

Environment Agency shuts down illegal waste site in Corfe Mullen

Without a permit, Mark Smith, 54, was bringing waste back to land called Heatherlands in Corfe Mullen where he was sorting through it for anything of value.

However, Environment Agency officers found the illegal waste site in April 2019 along with signs that rubbish was being buried and burned. Tradespeople were also spotted visiting the site to dump rubbish but quickly turned around when they saw the officers present.

Smith was warned that his operation was illegal and two months later a fire broke out, requiring the aid of the fire service.

During interview under caution, Smith claimed he had inherited 90% of the waste and didn't know what he had been doing was illegal. He admitted he had broken up a number of refrigerators, which would have released harmful gases. But he denied burning rubbish, claiming he only burned green waste and that he suspected children of starting the fire in June 2019.

The site was being used by cost-avoiding tradespeople to dispose of rubbish instead of using permitted sites

Bruce Maguire of the Environment Agency said:

It was disappointing to see tradespeople dumping waste here instead of paying to take it to a permitted site like a recycling centre.

Anyone employing a tradesperson for building, gardening or house clearance work has a duty of care to ensure that the person employed is an authorised waste carrier and will be taking any waste produced to a regulated facility.

This allows legitimate business to compete on equal terms as well as preventing significant harm to the environment.

Smith pleaded guilty to two charges of running a waste site without a permit and was fined £2,800 by Poole Magistrates Court on 3 November 2021 and ordered to pay costs of £700.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Smith pleaded guilty to one count of breaching regulations 12(1)(a) and 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 by operating a regulated facility, on land known as Heatherlands at

Boundary Lane, Corfe Mullen, Dorset, in respect of which no environmental permit was in force, on and before 3 April 2019.

Smith pleaded guilty to one count of breaching regulations 12(1)(a) and 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 by operating a regulated facility, on land known as Heatherlands at Boundary Lane, Corfe Mullen, Dorset, in respect of which no environmental permit was in force, between 3 April and 5 June 2019.