

# Environment Agency crushes tipper truck in waste crime probe

Investigators believe the Ford tipper truck belonged to a group operating at various sites in the capital. Crime officers removed the vehicle from an address at Chesham in Buckinghamshire during a wider probe into organised waste crime.

The 18-year white van had been seen reportedly dumping waste on open land, in empty warehouses and other sites in Croydon, Merton, Mitcham and Southwark in the past year. Material left at the sites included construction waste, tyres and rubbish from house clearances.

Officers continue to investigate the vehicle's owners, who failed to come forward to claim it before it was destroyed.

Matt Higginson, an Environment Manager for the Environment Agency in the South East, said:

Where individuals threaten to undermine legitimate businesses and illegally dump waste, we have no hesitation in using all powers open to us.

Seizing vehicles involved in waste crime, based upon vital intelligence from the public, is an important weapon in our armoury to disrupt waste criminals and can make a real difference to local communities blighted by illegal dumping of waste.

To avoid unwittingly supporting waste criminals, and facing the possibility of an unlimited fine, we ask the public and businesses to always ask for proof of a waste carrier's registration and waste transfer note – and take photos of them – before having any waste cleared.

Crushing suspected offenders' vehicles is one of the tactics of Operation Angola, which investigates large-scale illegal dumping of commercial waste.

Whether a resident or a business, everyone should take responsibility for their own waste. Don't give rubbish to someone who can't prove they are a legitimate waste carrier – they may just dump it to avoid paying waste-disposal costs.

Anyone using a company or individual to take away their waste should always obtain a waste transfer note as proof. If in any doubt, call the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111, or use the online form at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org).

The white 2004 Ford tipper truck was seized using powers under section 34B of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The decision to crush the vehicle was taken as there was no value in selling the vehicle.