

Environmental and Waste Management Group

October 2017 Newsletter



GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

Waste and recycling industry being told to clean up by regulator

Companies and people working in the waste and recycling industry are being told they must pay closer attention to how they manage workplace risk or face serious penalties. [HSE's programme of proactive inspections](#) will review health and safety standards in waste & recycling businesses across the country, with the industry warned that unannounced inspections will begin from October.

The visits come as HSE releases its sector plans which pinpoint the waste and recycling industry as a priority sector. The waste & recycling sector, which employs c.120,000 workers, has a statistically higher rate of workplace injury and work-related ill health than other sectors and workers in this industry are more likely to suffer work-related illness than elsewhere.

(Read more: ciwm-journal.co.uk & shponline.co.uk)

New SEPA consultations on shaping future Scottish environment regulations

Everyone with an interest in Scotland's environment, health & wellbeing, and economy is being encouraged to take part in important consultations that will shape the future of environmental regulation.

The [Scottish Environment Protection Agency](#) (SEPA) and the Scottish Government have published consultation documents for the next stages of the journey to an '[Integrated Authorisation Framework](#)' - designed to bring real benefits to the environment, communities, businesses, and SEPA itself. The consultation is in two parts:

- A consultation on the [draft Environmental Authorisations \(Scotland\) Regulations 2018](#) - closing 23 November 2017
- A [consultation on the supporting guidance](#) - closing 22 December 2017.

INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS

Recycling company fined £650,000 after reversing vehicle fatality.

A clothing and textile recycling company has been prosecuted after a 76-year-old worker was fatally injured by a reversing delivery vehicle.

Savanna Rags International Ltd, of Mansfield was fined £650,000 on 30 October after a worker at the textile recycling company was fatally injured when she was struck by a reversing delivery. The victim was walking from the weighbridge towards the smoking shelter in the rear yard during her afternoon break when she was struck by the rear of a vehicle reversing from the weighbridge.

The HSE investigation found that there were no measures in place to adequately segregate pedestrians from moving vehicles; there wasn't a safe system of work to ensure that reversing was minimised so that vehicles could manoeuvre safely. (Read more: hse.gov.uk)

Litter picker struck by plant loses both legs

A recycling company has been fined £100,000 (20 October) after a worker was left with life changing injuries after he was struck by a moving machine. Shrewsbury Crown Court heard that the employee was working as a litter picker at Lodgewood Farm, Telford, when he was struck by a shovel loader as he was standing next to a brick wall on the site. He was airlifted to hospital, where both his legs had to be amputated below the knee. He died in September 2016 but his death was not related to his injuries, the court was told.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the loading shovel driver initially thought he had just hit the wall and had not realised he had struck someone. The driver climbed down from the cab to check for damage and found the employee badly injured on the floor.

(Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk) & [ioshmagazine.com](https://www.ioshmagazine.com))

Director and company sentenced after worker killed

A Brighton-based waste collection and recycling company has been fined £500,000 after a worker died after being struck by a reversing telehandler. Brighton Magistrates' Court heard that the employee of United Grab Hire Ltd was struck by the vehicle while crossing the work yard in Horley, East Sussex. The worker sustained multiple injuries and later died in hospital.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to address the management of large vehicle movements on its site and had not carried out an on-site health and safety inspection. In addition the driver of the telehandler involved in the incident had not received any training in operating this vehicle. (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk) & [ioshmagazine.com](https://www.ioshmagazine.com))

Waste director handed suspended jail term after worker's death

A North-West based waste processing company, and its managing director, have been fined after a worker was crushed to death. Liverpool Crown Court heard how Fresco Environmental Ltd's employee was processing waste carpet for re-baling when one of the bales fell from a stack onto him, causing injuries from which he later died.

An investigation by the HSE found that the company had failed to ensure proper controls were in place to reduce the risk of bales falling and injuring workers. There were no exclusion zones around the stacks of bales; bales were poorly stacked and in close proximity to vibrating machinery. It also found that the company's managing director, Lee Heaps, had failed to ensure that a safe system of work was in place for the processing of carpet bales, thus exposing his employees to avoidable risks. Mr Heaps was also given a six-month custodial sentence, suspended for 12 months, and is to carry out 100 hours of unpaid work. (Read more: [ciwm-journal.co.uk](https://www.ciwm-journal.co.uk) & [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk))

Company and directors fined after multiple safety failings

A recycling company and its two directors have been prosecuted after multiple safety failings. Northampton Crown Court heard how Monoworld Recycling had failed to manage risks when its staff worked at height, failed to suitably maintain work equipment, and failed to control risks from electrical systems.

After several visits by the HSE, a total of 15 enforcement notices were served on the company, and three served on each of the two company directors, in less than two years. The notices covered a range of topics including work at height, work equipment and electrical matters. An investigation by HSE found that employees were instructed to carry out work at height even after a Prohibition

Notice had been served, and that staff felt pressurised to complete their work even when they had raised concerns about their safety. (Read more: hse.gov.uk & ioshmagazine.com)

Company fined after chemical incident

An oil storage company has been fined after contractors cut into a sealed pipe causing an explosion inside a tank. Liverpool Crown Court heard that on 19 January 2015, contractors of ESL Fuels Ltd cut into a sealed pipe using a grinder. The pipe, which was attached to a tank, was being used as part of a waste oil recovery process at their North Blend Tank Farm. Flammable gases in the pipe ignited, resulting in an explosion within the tank resulting in the tank lid and vent pipe becoming partially detached and projected over a raised walkway.

An investigation by the HSE found that the company was having difficulty with the waste oil recovery process, which was foaming out of the vessel and filling its bund. The company's tests were inadequate and failed to identify the cause of the problem which was generating flammable carbon monoxide gas. (Read more: hse.gov.uk)

Six sentenced after fires hit illegally stored waste

One man has been jailed, three given suspended prison sentences and two given community orders for serious environmental permit breaches on waste sites that resulted in numerous fires.

The environmental offences were committed by corporate officers working for Nottinghamshire Recycling Ltd (NRL) and Park Farming Ltd, in relation to three sites in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, and Kiveton and South Anston in South Yorkshire. The company paid no heed to repeated warnings about the illegal storage of waste at all three sites, and the fire risks at Worksop. This resulted in five fires at NRL's Worksop site during 2013 and 2014. (Read more: letsrecycle.com)

Defective vehicle contributed to employee's death

A coroner's jury has ruled that a collection vehicle's faulty brakes and wiring was a factor in the death of F&R Cawley employee, Peter Coleman. Mr Coleman, 54, of Dunstable in Bedfordshire, died on 11 October 2014 in an incident while collecting waste from the Woodside Leisure Park in Watford.

The jury was told that, while working on his own, Mr Coleman had applied the handbrake and got out of the vehicle to collect two commercial bins. The vehicle moved off as he operated its lifting mechanism. He ran after the vehicle in an attempt to stop it, but became trapped underneath the back axle for around 90 minutes. The vehicle then caught fire. Experts said the vehicle's brakes were defective and a safety feature of the vehicle's lifting equipment had been bypassed.

(Read more: mrw.co.uk)

OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST

Viridor calls for collaboration on lithium battery detection

Recycling and renewable energy company Viridor has issued a call for collaboration on technology to detect lithium ion batteries – the biggest cause of waste industry fires – and is offering up to £75,000 in research funding.

These rechargeable batteries are widely used in mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras and toothbrushes and, when damaged, can produce high temperatures under great pressure which makes them a serious fire risk.

Viridor says it has identified five challenges in terms of detection in the waste stream as part of a project involving waste industry partners along with the University of Sheffield and the [Energy Innovation Centre](#). The challenges are linked to detection in waste collection vehicles, on conveyor belts, differentiating between the batteries and other metallic scrap, and detecting heat or fumes from a burning battery in waste bunkers. (Read more: [ciwm-journal.co.uk](#))

Pollution linked to one in six deaths worldwide

Pollution has been linked to an estimated nine million deaths in 2015 – equivalent to one-sixth of all fatalities that year, according to a [report published in The Lancet](#).

It was determined that air pollution was the biggest contributor after being linked to an estimated 6.5 million deaths, followed by water pollution, which was connected with 1.8 million. Most of these were due to non-infectious diseases such as lung cancer, strokes and heart disease, with pollution responsible for three times as many deaths as AIDs, tuberculosis and malaria combined.

“Pollution is much more than an environmental challenge – it is a profound and pervasive threat that affects many aspects of human health and well-being,” study co-lead Prof. Philip Landrigan said.

SEPA calls on businesses to take action on recycling or face the penalties

SEPA is calling on businesses across Scotland to meet their duty to recycle now or they could potentially receive a £30 Fixed Monetary Penalty (FMP). Eleanor Strain, Senior Policy Officer for SEPA’s National Waste Unit, said: “It is important that all businesses in Scotland recognise their duty to recycle as non-compliance is not an option.

Working in partnership with waste service providers and local authority enforcement functions (both waste & environmental health), SEPA is able to target enforcement effort on the worst offenders. As a result of this engagement, nearly 90% of these businesses have changed their behaviour, and two have been issued with a £300 FMP for failure to separate their food waste. The remainder still face enforcement action if they cannot demonstrate compliance. (Read more: [sepa.org.uk](#))

World's first floating wind farm starts generating electricity

The world's first floating wind farm has started delivering electricity to the Scottish grid. Five giant turbines have been tethered to the seabed about 15 miles from Peterhead in Aberdeenshire.

The wind farm has been officially opened by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon. She said the project, which will generate enough power for about 20,000 homes, was testament to Scotland's "international reputation" for renewable energy. (Read more: [bbc.co.uk](#))

EA dog gets ‘ruff’ with crime

The Environment Agency (EA) has recruited a dog who can trace illegal and dumped waste to help prevent crime and identify criminals. Although frequently used by the police, this is the first time the EA has used the tool.

Ronnie the DNA dog, based in Lancashire, has been trained to trace baled illegal waste or loose items of illegally dumped waste that has been sprayed with SelectaDNA, a forensic marking solution that enables users to mark property and identify criminals. (Read more: [wrw.co.uk](#))