

Press release: Waste company fined for permit breaches

A north east waste management company has been fined thousands of pounds for breaching environmental laws leading to a fly infestation which blighted the local community.

Niramax Group Limited appeared at Teesside Crown Court on Monday 15 January where it pleaded guilty to breaching its environmental permit, leading to a fly infestation at its site at Monument Park, Washington.

It also pleaded guilty to failing to comply with an enforcement notice by not removing waste as required at its site at Tofts Farm in Hartlepool after large amounts of waste tyres created a potential fire hazard.

The prosecution follows an investigation by the Environment Agency. They were fined a total of £16,000 and ordered to pay costs of £10,000.



Flies on the waste at the Washington site

Fly infestation

Lee Fish, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that at the Washington site a pre-arranged audit took place on 2 April 2015 where Environment Agency officers discovered a fly infestation.

Two of the bay doors to the waste shed were not operating satisfactorily which caused problems with pest control measures. Waste was not sufficiently divided between the four bays.

A second visit on 9 April saw the flies still present both outside and inside the waste storage shed. Efforts had been made to empty the waste from the bays. A visit on 12 April saw the site and issues had been cleared.

During the investigation Environment Agency officers spoke with neighbouring businesses and residents which confirmed the impact of the infestation.

Excessive tyre storage

At Hartlepool, where Niramax treats waste tyres, the Environment Agency originally attended the site in June 2015 after receiving complaints about dust.

On 28 July an Action Plan was signed by the operator to resolve a number of permit breaches, which included a dust management plan. And the large amounts of waste tyres on site were to be stored within bays in accordance with permit conditions and fire prevention guidance.

The operator agreed to return the site to compliance by 30 November 2015.

In February 2016, Environment Agency officers attended the site to assess its compliance with its permit. It was noted the site was still operating as it was in June the previous year and the bays were still buried under piles of waste tyres.

An enforcement notice was served on the company to clear the site of tyres by 14 June, 2016. On 15 June the Environment Agency visited the site, and while the amount of shredded tyre waste had reduced permit breaches were still evident – waste was not contained in the bays and no fire breaks were noted.

The bays were capable of storing 1490.4m³ and the contents were measured to be 2461.71m³.



Piles of waste tyres at the Hartlepool site.

‘Negative impact on local areas’

The company told the court that they had been caught out by an unseasonably sharp rise in temperature. This meant their fly suppression methods proved inadequate.

At the tyre site they suffered when a fluctuation in the market made it more difficult to remove the shredded tyres from the site. They said they had done everything in their power to comply with the enforcement notice.

Rachael Caldwell, Enforcement Team Leader at the Environment Agency in the north east, said:

Environmental laws exist for a reason – to protect the environment and communities – so it is vital that waste operators meet the conditions of their permits.

In both of these cases there was a negative impact on the local areas, which is extremely unpleasant and unacceptable and not something communities should have to endure.

We always treat operators fairly and ensure they understand the potential impact their activities can have, and work together with them to help bring sites into compliance.

At Hartlepool we gave Niramax ample opportunity to bring their site

back into compliance, and at Washington we gave them five days to act on what was a serious fly infestation.

But they repeatedly showed little regard for the detrimental impact on their neighbours and the environment. And during our investigation they even described our actions – to protect the environment and the community – as ‘nit picking’.

I hope this case reassures our communities that we will do everything possible to ensure operators comply with their permit, and take enforcement action when they don’t.

Press release: Appointments to the Board of the Environment Agency

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, has appointed Judith Batchelar OBE, Robert Gould, John Lelliott OBE and Caroline Mason CBE for first terms to the Board of the Environment Agency. He has also reappointed Lynne Frostick and Gill Weeks OBE for second terms to the Board.

Robert Gould’s and John Lelliott’s appointments will run from 1 February 2018 until 31 January 2021. Judith Batchelar and Caroline Mason’s appointments will run from 1 April 2018 until 31 March 2021. Gill Weeks and Lynne Frostick’s reappointments run from 8 September 2017 until 7 September 2020 and 6 March 2018 until 15 March 2021 respectively.

Secretary of State Michael Gove said:

I am delighted to welcome John, Robert, Caroline and Judith. They will bring a strong and broad mix of skills and experience to the Environment Agency.

I am also thrilled that Gill and Lynne will be continuing to help us with meeting the challenges ahead.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency said:

I am looking forward to working with John, Robert, Caroline and Judith on some of the greatest environmental challenges of our time. It was a highly competitive selection process and they will each bring a broad range of experience and expertise to the Environment Agency.

All appointments to the Environment Agency Board are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointments comply with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Board members provide non-executive leadership challenge and support to the Environment Agency's executive through regular Board meetings, committees and groups. They also undertake individual lead roles on relevant issues and with local operational teams.

The Environment Agency is a Non-Departmental Public Body set up under the Environment Act 1995 to take an integrated approach to environmental protection and enhancement in England. It has major responsibilities in flood management, water resources and quality, climate change, land quality, chemicals, pollution prevention and control, waste, conservation and biodiversity, fisheries conservation, air quality and navigation.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. All the appointees have confirmed that they have not undertaken any significant political activity during the past 5 years apart from Robert Gould, who is a member of West Dorset District Council and a former leader of both Dorset County Council and West Dorset District Council.

Environment Agency Board members receive remuneration of £350 per day. Judith Batchelar, Robert Gould, John Lelliott and Caroline Mason will each receive £16,800 per year based on a time commitment of four days per month. Gill Weeks will receive £21,000 per year based on a time commitment of five days per month. Lynne Frostick will receive £25,200 per year based on a time commitment of six days per month.

Biographical details

Judith Batchelar OBE

Judith Batchelar is Director of Sainsbury's Brand, Corporate Responsibility and Public Affairs at J Sainsbury plc, where she has worked since 2004. She previously worked for Safeway, Marks and Spencer, Mars Confectionary and Bass plc. Judith is also a Co-Chair of the Agri-food Technology Leadership Council, an Industrial Governor of the British Nutrition Foundation and an Ambassador for the Woodland Trust. Judith was appointed OBE in 2015 for services to farming and the food industry.

Lynne Frostick

Professor Lynne Frostick is both a chartered geologist and a geographer with an academic background in environmental science. She was Professor of Physical Geography at Hull University from 1996 to 2014 and is now Professor Emerita. She has published over 100 papers and books on environmental physics, modelling and hydraulic engineering. She was the first female Honorary Secretary (1988 – 1991) and second female President (2008-10) of the Geological Society of London. She was a member of the North East Regional

Environmental Protection Advisory Committee (1997 – 2006) and a leading member of the 2007 independent Hull Flood Review Group. In 2009, she was named both Yorkshire's environmental champion and Woman of Outstanding Achievement for leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). She chaired the Government's Expert Group for Women in STEM for 8 years and sat on the Athena Swan committee based in the Royal Society. She has been awarded an honorary DSc by both Royal Holloway University, London and the University of Hull. Lynne joined the Board of the Environment Agency in 2015.

Robert Gould

Robert Gould was Leader of Dorset County Council from 2014 to 2017 and a member from 2009 to 2017. He has been a member of West Dorset District Council since 2004 and was Leader from 2004 to 2014. Robert was a member of the Local Government Association's Improvement and Innovation Board from 2015 to 2017. He previously managed the family farm after working in industry and property management.

John Lelliott OBE

John Lelliott retired as Chief Financial Officer of the Crown Estate in 2016. He is currently a Board Member of the Covent Garden Market Authority where he chairs the Audit and Risk Committee. He is also Chair of the Natural Capital Coalition and Non-Executive Director of the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospital Foundation Trust where he chairs the finance committee and is a member of the audit committee. John was appointed OBE in 2017 for services to the Crown Estate and the voluntary sector.

Caroline Mason CBE

Caroline Mason is Chief Executive of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, one of the UK's largest independent grant-making foundations. She was previously Chief Operating Officer of Big Society Capital and Chief Operating Officer of Charity Bank. Before that she was co-founder and COO of Investing for Good, an enterprise offering social investment advice. Caroline is also a Board Member of the European Venture Philanthropy Association. Caroline was appointed CBE in 2013 for services to social investment.

Gill Weeks OBE

Gill Weeks is an industry expert within the field of waste and resource management. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management and a Chartered Environmentalist. Gill joined the Board of the Environment Agency in 2014. She currently chairs the Environment and Business Committee and is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee. Gill is also the Board lead on waste and industrial processes. From 2006 to 2013 Gill was Regulatory Affairs Director at Veolia Environmental Services and was acting Policy Director at Environmental Services Association 2010-11. Gill was appointed OBE in 2011 for services to the waste management sector.

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Notice: P018 OHL, IGas Energy Enterprise Limited: environmental permit application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how you can view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)

[Press release: Gedling MP looks at Nottingham's flood defences](#)

Gedling Member of Parliament Vernon Coaker has visited the Holme Sluices at Colwick, Nottinghamshire to find out more about the Trent flood defences and the work of the Environment Agency.

The MP met with EA officials, led by Louise Cresswell, Area Director for the East Midlands, to see how the sluices work in protecting properties from flooding and how they maintain levels in the River Trent during times of low flow.

He also discussed the general work of the EA including the ambitious plan to improve fish passage for all species in the lower River Trent.

The EA are seeking support for the Trent Gateway Project which aims to open up 8 barriers on the river which presently block fish migration.

At present, the EA has funded the design of a possible fish pass at Colwick sluices and are working in conjunction with Nottingham City Council on a proposed Heritage Lottery Fund bid to build a visitor hub at Colwick Country Park.

Louise Cresswell, Area Director, East Midlands, said:

The visit of one of our local MPs was a great opportunity to talk about how the EA works to improve the environment for everybody.

We took time to show how the sluices work and to explain the flood defences for the area generally which protect a huge number of people and properties, including many in his own constituency.

The Trent Gateway Project is an ambitious plan to improve fish passage on the River Trent. Our aspiration is to open up all of those 8 weirs for passes which will increase the fish populations

both coarse and salmon.

Vernon Coaker, Member of Parliament for Gedling, said:

It was a fascinating visit and gave me a better understanding of the River Trent and how it works.

The Environment Agency are doing some great work and it is important that we continue to work together for the good of the local area.

I feel very passionately about protecting our local environment and I was pleased to hear all about the Trent Gateway Project which is an ambitious project but one that will benefit everybody by helping to improve the environment.