These visits are part of a series of multi-agency days of action targeting waste businesses, focusing on metal theft including cables and catalytic converters. The visits recovered 182 kilograms of Openreach's telecom cables and a quantity of power cables belonging to UK Power Network.

The Environment Agency and partners visited 6 waste sites where, as well as the cable, they uncovered a number of incidents of poor compliance with waste permits. Investigations will now follow and appropriate action will be taken to improve compliance and the state of the sites, which could include enforcement action.

Matt Higginson, Environment Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

This should serve as a warning to those who would flout the law that we and our partners are rooting out waste crime and we won't hesitate to take action.

Unscrupulous scrap metal sites are accepting stolen catalytic converters and cabling, further fuelling their theft across the south east.

Joint investigations and enforcement will continue and if convicted, those responsible could face extensive fines and even prison sentences.

Anyone who suspects illegal waste activity is reminded to report it to our 24 hour hotline by calling 0800 80 70 60, or anonymously contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

You can [check your waste collector's waste carriers' registration](#) or call 03708 506 506.

Earlier this year the Environment Agency and partners launched the [Joint Unit for Waste Crime](#), aiming to stop serious and organised crime in the UK Waste Industry.

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