

Press release: Landowners warned after waste dumped illegally

Durham Police and the Environment Agency are warning landowners to be vigilant after a significant illegal waste site was discovered on private land in County Durham last week (10 February 2017).

More than 600 bales of general household waste were found dumped on the premises of a former foundry in Tow Law.

Officers from Durham Police and the Environment Agency attended the scene after they were alerted to the activities taking place at the site.

This is the latest in a recent spate of illegal waste dumping across the region. The Environment Agency currently has three ongoing investigations relating to eight sites where baled waste has been dumped over the last six months.

Environmental laws state that waste producers, brokers, road hauliers and landowners each have a responsibility to ensure waste is dealt with legally and correctly for the protection of the environment and communities. The Environment Agency will seek to take action against all parties responsible for this illegal activity.

Dave Edwardson, Enforcement Team Leader at the Environment Agency in the North East, said:

Landowners can be vulnerable. Waste dumped in vacant buildings or land may leave landowners with the responsibility and costs of disposing of the waste, which can be considerable.

We're determined to tackle waste crime such as this; waste that isn't managed properly can impact on communities, the environment and legitimate businesses and won't be tolerated.

I'd urge all landowners, farmers and property agents to be vigilant and report any concerns or anything suspicious to us straight away.

Waste producers and road hauliers must ensure they adhere to their Duty of Care when they are managing waste. They can contact the Environment Agency if they need any advice or information.

Anyone with information about those responsible for this or similar incidents is asked to contact the Environment Agency's 24-hour Incident Hotline on 0800 807060, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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Press release: Valentine's Day of action against illegal waste activity

Environment Agency enforcement officers, on the 14 February, paid unannounced visits to 14 sites across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, Hampshire and West Berkshire in a bid to stamp out waste crime and protect the environment from the threat of pollution.

Named Operation Arrow, officers targeted sites suspected of operating in the waste business without the required environmental permits, flouting the law and committing crime.

Waste that ends up at unregulated sites is often stockpiled in vast quantities and for long periods of time. The waste can pose a significant risks to the environment, blighting communities with smoke fumes and causing noise and odour complaints. Illegal waste operators also undermine the work of legitimate waste companies, creating an unfair playing field for business.

Helen Page, Enforcement Team Leader at the Environment Agency said:

We want to make sure the right waste goes to the right place – to protect the environment and local communities. Site visits on our days of action are just one of the ways we are tackling waste crime to help make sure this happens.

We are really pleased with what we achieved. Of the 14 sites visited, 5 were found to be operating illegally. The information we have gathered is helping us target our work at those involved in organised environmental crime and where their activities pose the greatest risk to the environment.

Everyone can do their bit to reduce waste crime by making sure that any waste for disposal is collected by a licensed waste carrier and taken to a properly permitted, legitimate waste site.

To check if someone is registered please visit environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers.

For all media enquiries please phone 0800 141 2743, or email us at southeastpressofficel@environment-agency.gov.uk

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Fitness in forestry

Three student nurses put the arboriculture students at the Barony Campus of SRUC through their paces when they educated them on healthy eating, diet and fitness.