

## Environmental and Waste Management Group



### March 2020 Newsletter

#### LEGISLATION, REGULATORS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

##### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) - UK government response**

Comprehensive guidance, including for employers and businesses (with detail on cleaning and waste), is provided on the UK government's dedicated website and from Health Protection Scotland. (Read more: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) & [hps.scot.nhs.uk](https://hps.scot.nhs.uk))

In support, [new guidance](#) from the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) has been published and sets out the vital role OSH professionals have to play in preventing the spread of coronavirus. [A dedicated section](#) to coronavirus, which will be regularly updated with new advice, sets out a number of areas IOSH believes an organisation should consider when responding to communicable diseases and taking proportionate, preventative measures. (Read more: [iosh.com/coronavirus](https://www.iosh.com/coronavirus))

With many people now working from home temporarily as a result of the coronavirus outbreak it is worth remembering that employers have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers. Health & Safety Executive (HSE) provide lots of guidance on [home workers](#) and how to minimise risks to their health, including lone working, working with display screen equipment, and stress and mental health.

Other sources of relevant information include –

- [Public Health England \(PHE\) – COVID-19: background information](#)
- [World Health Organisation \(WHO\) – COVID-19](#)

## **INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS**

### **'Plymouth's worst fly-tipper' jailed after 3 years on the run**

A Plymouth man who fled to Ireland after committing a year-long fly-tipping spree has been jailed.

Martin McDonagh, 26, was called 'Plymouth's worst fly-tipper' by the press for dumping rubbish collected from people's homes in the countryside. He caught a ferry to Ireland 9 days before he was due in court in February 2017 and was sentenced in his absence to 20 months in prison.

A European arrest warrant was issued and McDonagh turned himself in to the police in Ireland late last year. He has now been extradited back to Devon to serve his sentence. (Read more: [gov.uk](http://gov.uk))

### **Banksman crushed by shovel loader on large waste and recycling site**

Viridor Waste Management Limited has been fined £400,000 after pleading guilty to causing a life changing injury to one of its employees who was crushed by a reversing 22.5 tonne shovel loader driven by an on-site contractor at its Crayford Materials Recycling Facility in 2017. The injured employee was working on foot in the area in his role as banksman, assisting a lorry to manoeuvre into a bay while a shovel loader reversed out of the bay independently, knocking him to the ground and driving over the lower half of his body. He suffered very serious internal injuries and multiple serious fractures, both with significant life changing effects.

This latest prosecution is the fourth in four years for Viridor: Last May the firm appeared in court after an employee's finger was partially amputated on a fridge dismantling line; in November 2018, the company was fined £650,000 following the death of a cleaner inside a waste sorting machine at its Milton Keynes premises; and, earlier the same year, the firm was fined £237,500 after a worker was killed under his own runaway lorry.

Speaking after the case HSE inspector Megan Carr said "this incident is a reminder to the waste and recycling industry as to the importance of good workplace transport control which can often be achieved by simple pragmatic steps to avoid such incidents from occurring. HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards." (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk) & [ioshmagazine.com](http://ioshmagazine.com))

## **OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST**

### **Message from waste sector to public: "We're working hard to maintain your services"**

Britain's biggest private recycling and waste management companies, along with industry and local government bodies, have jointly issued a message to the public, urging people to follow government advice about how those in self-isolation should manage their household rubbish – to protect waste workers and prevent the spread of infection.

While emphasising that bins will continue to be collected throughout the Coronavirus crisis, the statement also warns that some "non-essential services" might be affected in coming weeks in the event of staff shortages. (Read more: [circularonline.co.uk](http://circularonline.co.uk))

## **Carbon capture and storage project moving forward**

Costain has been selected by Pale Blue Dot Energy deliver technical consultancy services on what could be the UK's first carbon capture and storage (CCS) project, 'Acorn'. The scalable CCS scheme proposes the cost-efficient capture and storage of current carbon emissions from the onshore gas facilities at the St Fergus terminal in Scotland but is also a key enabler for the 'Acorn Hydrogen' project.

The Acorn Hydrogen project will see North Sea natural gas be reformed into clean hydrogen for blending into the gas grid to decarbonise heating in homes and industries throughout the UK and use for other applications such as decarbonised transport. The system is also designed to be an enabler of other capture and storage projects including provision of CO2 shipping facilities in Peterhead Port and repurposing the existing Feeder 10 pipeline to enable capture of CO2 from Central Scotland. (Read more: [pbctoday.co.uk](http://pbctoday.co.uk))

## **Liverpool unveils green bin lorries to slash transport emissions**

Liverpool is investing £3.4 million to introduce new compressed natural gas rubbish trucks. The move aims to reduce emissions as the city works to reach a target of recycling more than 55% of its waste. The fleet of 20 vehicles will replace existing diesel models – they are said to produce 80% fewer carbon dioxide and 90% less nitrogen oxide. (Read more: [futurenetzero.com](http://futurenetzero.com))

## **New energy centre uses waste from London Tube to heat homes**

Waste heat from the London Underground network is now capable of providing heating and hot water to more than 1,350 homes, a school and two leisure centres in Islington thanks to a pioneering energy centre that opened at the start of the month. (Read more: [pbctoday.co.uk](http://pbctoday.co.uk))

## **Recycling business First Mile unveils EV infrastructure upgrade**

London-based recycling company First Mile has installed new charging infrastructure to support its electric vehicle (EV) fleet. The new equipment at its west London depot has been installed by Octopus Energy, which will also provide 100% renewable power to the chargers. (Read more: [futurenetzero.com](http://futurenetzero.com))

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **COVID-19 | Unsound waste management could cause “unforeseen knock-on effects”, says UN**

The United Nations' (UN) Environment Programme says governments must minimise possible secondary impacts upon health and the environment by treating waste management as “essential public service”.

With the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continuing to spread and its impacts upon human health and the economy intensifying day-by-day, governments are urged to treat waste management, including of medical, household and other hazardous waste, as an urgent and essential public service in order to minimise possible secondary impacts upon health and the environment. (Read more: [circularonline.com](http://circularonline.com))

### **Coronavirus triggers domino effect on clean economy...**

The clean economy, including renewable power, energy storage, electric vehicles, heating, cooling and the circular economy 'will be hit hard' by the coronavirus, according to a new report from BloombergNEF researchers. (Read more: [energynews.com](https://energynews.com))

### **...whilst giving further evidence of the effect we have on the environment**

Nasa satellite images show a dramatic decline in pollution levels over China, which the US space agency believes is "partly related" to an economic slowdown due to the coronavirus.

Nasa scientists said the reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels, the noxious gas emitted from motor vehicles, power plants and industrial facilities, was first evident near Wuhan city, the source of the outbreak, but then spread across the country.

Meanwhile in Venice, residents have reported spotting dolphins, swans and fish in newly clear canal waters after the usually bustling city went quiet as coronavirus spread throughout Italy.

(Read more: [theguardian.com](https://theguardian.com) & [standard.co.uk](https://standard.co.uk))

## **SEMINARS, CONFERENCES & COURSES**

### **COVID-19 affecting seminars and conferences...**

#### **...IOSH National Safety and Health Conference 2020, planned for 09 June, anticipated to be postponed**

The conference is a public sector event and is led by four IOSH Networking Groups including the Environmental and Waste Management Group. 2020 is the 45<sup>th</sup> year of the NSHC and together with EWMG the Education Group, Health and Social Care Group, and the Public Services Group planned to come together to deliver an inspiring conference, with considerable learning outcomes, enabling you to explore new ideas and ways of working.

#### **...And the Health and Safety event pushed back**

A series of seminars and an exhibition scheduled to take place at the NEC in Birmingham on 28 – 30 April has been postponed until 22-23 September to run alongside The Emergency Services Show. Seminars are anticipated to still include –

- The British Safety Council Conference – providing updates and developments in health and safety management
- The Knowledge Exchange – providing a series of panel discussions covering the challenges faced by health and safety professionals and practitioners
- Safer Logistics & Machinery Safety Theatre – offering expert advice and guidance on safer logistics and machinery safety
- Lone Worker Theatre – addressing the key issues of safety, security and wellbeing

- HSE Connect – bringing a highly engaging programme and speaker line up of experienced professionals to address the practical issues, latest policy developments and solutions you need to run a safe, healthy and sustainable working environment

(Read more: [healthandsafetyevent.com](https://healthandsafetyevent.com))

### **...No announcement yet made on Resourcing the Future Conference**

Delivered in partnership by CIWM, WRAP, the ESA and INCPEN, this year's Resourcing the Future Conference appears still to be scheduled for 9 - 10 June 2020 in London, will provide an opportunity to assess and understand the key issues shaping the debate around resources and waste and the circular economy.

Topics will include the contribution that sustainable resources and waste management can make in progressing toward a circular economy and achieving the UK's net zero ambitions; how the concept of 'responsibility' – in the context of producers, the supply chain, and consumers – is influencing policy thinking and behaviour; and the role of the sector in increasing the resilience of the UK economy as a whole through the clean growth agenda. (Read more: [ciwm.co.uk](https://ciwm.co.uk))

### **...CIWM training on fire safety on waste sites will hopefully remain available**

Delivered over two non-consecutive days, 22 October and 29 October in Northampton, by experienced CIWM trainers, this course will provide an opportunity to identify fire prevention options and identify the information needed for a Fire Prevention Plan (FPP). The course will –

- Introduce the key requirements of Fire Risk Assessments, including how they relate to waste facilities and support the production of good Fire Prevention Plans.
- Highlight requirements of the Environment Agency and WISH guidance.
- Support you to understand the link between how you manage your waste and resources site effectively, utilising appropriate infrastructure, housekeeping and monitoring/supervision systems, in order that the likelihood of waste fires is reduced and, that if waste fires do occur, they can be dealt with appropriately to prevent harm to human health, the environment, property damage and minimise business interruptions.

(Read more: [ciwm.co.uk](https://ciwm.co.uk))