Notice: YO42 4LJ, Sellmor Farming Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document for:

- Operator name: Sellmor Farming Limited
- Installation name: North Farm
- Permit number: EPR/HP3330AY/A001

Press release: Fish kill costs Frome farmer Michael Aylesbury more than £22,000

A farmer was told to pay more than £22,000 for polluting a river in Frome, Somerset, killing nearly 2,000 fish.

Dairy farmer Michael Aylesbury, a director in Cross Keys Farm Ltd, pleaded guilty to causing an unpermitted water discharge which turned the river in Frome brown and smelly in May 2016, killing 1,700 fish, probably many more.

The pollution came from a slurry lagoon at Bollow Farm, Silver Lane, East Woodlands where it was overflowing into a ditch from an underground chamber that had not been fully sealed off. Making matters worse, a spillage from a slurry pumping operation days before also entered the same ditch, meant only to carry rainwater.

The reduced water quality and the river’s polluted appearance hit local groups, like anglers, kayakers and swimmers, who had to suspend activities. Residents were also upset by the sight of distressed and dying fish.

The Environment Agency was alerted to the incident on 12 May 2016 and attempted to save the fish population by spraying hydrogen peroxide to restore dissolved oxygen levels in the water. The pollution was traced back to Bollow Farm the next day.

To save the fish, hydrogen peroxide was sprayed to restore the dissolved oxygen levels

Tasked with protecting water, land and biodiversity, the Environment Agency classified the incident as category one – the worst kind – which affected the watercourse for more than 6km and was obvious to the naked eye.
The defendant told investigating officers “he had nothing to hide and held his hands up to the pollution incident” and that he was sorry it had happened.

Bath Magistrates’ Court found Aylesbury to be negligent for not informing the Environment Agency about the initial spillage and fined him £3,000, a victim surcharge of £170 and ordered him to pay costs of £19,306.69 on 5 June 2017.

Environment officer Andy Grant said:

> Our role as a regulator is to protect people and the environment and support sustainable growth. We work with business owners to create better places but when avoidable incidents like this happen, we take action.
>
> Informing us of the initial spillage and keeping an eye on nearby watercourses are two simple actions the farmer could have taken which would have sped up our investigation and stopped the cause of the pollution sooner.
>
> Last November we restocked 5,500 fish including chub, roach and bream at two locations in Frome and we continue working with our

partners including the Bristol Avon Rivers Trust, Frome Town Council, farmers and landowners to identify opportunities to enhance and protect the River Frome.

Detailed guide: Safe passage for eels

Existing water obstructions

You may need to construct an eel pass if you own or occupy land with, or are in charge of, a

- dam
- weir
- sluice
- other in-river obstruction

The Environment Agency will write to you if you must construct an eel pass to allow eels to migrate safely past the structure.

Contact the Environment Agency and ask for your local fisheries officer to confirm a completion date for the work at your site.

You may need to apply for a permit or permission to do the work. Check the guidance to see if you need a:

- flood risk activity environmental permit
- land drainage consent

Check with your local planning authority if you need planning permission.

You must pay for the construction, operating and maintenance costs.

If you do not do the work the Environment Agency can:

- issue you a warning letter
- serve you with a formal caution
- prosecute you if they think it’s in the public interest
- construct the eel pass and charge you for the work

Existing water abstraction structures

In most cases you must install an eel screen if you do both of the following:

- own or occupy land with, or are in charge of, a water abstraction structure
- abstract at least 20 cubic metres of water per day

Water abstraction structures include:

- pumping stations
- hydro-electric power stations
- irrigation pumping systems

Check when you do not need to install an eel screen.

A screen will keep eels out of the structure and allow them to migrate safely past it.

You must have a temporary exemption notice in place until you have completed the work. Contact the Environment Agency to get your exemption notice and the date by which to complete the work.

You may need to apply for a permit or permission to do the work. Check the guidance to see if you need a:

- flood risk activity environmental permit
- land drainage consent

Check with your local planning authority if you need planning permission.

You must pay for the installation, operating and maintenance costs.

If you do not do the work before your exemption notice expires the Environment Agency can:

- issue you a warning letter
- serve you with a formal caution
- prosecute you if they think it’s in the public interest
- install the eel screen and charge you for the work

When you do not need to install an eel screen

If you can prove that your abstraction structure does not affect eel migration, the Environment Agency may give you a permanent exemption from screening.

If you can provide evidence that it’s not cost beneficial to install an eel screen, the Environment Agency may give you an exemption from screening for a specified period. You must prove that the cost of installing a screen is greater than the benefit of protecting eel at your intake. Contact the Environment Agency to find out how to do these calculations.

But you will still need to protect eels, for example by:

- installing a fish recovery and return system
- installing a fish friendly pump or turbine
- protecting eel in another way, such as creating a new eel habitat

New licence and permit applications

You must make sure eels can migrate safely past your new structure or flood risk activity when you apply for any of the following:

- impoundment licence
- abstraction licence
- flood risk activity environmental permit

Impoundment licence

In most cases, when you apply for an impoundment licence you must include information on how eels can pass safely around, over or through your development.

You may not need to include an eel pass if your structure is both greater than:

- 100 kilometres from the tidal limit
- 150 metres above sea level

Check with the Environment Agency and ask for your local fisheries officer.

Apply for an impoundment licence.

Abstraction licence

In most cases you must include a screen at an abstraction point to keep eels out of the abstraction structure. You must submit information on how you will include a screen as part of your licence application.

You may not need to include an eel screen if your structure is both greater than:

- 100 kilometres from the tidal limit
- 150 metres above sea level

Check with the Environment Agency and ask for your local fisheries officer.

Apply for an abstraction licence.

Flood risk activity environmental permit

When you apply you must submit details of eel passage, such as an:

- elver pass
- eel by-pass structure

Read the guidance on how to apply for a flood risk activity permit.

Sanctions

If you do not comply with the conditions of your licence or permit the

Environment Agency can:

- issue you a warning letter
- serve you with a formal caution
- prosecute you if they think it’s in the public interest
- impose a civil sanction where the law allows or you may be able to offer a civil sanction enforcement undertaking.

Contact the Environment Agency

National Customer Contact Centre

PO Box 544

Rotherham

S60 1BY

Email enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Telephone 03708 506 506 See call charges

Ask for your local fisheries officer.

Minicom (for the hard of hearing) 03702 422 549

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Press release: Ozone air pollution alert

A high pressure system persisting over the UK has brought warm and still conditions, resulting in increased ground level ozone.

A number of sites in the UK have exceeded the EU ozone public information threshold of 180µg/m3.

The latest information on these alerts will be issued on the UK Air website.

Some people are more sensitive to ozone than others and may begin to notice an effect on their breathing. People with asthma are not necessarily more sensitive but, if affected, can use their ‘reliever’ inhaler to alleviate symptoms.

If affected, people are urged to take sensible precautions. In particular,

avoiding exercise outdoors in the afternoon can reduce individual exposure to ozone.

If the legal threshold for ozone is again breached, further alerts will be issued on our UK Air website.

Forecasts, latest measurements and health advice are available on UK Air and via Defra's freephone helpline (0800 556677). Updates on current and forecast levels of air pollution can also be found on Twitter @DefraUKAir.

News story: Magnox Ltd complete FED treatment programme at Bradwell in Essex

This is an important step towards the site's planned closure, as part of the NDA's mission to clean up and decommission the UK's earliest nuclear sites.

Magnox Ltd and its supply chain used innovative techniques and unique solutions to manage the waste, which mainly consists of pieces of the magnesium alloy cladding that surrounds Magnox nuclear fuel. They dissolved the material in acid and explored new options for disposing of the waste. The result is a reduction in the hazards on the site and shortening the FED treatment project by more than a year.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Chief Executive, David Peattie, said:

> This is another really important milestone and a huge step forward in cleaning up and decommissioning the UK's earliest nuclear sites.
>
> Finding new solutions and techniques to deal with radioactive waste is helping us to do things more quickly and efficiently, making our sites safer sooner and providing best value for the taxpayer. I would like to thank everyone involved in delivering this successful programme.

65 tonnes of FED were treated in an on-site 'dissolution plant', which dissolved the waste in an acid, separated the radioactive materials and reduced the volume of the solid waste by more than 90 per cent.

Over half of the FED at Bradwell was re-classified as suitable for disposal as Low Level Waste (LLW) in a first-of-a-kind collaboration between Magnox Ltd, the Low Level Waste Repository Ltd (LLWR) and specialist contractor Tradebe-Inutec.

More than 140 tonnes of FED have now been sent to Tradebe-Inutec as LLW for treatment and eventual disposal at the Low Level Waste Repository in west Cumbria – saving around 2 years of dissolution operations.

Fuel Element Debris (FED)

Bob Nichols, Magnox Ltd's Bradwell Site Closure Director, said:

> I want to pay tribute to the Bradwell and wider Magnox workforce who have worked tirelessly to manage Bradwell's FED inventory, which has proved to be one of the most challenging work programmes undertaken by Magnox.
>
> We have shown we are able to work collaboratively, both with our supply chain and other parts of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority estate, to accelerate progress without compromising our high safety standards, which stands us in good stead as the site approaches Care and Maintenance.

A second major achievement at the site is the demolition of the used fuel ponds complex – which was used to cool and store spent nuclear fuel under water after it was taken out of the reactors when the site was generating electricity.

The redundant buildings were decontaminated over a 4 year period, which meant they could be taken down using conventional demolition methods. The remaining buildings on the site will now be enclosed in weatherproof cladding in

preparation for Care and Maintenance.

Find out more about Bradwell nuclear site