

Press release: Waste criminal pays up after Proceeds of Crime confiscation order

A man who ran an illegal waste site for 15 months has been forced to sell his home to pay towards the clean-up of land off the A38 at Eggington near Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

The Environment Agency took confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 against Robert Murphy, 49, of Carver Road, Burton-on-Trent.

This follows a hearing in May 2015 at Stafford Crown Court when he was sentenced to 7 months imprisonment for operating a site he did not own or have an environmental permit for.

As part of his sentence, a Confiscation Order was made, requiring him to pay compensation of £20,793 to the landowner. The Environment Agency were also awarded prosecution costs of £10,000. Murphy failed to make any payments.

He has since served an additional 12 month default sentence for his failure to comply with the Confiscation Order.

It was necessary for the Environment Agency to enforce compliance with the Order to recover compensation for the landowner who is faced with the costs of site clearance.

This required attendance at further enforcement hearings at Birmingham Magistrates Court. The Confiscation Order and order for costs has now been settled in full.

Between 3 January 2013 and 28 June 2014, Murphy used the land which belonged to a vulnerable and elderly couple to deposit, store and burn large quantities of mixed waste including metal, wood, electrical items and construction and demolition waste.

An Environment Agency officer involved in the case said:

This has been a long and involved case but it demonstrates that the Environment Agency is determined to tackle waste crime.

We hope this case serves as a message to those involved that we won't stop the fight against this blight, and that it acts as a deterrent against those who undermine legitimate businesses within the industry.

This is a serious issue diverting as much as £1 billion per annum from legitimate business and treasury. Since April 2011 the Environment Agency has invested £65.2 million in tackling it.

We urge any landowners, farmers, members of the public who find these sites to call us immediately on our 24-hour free incident hotline number 0800 80 70 60 or make an anonymous report to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.