

Regulating the waste industry during the coronavirus pandemic

Press release

The Environment Agency continues to respond to reports of illegal waste sites, even during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.



The illegal waste site in the Bulkington area of North Warwickshire

On Wednesday 3 June the Environment Agency's West Midlands illegal waste site team joined forces with the Warwickshire Police Rural Crime team to attend an illegal waste site in the Bulkington area of North Warwickshire.

They found the land was being filled with general waste materials and topped off with soil. The land was not permitted to be receiving waste materials of any kind.

At the time of their attendance, officers witnessed two articulated lorries at the site, which were in the process of being unloaded. The officers instructed the drivers to refill the lorries with the waste they had deposited and move off the site. An excavator that was on hire was also repatriated to its owner.

During the visit, police officers also identified and seized a previously stolen piece of plant machinery. An investigation into the illegal waste activity is now under way.

A spokesperson for the illegal waste sites team, said:

There may be a global pandemic affecting the UK but that doesn't give waste criminals an excuse. We remain committed to reducing waste crime and reducing the opportunities for those operating illegally to do so.

Land and property owners need to be extra vigilant during this

pandemic to avoid being a victim of waste crime. Waste criminals are targeting land and property, they may offer cash to store waste promising to come back and remove it but never do, or, they may dump the waste without the owner's knowledge.

We urge owners to check empty land and property regularly and make sure they are secure as any waste stored on their property without the relevant permissions could leave the landowner liable to prosecution and costs to remove the waste.

Everyone has a part to play to help solve the waste crime problem and make sure waste is managed responsibly. If you pass your waste to someone else to take away for you, you must first check they are registered with the Environment Agency so it doesn't end up in the hands of operators who break the law.

Businesses and householders should carry out checks to ensure that they are using legitimate companies to deal with their waste. You can check if a waste carrier is genuine by visiting the Environment Agency's [public register](#).

Anyone who suspects a company is operating illegally can call the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60 or report it anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Notes to editors

- An illegal waste site is any site routinely operating without a permit or outside of its permit limits. They pose a risk of harm to the health of people and the environment.
- Waste site owners should make sure their site is legal and [check they have the right permit](#) for their activities.
- You must [register with the Environment Agency](#) to legally operate as a waste carrier, broker or dealer.
- [More information on the Environment Agency's regulatory approach](#).
- To support business to meet the challenge of operating during the pandemic, the Environment Agency has put in place a number of regulatory position statements, which help businesses minimise risks to the environment and human health where, for reasons beyond their control, compliance with certain regulatory requirements may not be possible due to coronavirus.

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