

News story: Environment Agency's 'Incident Management Portal' receives international award

The Environment Agency's Incident Management (IM) Portal has been awarded a 'Special Achievement in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Award' at the [2018 International ESRI User Conference](#) in recognition of its outstanding use of GIS technology.

Launched in October 2016 the IM Portal has already:

- Reduced the time between data capture and reporting during an incident
- Improved the Environment Agency's ability to easily share mapping internally and externally during an incident ensuring consistency
- Simplified and standardised the tools used, and the process for capturing, storing, analysing and sharing data

Catherine Wright, Director for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management said:

The Incident Management Portal is just one example of how the Environment Agency is working to improve incident response. The portal is a great example of how the Environment Agency is using technology to improve its response to environmental incidents – from everything to flooding and drought to tackling waste crime and improving biodiversity. It has revolutionised how we collect and use data during incidents by providing real-time data and images to our incident rooms across the country.

The portal has already proved invaluable during incidents and we are continuing to look at ways we can build on the system to maximise the longer term benefits from the data captured and use it to help inform future decision making. It is an honour to accept this international award on behalf of the team who have created this innovative system.

Stuart Bonthron, Esri UK Managing Director, visited the Environment Agency office in Bristol where he presented the award.

The Incident Management Portal Team has put the Environment Agency at the forefront of this international audience.

At the conference in San Diego, Jack Dangermond, President and Founder of ESRI, said:

The work of the Environment Agency stood out from more than 100,000

other applicants and I would like to congratulate you on a job well done.

The Incident Management Portal was established following a review of the Environment Agency's mapping capabilities after the floods of winter 2015/16. The review identified the need to improve how data is acquired, shared, and used during an incident.

The Incident Management Portal is just one example of how the Environment Agency is working to improve incident response. Since the flooding of 15/16, the Environment Agency has invested £12.5 million in new flood equipment including an additional 40km of temporary barriers, 500,000 sandbags and 250 pumps, including 12 ultra-high volume pumps. There are around 6,500 trained staff across the country, ready to respond to flooding, including 500 flood support officers and the Environment Agency have awarded a new Incident Management Logistics Contract to store and deploy the temporary flood defences.

More than 1.4 million people are signed up to the Environment Agency's free flood warning service, which sends a message directly by voice message, text or email when a flood warning is issued. Over the last year the Environment Agency has partnered with mobile phone networks to automatically add thousands of mobile customers to the service and this work will continue throughout 2018.

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News story: Dream comes true for young 'nuclear expert'

School pupil Samuel Boardman had wowed decommissioning leaders with a letter detailing how he would empty the highly-hazardous ponds.

The 11-year-old, from North Wales, came up with a proposal, using similar techniques to those already being used.

So impressed was the head of the legacy ponds, Dorothy Gradden, she offered Samuel and his family the chance of a lifetime to come and see the Sellafield site for himself.

The visit saw Mrs Gradden and Steve Cottam, head of strategy and technical for the legacy ponds, give a personalised presentation to the Boardman family.

They were also shown the Thorp viewing gallery, National Nuclear Laboratory and the underwater test facility.

Samual Boardman standing outside the Windscale Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor.

Dorothy Gradden, who was awarded an OBE last year for her services to the nuclear industry, added:

As a passionate supporter of education and training, I was hugely impressed by Samuel's detailed letter.

I value the importance of nurturing nuclear interest in youngsters, and it was a pleasure to meet Samuel so I could talk to him about his proposals and show him exactly how we are dealing with the nuclear clean-up.

It's important that the extremely challenging and complex work we already do is carried on by the next generation, so I wanted to extend the offer of a visit to Samuel, who continued to impress me with his knowledge when he came to Sellafield.

Samuel described himself as a 'nuclear physics expert' in his letter to Sellafield, and his dad Chris said:

It was a wonderful experience for Samuel and the whole family. We were amazed by complexity of the incredible work being done.

Samuel is really keen on the nuclear sector and learned an awful

lot from his visit. We all did !

The effort that Sellafield put into making a little boy's dream come true was greatly appreciated. We didn't expect anything when Samuel wrote to Sellafield, so this was an incredible experience.

Adrian Bull, MBE, director of external relations for the National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL), said:

We are always keen to encourage bright, young people to make a contribution to society by suggesting ways things could be improved – whether through the development of new technology or through the creative application of existing techniques.

Samuel has shown tremendous talent and enthusiasm through sharing his suggestions with the industry and I was delighted the he was able to visit NNL's facilities on the Sellafield site to see for himself some of the work we are doing.

Press release: Hoteliers and haulier fined after waste illegally dumped to extend hotel car park

Three North East men have been ordered to pay over £10,000 for illegally landfilling waste after a successful prosecution by the Environment Agency

David Bradley (57) and Alan Bradley (64), the brothers and joint owners of Hardwicke Hall Manor Hotel, near Blackhall in East Durham were fined £3,855 & £971 respectively. The haulier, Alan Waggott (53) of Howden-le-Wear, near Crook was fined £6,007 after appearing at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates Court today (15 August) where they pleaded guilty to various environmental offences.

Chris Bunting, prosecuting told the court that in September 2016 Environment Agency officers attended the hotel and found part of the car park, which is close to a watercourse, covered in various waste materials. Enquiries revealed that the edge of the car park had suffered from landslip, so the Bradleys had decided to repair the damaged area.

It is illegal to dispose of waste by landfilling without an environmental permit and Hardwicke Hall Manor Hotel had no such authorisations. Environmental permits safeguard people and the environment by placing controls on any activity that could pollute air, water or land.

During their inspection, Environment Agency officers witnessed a fully laden waste vehicle arrive on site belonging to Alan Waggott Haulage. The waste was seen to be of the same type which could be seen on the ground.

Photographs showed a wide range of waste materials which should never have been deposited in such a mixed state, at such a location where no permit was in place. Traces of bonded asbestos, a hazardous waste, were identified by officers although it was made clear that Waggott was responsible for only a fraction of the total waste material which had been used.

The court heard that Waggott was contracted to remove waste from construction sites in North Ormesby and Stockton-on-Tees. Whilst paperwork issued by Waggott claimed that this waste was to be deposited at a permitted landfill site, 36 wagon loads were in fact tipped for free at the hotel.

Having ordered tipping operations to stop and given instructions for the illegally tipped waste to be removed and disposed of at a permitted facility, a subsequent inspection by the Environment Agency found that additional waste had been deposited in the car park area.

In mitigation, John Elwood for the Bradleys showed photographs of fly tipped waste which formed part of the problem, and said that they never realised at the outset that a permit may have been needed. Ben Pegman for Waggott, confirmed that his client had acted on trust, but recognised he needed to improve his working methods to ensure he was acting lawfully.

In passing sentence, the Court said there was no doubt the incident was clearly for monetary gain.

Rachael Caldwell for the Environment Agency said:

We will not tolerate abuses of the environmental permitting system. Those who ignore environmental laws can cause serious pollution to the environment, put communities at risk and undermine legitimate business and the investment and growth that go with it.

We hope that the sentencing handed down today acts as a deterrent to those who may think they can get away with it.

If you see or are aware of waste crime, you can report it by calling the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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