

# Press release: Vehicle recyclers urged to put fire prevention plans in place

With above average temperatures and slightly lower than average rainfall likely over the next three months, the Environment Agency (EA) is warning of an increased risk of fire at waste sites, particularly end of life vehicle facilities, and urging operators to have Fire Prevention Plans (FPPs) in place.

The warning follows a number of severe waste fires recently including an incident which forced Coventry Airport to close temporarily and another fire in Witney resulted in the public being warned of the potential for asbestos debris being deposited.

Reports of fires at car breakers (end of life vehicle sites) has increased steadily in recent years. In 2017 the EA received reports of 24 fires at end of life vehicle sites and 21 reports in 2016.

The regulator is urging the operators to ensure they have FPP in place to minimise the risk to the environment, local communities and workers on site.

Malcolm Lythgo, Head of Waste Regulation at the Environment Agency said:

Fires on waste sites, particularly sites handling hazardous components, unfortunately happen all year round. However, dry, warm weather conditions bring an increased risk.

It's really important that those handling end of life vehicles have Fire Prevention Plans in place and engage with the Environment Agency for advice and support on keeping their sites safe. This is not just good for businesses, but also helps to safeguard the environment and surrounding communities.

The EA's Fire Prevention Plan guidance seeks to minimise the likelihood of a fire happening and advise on ways to minimise the spread of fire within the site and to neighbouring sites.

There are simple steps that can be taken to prevent the causes of fires. These include:

- Disconnecting and removing batteries as soon as reasonably practical after vehicles arrive on site, to reduce the risk of electrical short circuits.
- Using safe depollution equipment and storing fuel in containers designed to store it.
- Ensuring vehicles are fully depolluted before crushing and shredding.

- Enforcing a no smoking policy for both staff and customers,
- Following the Environment Agency guidance and putting a Fire Prevention Plan in place.

More information on FFPs is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)