

Press release: Essex wood waste site fined for illegal waste operation

JSJ Wood Recycling Ltd, operating in Nazeing, Essex, and two directors have been ordered to pay over £12,000 in fines for treating wood waste without the correct authorisations from the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency was also awarded £10,000 in costs.

The company, and former company directors Jenny Dodge of Epping and John Michael Parish of Wickford, Essex appeared before Barkingside Magistrates Court (on Friday 10 March 2017) and pleaded guilty to operating their wood recycling site unlawfully over a period of 8 months.

Under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010, certain low-risk waste operations can be undertaken when an operator registers an exemption with the Environment Agency. Exemptions are limited to particular types and amounts of waste and methods of treatment. If an operator registers an exemption but then operates outside of its terms, he or she commits an offence.

The court heard how JSJ Wood Recycling Ltd registered two exemptions for the storage and treatment of wood waste, which allowed the storage of up to 600 tonnes of waste wood at any one time. The company had a blatant disregard to the requirements of the exemption and exceeded the allowance by storing up to 1,750 tonnes of waste wood. The site also accepted waste which it was not authorised to treat and processed it in ways which it was not permitted to do.

JSJ Wood Recycling Ltd received payments for illegally receiving waste wood on its site at Birchwood Industrial Estate, Hoe Lane, Nazeing. Once on the site, the wood was processed by using heavy plant to chip it. Chipping wood makes it easier to store and transport, and in some instances makes it suitable for reuse. Once chipped, some of the wood was taken off site for incineration and for export. Some of the wood was baled in black plastic wrapping prior to removal.

Environment Agency officers attended the site in May 2014 to assess compliance with the registered exemptions, but raised concerns about the way the site was being operated, most notably the dust being generated from the chipping process and the treatment of waste wood of a type not allowed by the exemptions.

Lead Officer in the case, Patrick Schneiders, said:

I visited the site on numerous occasions during 2014 but the defendants continued to ignore our advice on how to comply with their exemptions and run a site within the rules. Further visits to the site throughout 2014 revealed an increase in illegal activity

with even more waste on site.

Waste crime can undermine legitimate businesses, so we work closely with businesses to help them comply with the law. In cases like this where individuals consistently operate illegally, we have no hesitation in prosecuting them as we want to make sure that waste crime doesn't pay.