

Environmental and Waste Management Group



January 2019 Newsletter

LEGISLATION, REGULATORS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

Safe Handling and Storage of Lithium Ion Batteries at Waste Management Facilities

Comments on Environmental Services Association's (ESA) draft guidance is requested via the EWMG committee – the guidance is currently downloadable from the EWMG 'Industry resources' page on in your membership area of the IOSH website.

These batteries represent possibly the most serious current risk in the waste industry; please e-mail any comments to the committee (ewmg@ioshnetworks.co.uk) by 15th February 2019 so that a consolidated response may be fed back to ESA.

World Soil Day: The increasing recognition of Soil as a key environmental component

2018 saw the launch of the UK government publication on the environment entitled 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'. This document whilst addressing the broad environment has some strong themes relating to soil and soil protection. In particular, it identifies the importance of maintaining healthy soils.

Within the United Kingdom, matters relating to the Environment are a devolved responsibility. Within England there have been a number of attempts to recognise the need for soil protection and introduce some measures to encourage soil protection practices. In 2004 Defra launched 'The First Soil Action Plan for England 2004-2006'. The plan highlighted the need to raise awareness amongst a much broader community of the key roles played by soils in many aspects of our lives.

There was also concern about the increasing rate at which soils were covered or sealed by development removing them from the natural environment. The need to reduce soil sealing was a key conclusion of the European Commission's Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection. The 2009 document also highlighted the degradation of soils through compaction and loss of organic matter and the loss of soils from wind and water erosion; there was a commitment to reduce these impacts through science-based strategies for land management. Strategies to increase levels of carbon in soil were strongly supported as in addition to the benefits from carbon sequestration there are also related benefits in terms of increased resistance to soil erosion and compaction as soil carbon levels are increased in degraded soils.

If you are interested in this aspect of soil then you can read more: sagta.org.uk.

Policy paper Draft Environment Bill 2018

If you can't get enough of BREXIT, the draft Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill sets out how we will maintain environmental standards as we leave the EU and build on the vision of the 25 Year Environment Plan. (Read more: gov.uk)

However, DEFRA has been viewed to be remaining 'silent' on replacing water, waste, air, chemicals law post-Brexit according to a House of Commons committee. In its assessment of the government's plan, the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) recommended that the legislation be drafted into domestic law, but the government did not make reference to it in its response to the committee's report; the EAC chair saying the government's failure to refer to issue was "deeply worrying".

Published: The Soil and Groundwater Technology Association (SAGTA) Guiding Principles Presentations

SAGTA, in collaboration with the Environment Agency, convened a Guiding Principles workshop back in April 2018 at the Agency's offices in York. The workshop was attended by a cross-section of representatives from regulators, industry and consultancy that included participants from both the nuclear and non-nuclear sectors and regulators from all four UK jurisdictions. A wide-ranging programme of presentations provided perspectives about the original Guiding Principles documents, regulatory drivers, local authority views on potential for going forward, and nuclear sector ways of working. (Read more and access the presentations here: sagta.org.uk)

Environment Agency updates

- **Standard rules for non-hazardous & hazardous household waste amenity site**

The Environment Agency has updated the risk assessment, SR2015 number 20, correcting an issue with the earlier risk assessment that contained the wrong information. (Read more: gov.uk)

- **Packaging waste: producer responsibilities**

'Obligated' packaging producers must register and meet their waste packaging recycling and recovery responsibilities. (Read more: gov.uk)

- **Waste duty of care code of practice**

This code provides practical guidance on how to meet waste duty of care requirements in England and Wales; it applies if you produce, carry, keep, dispose of, treat, import or have control of waste in England or Wales. If you're authorised or registered in Scotland or Northern Ireland but you store, transport or transfer waste in England or Wales, you should also take account of this code. (Read more: gov.uk)

Defra consult on Biodiversity Net Gain for Developments

Defra is seeking views on how they can improve the planning system in England to protect the environment (biodiversity net gain) and build places to live and work. They would like to know what people think about their proposals to make biodiversity net gain necessary for developments when granting planning permission. (Read more: [claire.co.uk](https://www.claire.co.uk))

INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS

Demolition contractor fined after workers fall from excavator

Cheshire Demolition and Excavation Contractors Limited has been fined £134,000 and costs after two workers fell from an attachment on an excavator, resulting in serious injuries, during its demolition of a derelict nightclub. HSE found that the company did not properly plan the work and failed to provide suitable access equipment.

After the hearing HSE inspector David Argument said: “These risks could so easily have been avoided if the work at height was properly planned and appropriately supervised. Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards”. (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk))

Asbestos releases

HSE highlighted three prosecutions during the month concerning asbestos related incidents:

- Landlord and contractor fined following fibre release from [Conservatory demolition](#);
- Building contractor fined after an employee used a powered saw to [accidentally cut through asbestos containing materials](#);
- Two construction companies have been fined after sub-contractors working under their control were exposed to asbestos fibres during [school refurbishment work](#).

North East man fined for waste offences

A North East man has been fined after pleading guilty to three offences, including breaching an environmental permit and obstruction. (Read more: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST

Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in the UK

The Environment Agency published new reports for the amount of EEE placed on the market and WEEE collected in the UK under the WEEE Regulations in December. The reports include quarter 1 to quarter 3 2018 data. (Read more: gov.uk)

And it's updated the WEEE approved authorised treatment facility public register. (Read more: gov.uk)

UK climate projections

The UK's most comprehensive picture yet of how the climate could change over the next century has been launched by the Environment Secretary. The new data gives the most detailed picture yet of our changing climate, and specifically temperature, rainfall and sea level rise over next century.

- Summer temperatures could be up to 5.4C hotter by 2070, while winters could be up to 4.2C warmer;
- The chance of a summer as hot as 2018 is around 50% by 2050;
- Average summer rainfall could decrease by up to 47 per cent by 2070, while there could be up to 35 per cent more precipitation in winter; and
- Sea levels are projected to rise over the 21st century and beyond under all emission scenarios (sea levels in London could rise by up to 1.15 metres by 2100) – meaning we can expect to see an increase in both the frequency and magnitude of extreme water levels around the UK coastline.

(Read more: metoffice.gov.uk)

National Safety and Health Conference: Looking after the worker

The 2019 National Safety and Health Conference (NSHC) will be held on Thursday 13 June at the Holiday Inn Royal Victoria Sheffield. In its 44th year in 2019, this conference will be led by four IOSH Groups:

- Public Services Group
- Education Group
- Health and Social Care Group, and
- Environmental and Waste Management Group

Early-bird bookings are available until 28th February 2019. (Read more: iosh.co.uk)