

Press release: East coast surge prompts people to sign up for flood warnings

More than 2,000 people in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire signed up for flood warnings in just two days when flooding threatened the east coast in January.

The number of local registrations jumped by 7 per cent, Environment Agency figures have shown.

Nearly all the new sign-ups occurred on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th January 2017 when forecasters predicted that high tides combined with weather conditions could cause widespread coastal flooding.

Fortunately the event passed without flooding any homes in either county, but the Environment Agency is reminding everyone to sign up, as figures show that only 18 per cent of the total number of properties at risk in the area are fully registered.

Anyone can check whether they are at risk and register for warnings by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188. You can also make sure your contact details are up-to-date and choose how you'd prefer to be contacted – by mobile, text, landline or email – if flooding was expected.

Ben Thornely, Area Incident Manager, said:

We're glad to see people listened to our advice during the surge. It means another 2,000 families will have early warning should flooding be expected – early warning that could give them extra time to protect themselves and their homes.

That's why we're encouraging everyone to sign up now – before the next surge or storm.

The service is free, and it's the most simple, specific and timely way to find out when you're at risk. You can tell us how best to reach you with vital information that's updated every 15 minutes.

All it takes is a simple phone call or you can visit www.gov.uk/flood to find out more.

Notes for editors:

- In January, the amount of fully-registered properties increased by 7 per cent, from 28,500 to 30,500.

- However, only 18% (30,500) of the 169,500 of properties at flood risk in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire are registered with Floodline.
 - People who proactively contact Floodline to provide their contact details and preferred method of contact are considered to be fully-registered.
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[Press release: No profit for waste couple](#)

The operator and the landowner of an illegal waste site in an Essex village have been ordered to pay a total of £66,493

Chelmsford Magistrates' Court heard that 14,700 tonnes of inert waste was stored on land behind a residential address known as Gean Tree in Great Horkesley north of Colchester 'grossly' breaching a waste exemption and planning rules.

George Nicholas James Dench pleaded guilty to running the illegal site and failing to comply with an enforcement notice to remove the waste. He was ordered to pay a total of £32,895 in fines and costs by Chelmsford Magistrates' Court on Monday (6 Mar).

Annette Ismay Williams, who owned the land pleaded guilty to allowing the illegal waste site to run and to failing to clear the land under an enforcement notice and has to pay a total of £33,598 fines and costs.

Mrs Miriam Tordoff, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court the waste had been deposited there over 2.5 years.

Williams lives at the address with her partner and their son George Dench who sought out companies to dump the waste there. He was paid £64,704.

Mrs Tordoff said only certain relatively low risk activities can be covered by an exemption which sets out conditions that must be met at all times. These include not risking human health nor the environment, not causing a nuisance with noise or odours and not adversely affecting the countryside or places of special interest.

The exemption registered by Williams allowed the use of certain types of inert waste in construction and the limit for waste soils and stones was 1,000 tonnes in any 3 years. That target was reached in the first month.

A further exemption allowed the treatment of up to 5,000 tonnes of waste in any 3 years, providing it was also used on the same site and only stored for

a year.

Dench told investigating officers he had brought the soils to the site to repair the bank of a lake there. Williams said she just did the admin work. Both said they did not know how many tonnes the exemption allowed for.

Dench said he had not taken in the soils for financial gain as he was now bankrupt and he had not taken in any more since.

Mrs Tordoff told magistrates that Environment Agency officers had advised and written to the 2 saying the site needed to be cleared and operated properly.

Between September 2012 and March 2015 the Agency received 34 complaints about activities at the site.

After the hearing Environment Agency Enforcement Team Leader Lesley Robertson said:

We advised the defendants several times against accepting any more soils at the site but they continued to take it.

The site is in a village close to other homes and operations there affected people living nearby.

Councillor Simon Walsh, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste, said:

This case is an example to show landowners that risk taking is not acceptable, whether it is a risk that concerns human health or the environment.

Owning a piece of land means accepting a responsibility to the surrounding area and all that resides there, be it business, homes or wildlife.

Notes for Editors:

Breakdown of costs and fines:

Dench: EA offence – fined £14,353 plus £8,103 (a share of the full costs)
ECC offence – fined £9,568 plus £750 costs

Williams: EA offence – fined £14,775 plus £8,103 (a share of the full costs)
ECC offence – fined £9,850 plus £750 costs

Press release: Wilton flood defence scheme to be shown at public drop-in event

The Environment Agency is holding a public consultation in Wilton, near Salisbury, to explain how it plans to reduce flood risk to local homes and businesses.

The Environment Agency is keen for local people to share their views on its proposals and any experiences they have of flooding.

The consultation will take place on 10 March 2017 from 3pm to 7pm, at:

The Cricket Pavilion

Recreational Ground

Wilton

Mark Goldingay of the Environment Agency said:

This event is an ideal opportunity for people to learn about the Environment Agency's latest plans for Wilton. Environment Agency officers will be on hand to explain the proposals and the steps people can take to prepare themselves against flooding. We'd like to hear the views of local residents and look forward to sharing ideas on how best to reduce flood risk in Wilton.

Wilton's existing flood defences protect some areas in the centre of the town. There are 30 properties currently at risk of flooding from the nearby River Wylde. In large flood events, flood water can bypass the defences and flow across the recreational ground towards the Castle Lane area. Properties in Crow Lane are also at risk.

The proposed solution is to build a raised flood embankment around the edge of the recreational ground, joining the existing flood defences beside Wiley Terrace. The height of the flood bank will be approximately 0.5m above existing levels with shallow side slopes. An access ramp would be provided over the embankment. A flood wall is also being proposed to protect properties in Crow Lane.

The proposed scheme would help protect the 30 properties in the centre of Wilton currently at high risk of flooding.

The Environment Agency aims to secure funding and obtain planning permission

for a suitable scheme by the autumn of 2017. It will then draw up a detailed design and carry out further public consultation before starting construction in early 2018. If all goes well, the new scheme should be completed by the summer of 2018.

[Press release: 5 illegal anglers ordered to pay over £4,000 in Nottinghamshire](#)

5 Nottinghamshire anglers have been found guilty of fishing without a licence, resulting in penalties totalling £4,265 and criminal records.

Jake Munns and Jai Makanji of Nottingham, Keegan Lambert and Kieran Buxton of Mansfield, and Phillip Galley of Sutton-in-Ashfield were all found guilty of fishing illegally. They were caught at the Woodend Lakes in Huthwaite during a routine patrol carried out by Environment Agency bailiffs.

The Environment Agency carries out these routine patrols to ensure that the future of angling is protected for the vast majority of anglers who fish legally. With an annual rod licence valid from 1 April only costing £30, the offending anglers have been left several hundred pounds out of pocket by their actions.

The 5 offenders were tried on 2 March 2017 at Mansfield Magistrates' Court. Fines totalled £3,300, but with £635 in costs as well as £330 in victim surcharges the total penalties amounted to £4,265.

Environment Agency enforcement officer Peter Haslock said:

This is an excellent result for the Environment Agency as well as for the hundreds of thousands of anglers who follow the rules.

These offenders could have saved themselves a substantial sum of money as well as a criminal record if they had bought the required licences. An annual rod licence that is valid from 1 April is available from just £30, so there really is no excuse.

The Environment Agency recently launched "Get a Fishing Licence" on GOV.UK to simplify the process of buying a fishing licence. This new webpage is part of a series of changes that have been made to improve the service. The improvements include:

- Free licences for junior anglers, up to the age of 17
- The fishing licence will now last for 12 months from the day it is bought rather than expire at the end of March every year. A standard year-long licence is available from £30.
- Anglers now need only one licence to use three rods, rather than the two licences that were needed previously.

All money raised through rod licence sales is used to support fish, fisheries and the angling sport. The Environment Agency's activities to protect and improve fish and fisheries include protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease, eradicating invasive species and improving fish habitats.

The Environment Agency urges people who suspect they may have been witness to, or have information of, illegal fishing to report illegal activity by calling its incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

ENDS

Notes for editors

- All five individuals in this case were prosecuted under Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, for fishing for freshwater fish or eels by means of an unlicensed rod and line in a place where fishing is regulated.
- Jake Munns, of Worrall Avenue in Nottingham, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127 as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.
- Jai Makanji, of Leivers Avenue in Nottingham, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127 as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.
- Kieran Buxon, of Milton Street in Mansfield, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127 as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.
- Keegan Lambert, of Stuart Avenue in Mansfield, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127 as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.
- Phillip Galley, of John Street in Sutton-in-Ashfield, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127 as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.

[Press release: Waste firm AWM fined £125,000 for causing odour pollution](#)

Waste firm Associated Waste Management Ltd has been fined £125,000 for causing odour pollution at its sites in Leeds and Bradford.

The company was sentenced at Leeds Crown Court on 6 March 2017 after previously admitting two environmental offences relating to its waste transfer facilities in Gelderd Road, Leeds and Canal Road, Bradford.

The Environment Agency prosecuted the company following repeated odour problems that had a detrimental effect on local residents.

Austin Stoton, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that AWM's Leeds site caused repeated odour problems between June 2012 and October 2013. During this time, Environment Agency officers carried out around 75 odour assessments, and most of them recorded smells that were likely to cause offence to human senses.

In October 2013 the Environment Agency suspended the company's permit for the Leeds facility, preventing it from bringing any more waste onto the site until it had made improvements to its odour management plan. This new plan was approved that month and the permit was reinstated.

In the same year, between March and July, AWM's Bradford site was also the cause of odour issues. These prompted local residents to complain on 49 separate dates.

One resident had complained that the odour was so bad that it had made him feel sick. He also said that if there was a smell present, he couldn't open windows and his family couldn't spend time in the garden. Another resident said at the time that he and his family had found it virtually impossible to have any enjoyment from their garden.

An inspection visit in March 2013 revealed that the company was not closing the shutters on a tipping shed used by bin wagons, which allowed the smell of rotting waste to leave the site.

In July, the Environment Agency served an enforcement notice on the firm that required it to improve its odour management plan for the site. The company's first revision of this document, submitted in August, was rejected as inadequate and it wasn't until October that a new plan was approved.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said after the hearing:

Waste sites like those managed by AWM can have a detrimental impact on local communities if they are not managed properly. That's why

it is vital that operators adhere to environmental regulations and the conditions on their environmental permits.

In this case, AWM failed to maintain high standards of odour management at its facilities in Leeds and Bradford, and local residents suffered as a result. We hope today's outcome demonstrates that odour pollution is not acceptable and that the Environment Agency will take action against businesses that fail to adhere to permitting rules.

In mitigation, the company told the court that it had relied upon an external company that had approached it regarding odour suppression equipment, which had not worked.

AWM was fined £75,000 for the Leeds offence, and £50,000 for the Bradford offence. It was also ordered to pay £75,000 in legal costs.