

[Guidance: Storing waste sandbags at collection sites after a flood: RPS 168](#)

If you comply with the conditions of this regulatory position statement (RPS) you can store waste sandbags at designated temporary collection sites without an environmental permit.

[Press release: 'Right Waste, Right Place' spot-checks on Thames Valley waste firms](#)

Updated: Updated summary.

A number of businesses across Berkshire and Buckinghamshire are on notice to comply with the law on waste disposal, after a series of unannounced checks by the Environment Agency on Tuesday 3 October.

Officers visited more than 100 sites and firms across the Thames Valley, and will be following-up on 10 illegal waste sites found during the day. The owners may face prosecution. Other premises were given advice and guidance to help them meet their legal requirements.

Firms are required by law to manage waste without a threat to the environment, such as not releasing anything other than waste water into the drainage network. The surprise inspections covered the removal of hazardous items, like chemicals and car batteries. Thames Water assisted the Environment Agency on pollution checks. Companies were also checked for having the correct environmental permit for their business.

Environment Agency staff were also on hand at DIY store Wickes in Slough, to offer free waste-handling advice to hauliers and homeowners, in order to reduce fly-tipping.

Mark Tucker, Installations Team Leader for the Environment Agency in the Thames Valley, said:

The Environment Agency works with business to make sure waste ends up in the right place, and may take more formal action where we

believe a serious crime has been committed through illegal waste disposal.

Anyone who produces, carries, keeps, treats or disposes of waste has a duty of care to make sure it is managed correctly. The public can do their bit by only using a licenced waste carrier, or reporting any concerns on waste management to the Environment Agency on 0800 807060.

The 117 sites we inspected this week were under no illusion of their legal obligations on waste management. Mishandling waste, poorly-operated permitted sites and illegal waste activities can pose a threat to human health and the environment by contaminating land, polluting rivers and producing emissions from burning waste.

As well as breaking the law, illegal operations undermine the work done by legitimate firms.

Waste crime is a very serious issue for both local communities and the environment. The Environment Agency uses reports from industry and the public to build intelligence, and target those involved in organised environmental crime, and where their activities pose the greatest risk to the environment.

Handling of illegal waste can be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers, on 0800 551111. There are lots of signs that could suggest suspicious activity. These include:

- Out-of-hours activity at night, over weekends and during bank holidays
- Smoke caused by constant burning
- An increase in the number of lorries entering a site
- Waste going into a site but not coming out with increasing quantities of waste stockpiled on site
- Water pollution

The Environment Agency and local councils also investigate reports of fly-tipping.

All media enquiries: 0800 141 2743.

Or email us at southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk.

[Press release: 'Right Waste, Right Place' spot-checks on Thames Valley](#)

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Press release: Thames Barrier to close due to high tide

Communities are warned to be prepared for a coastal surge which is forecast today. As a precaution the Environment Agency will close the Thames Barrier at 10am and re-open it at 4pm (5 October 2017) to reduce the risk of possible flooding in London and along the Thames catchment.

During today's closure the Thames Barrier, along with the associated gates and embankments, will be operating as part of our network of defences, protecting over 550,000 properties. The Thames Barrier is one of the largest moveable flood barriers in the world, protecting 125 square kilometres of central London.

It stretches 520 metres across the River Thames at Charlton and each gate takes 10 to 15 minutes to close (1.5 hours for total closure), and the control room is manned 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Andrew Batchelor, Thames Barrier Manager said:

We are closing the Thames Barrier to protect London from the threat of flooding due to high water levels around the time of high tides from the sea.

Practical advice on preparing for flooding can be found on GOV.UK or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188. Communities can also follow us on Twitter at [@EnvAgencySE](https://twitter.com/EnvAgencySE) and #floodaware for the latest flood updates.

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