

Press release: Environment Agency joins forces with eBay to stop illegal vehicle breakers

The partnership will also act to better inform the public who may unknowingly purchase parts from illegal traders. Business sellers who list used vehicle parts now receive a pop up message to highlight that an environmental permit is needed to break vehicles and directs them to Gov.uk where they can get further information.

Sellers on eBay are also being advised to display their permit number, or the name of the sites where they source the parts they are selling, which provides reassurance to purchasers that they are buying from a legal dealer.

The Environment Agency are directly contacting eBay traders who are not displaying their environmental credentials, providing guidance and warning them about undertaking non permitted breaking activities.

Those intentionally operating illegally and not responding to the Environment Agency will find their trading account suspended or removed from eBay.

It has been discovered that some car breakers and traders are not aware of the need to have a permit. They are also unaware of how to properly dismantle a vehicle, dispose of the hazardous waste, deal with fire risks and subsequent risk to the environment.

The new partnership has resulted in an increase in applications for permits to take their business into legal status. The Environment Agency has also benefited from being able to utilise resources and time in tackling illegal car breaking.

Rich Cloke from the Environment Agency said:

Businesses are not always aware they should have a permit and many are reacting positively to the messages we are getting to them. We have seen an increase in businesses subsequently applying for the relevant permit.

This is proving to be a quick and effective way of communicating our message directly with vehicle breakers and parts dealers.

With sellers who continue to trade, the Environment Agency will take further steps including reporting them to the Police and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and making a site visit.

The partnership will also aim to inform the general public who may unknowingly purchase used parts from illegal businesses.

A spokesperson for eBay commenting on working with the Environment Agency said:

eBay's contribution to supporting the Environment Agency compliance efforts on the sale of vehicle parts sourced from illegal End of life Vehicle (ELV) breakers has significantly increased the level of compliance from business sellers on eBay UK website.

This successful cooperation leads the industry and sets an example of effective collaboration between the private sector and the Environment Agency, rarely seen both offline and online.