

[Press release: Somerset farmer ordered to pay nearly £4,000 for stream pollution](#)

Watercourse affected by liquid silage and slurry

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A Somerset farmer has been ordered to pay £3,996 in fines and costs for polluting a stream with contaminated water.

On December 4, 2017 Environment Agency officers paid a routine visit to Meare Green Farm, Stoke St Gregory to check the farm's pollution prevention measures. Before entering the site they noticed a nearby watercourse was heavily discoloured. Sewage fungus was clearly visible – a sign of organic pollution. A yellow pipe was discharging dirty water from the farm into the stream.

The pollution occurred near the Sedgemoor Old Rhyne that lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area for Birds. The watercourse also joins the West Sedgemoor Main Drain, an important fishery.

The farmer, James Pine, explained the yellow pipe took roof water from the farm buildings and ran under a track between a slurry store and silage clamp. Officers saw a dark liquid leaching into the ground from the silage clamp. Dirty water then discharged into the stream via the rainwater pipe.

The defendant agreed to block off the pipe to prevent any further pollution. He explained the silage clamp had been extended over an area previously occupied by an old slurry lagoon. However, he had failed to install an impermeable base as required by the regulations and simply filled in the old lagoon and put down some hardstanding. This meant liquid silage waste could leak into the ground. He had also failed to remove a connecting pipe from the old slurry lagoon and this resulted in slurry overflowing into the ground when the new lagoon was full.

Magistrates heard the pollution had a 'significant impact' on several kilometres of watercourse.

Ian Withers at the Environment Agency said:

Farmers must ensure they have the correct pollution prevention measures in place and that their slurry stores and silage clamps are compliant with the regulations. The defendant had received two previous warnings before this latest pollution incident as well as guidance and advice from the Environment Agency. It was all the more regrettable the pollution occurred in a sensitive and highly designated part of the Somerset Levels.

Appearing before Taunton magistrates, James Pine was fined a total of £996 and ordered to pay £3,000 costs after pleading guilty to one offence under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 and two offences relating to the Silage Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil Storage Regulations. The case was heard on December 19.

[News story: Healthcare Environmental Services: information for employees](#)

Employees of Healthcare Environmental Services Limited (HES, company number SC173861) were made redundant on 27 December 2018.

We appreciate this is a very distressing time for former employees.

If you have worked for HES for at least 2 continuous years under a contract of employment you can apply to the Insolvency Service for your redundancy pay.

We are in contact with the company about the information we need so that we can fast-track the assessment of redundancy claims.

[Factsheet: Healthcare Environmental Services Limited Factsheet – what to do when you've been made redundant](#) (PDF, 237KB, 2 pages)

[Press release: Helping hand to set up new businesses](#)

More than 200,000 new businesses have used a new one-stop cross-government

service allowing new start-ups to register their company and also register for tax at the same time.

The Streamlined Company Registration Service, which has been set up in a collaboration between HMRC and Companies House, will ease the burdens on new businesses, enabling them to concentrate on what they do best – producing goods, providing services and contributing to the UK's reputation as one of the best places in the world to start a business.

When registering with Companies House, companies can also register for tax and HMRC's digital services, making it easier for new start-ups to fulfil all their legal obligations in one go.

The change, which came into effect last year, removes the need for businesses to send duplicate information to both Companies House and HMRC.

The new service is part of the government's modern Industrial Strategy's commitment to reduce administrative burdens on small businesses, enhancing the UK's reputation as one of the best global environments for small businesses to thrive in.

Mel Stride MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said:

It's never been easier to set up a business in the UK. Reducing the administrative burden on small businesses is all part of this government's commitment to support small business growth.

HMRC and Companies House are working hard to make business registration and tax easier. Previously, the same information would need to be entered into a number of different platforms to register a company and register for tax, we have simplified that process.

The government is committed to ensuring we can deliver a modern, digital tax system for all businesses and their agents, supporting them to get their tax right and reducing the amount of tax lost through avoidable error.

Small Business Minister Kelly Tolhurst said:

British small businesses, and the entrepreneurial spirit behind them, are the backbone of the UK economy employing over 16 million people up and down the country.

Through our modern Industrial Strategy we are making it easier for small businesses to grow and flourish by investing in modern industries, infrastructure and skills, and making it easier to access finance. Anyone thinking of starting a new business in 2019 should check out the huge wealth of Government advice and support available, and go for it.

There's only one more thing you need in order to start a business in the New Year: passion. You have a new idea that you, and those around you, truly believe in, that excites you and that you are motivated to bring to life. Get your start-up in gear. After all, New Year, new you, and a new business too!

Further Information

The joint service known as the Streamlined Company Registration Service supports the government objective to reduce administrative burdens on small businesses to support growth and was announced as part of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015

Companies House and HMRC worked together on the joint service to both set up a limited company and register for Corporation Tax, and register an employer for Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax

A formation agent can still be used to register businesses, and formation agents can continue to act for their clients

For more information, visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

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A new government service allowing start-ups to jointly register their company and register for tax has been used 200,000 times.