

Environmental and Waste Management Group



July 2020 Newsletter

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) and Public Health England (PHE) continue to lead the UK government response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. You can get up-to-date information about [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and what you need to do](#) on GOV.UK.

Increasing guidance to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the coronavirus pandemic is available for people and businesses in –

- England on the [UK Government website](#)
- Scotland on the [Scottish Government website](#)
- Wales on the [Welsh Government website](#)
- Northern Ireland on the [nidirect website](#)

Health & Safety Executive continues to publish a range of useful guidance and information –

- [Latest updates](#)
- [Social distancing and making your workplace COVID-secure](#) (includes links to public health guidance in Wales, England & Scotland)
- [Air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [Face masks and coverings](#)
- [Information relating to coronavirus disease reports made by employers to HSE and local authorities](#)
- [Risk assessment](#)

We Are Scotland campaign stakeholder toolkit

The We Are Scotland Stakeholder Toolkit will enable your business or organisation to communicate Scottish Government's safety messaging consistently and effectively to your employees and customers. The toolkit includes –

- We Are Scotland Campaign Information and TV Ad
- FACTS Guidance – Including posters and social media assets
- Retail Posters
- Face Covering Posters
- Protection Assets
- Suggested Social Copy
- FACTS Key Messaging
- Face Coverings Q&A

(Read more: [FindBusinessSupport.gov.scot](https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot))

SELECTED INDUSTRY AND SECTOR COVID-19 GUIDANCE AND RELATED NEWS

Local Authorities publish 14th report into impact of Covid-19 on waste services

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) has published the findings from its 14th waste impacts survey, designed in partnership with key local authority network groups.

Working alongside the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC), the Local Government Association (LGA) and the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers (NAWDO), ADEPT is monitoring the continuing impacts of Covid-19 on waste services across England.

This survey covers the week beginning 20th July and shows that for most responding local authorities all collection services are now operating normally, with 92% reporting normal services for residual waste and 82% for recycling.

(Read more: circularonline.co.uk)

LEGISLATION, REGULATORS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

HSE Annual workplace fatality figures

HSE has released its [annual figures for the number of work-related fatalities in 2019/20](#), as well as the number of people known to have died from the asbestos-related cancer, mesothelioma, in 2018.

The provisional annual data for work-related fatal accidents revealed that 111 workers were fatally injured at work between April 2019 and March 2020, the lowest year on record. This represents a fall of 38 deaths from the previous year, though it is likely that this fall was accentuated by the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on the economy in the final two months of the year.

In line with previous years' fatal injury statistics, these figures do not include deaths from occupational disease. Covid-19 infection is therefore not part of these figures and will not feature in fatal injury statistics in subsequent years. Notably –

- While there has been a long-term reduction in the number of annual fatalities (the number has almost halved in the last 20 years), aside from the current fall, the number has remained broadly level in recent years.
- Five fatal injuries to waste and recycling workers were recorded. Despite being a relatively small sector in terms of employment, the annual average fatal injury rate over the last five years is around 18 times as high as the all industry rate.
- The new figures also continue to highlight the risks to older workers; 27 per cent of fatal injuries in 2019/20 were to workers aged 60 or over, even though such workers make up only around 10 per cent of the workforce.
- The three most common causes of fatal injuries continue to be; workers falling from height (29), being struck by a moving vehicle (20) and being struck by a moving object (18), accounting for 60 per cent of fatal injuries in 2019/20.

There were 2,446 mesothelioma deaths in Great Britain in 2018, a broadly similar number to the previous six years.

(Read more: [full report – Workplace fatal injuries in Great Britain, 2020](#), [Mesothelioma statistics for Great Britain, 2020](#))

UK government vision for green recovery

George Eustice, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, set out his vision for the UK's green recovery from the coronavirus pandemic on 20 July. Headlines included –

- Past approach to natural and biodiversity was to protect what was left, the approach now will be to enhance it
- Build back better and greener
- Nature has been in recession for decades
- Confinement has made people appreciate nature in a new way
- Connection with nature is critical to human health
- £4 million to bring nature prescriptions to areas most hit by COVID-19, starting this autumn
- Post Brexit – no longer able to hide behind EU law, or blame it when things don't work

- Shortly publishing a paper on approach for setting targets for biodiversity and nature
- New appointment campaign for Head Office for Environmental Protection, ready for launch in 2021
- Keen to support nature-based solution internationally at COP26
- Habitats and Birds directive like many international conventions will remain
- As the UK charts a new course for environmental protection will aim to rebalance its policy development focusing more on science and less on legal – less reports and more ideas.
- Targets framework will give a new channel through which to test new ideas.
- Biodiversity net gain may not be delivered most effectively in the current regulatory setting - open to ideas.
- Coming this autumn – new consultation on changing approach to environmental impact assessments. Aim is to protect more of what is precious.
- Will look to create a centralised data store of species.
- £5 million announced today for a new natural capital and ecosystem assessment trial
- Intent to pilot highly protected marine areas.

It is perhaps worth noting that the commitment from George Eustice to put nature at the heart of the UK's recovery and to ensure nature-based solutions are advanced on the road to COP26 is undoubtedly welcome and it is clear that this is what the public expects, but while pledges are noble, results speak louder.

As things stand, less than half of the government's 25 Year Environment Plan indicators are showing improvement. To see funding announced for "nature prescriptions" and natural capital trials is positive, but the wider regulatory revisions to the environmental assessment process heralded today arguably must not come as part of a planning race to the bottom. The speech should also be seen in the wider context of the UK's agriculture and trade policies which will have as much, if not more influence on Britain's post-Brexit environment.

(Read more: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

...and £350 million unveiled to help fuel UK's 'green recovery'

Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced on 22 July that £350 million is being made available to cut emissions in heavy industry, drive economic recovery from coronavirus and step up efforts to tackle climate change...

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

OTHER NEWS

Aluminium packaging recycling rates reach record levels

According to data released by the Environment Agency, a record 40,653 tonnes of aluminium packaging were collected for recycling in Q2 2020.

This indicates that 76,933 tonnes were collected for recycling in the first half of the year – a significant increase of 52% compared to the same period in 2019 (50,744). Aluminium packaging collected through kerbside, bring and on-the-go systems increased by 37% during the first half of the year (53,312 in 2020, compared to 38,882 in 2019), while tonnage recovered from incinerator bottom ash (IBA) nearly doubled (23,621 in 2020, compared to 11,862 in 2019). (Read more: circularonline.co.uk)

Life Smart Waste – Project news July 2020

The Life Smart Waste project is an innovative partnership between key European bodies addressing waste crime. Read the latest updates from the Life Smart Waste team in their July 2020 newsletter, including –

- Reports on the 'Criminal impact of waste import bans',
- 'Results & recommendations' brochure – A digital brochure summarising LIFE SMART Waste's results and the recommendations arising from the project's capacity
- Conference videos and more...

Read more [here](#).

The Irish Environmental Protection Agency publishes Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2019-2040

In line with Climate Action Planning, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published its current projection for Greenhouse Gases Emissions in Ireland between 2019 and 2040, noting targeted climate and environmental actions are needed for long term improvement

- Ireland's Greenhouse Gas emissions, with full implementation of the Climate Action Plan, are projected to decrease by an annual average reduction of 3% between 2021 and 2030
- Even further measures are required to meet national and EU ambition to keep global temperature increase to 1.5oC
- Short term emission reductions due to Covid 19 do not negate the need for long term, targeted action across all sectors
- Ireland will rely on maximising the use of land – for example grasslands, wetlands and forestry to meet targets

The report compares two scenarios, one based on current measures and one with additional measures. Although Ireland is set to miss the 2020 EU's effort sharing decision ([Decision No 406/2009/EU](#)), projections including the measures adopted by the 2019 Ireland Climate Action Plan are more optimistic for the 2030 targets.

Read more: [Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2019-2040](#)

FUTURE EVENTS

Environmental & Waste Management Group Webinar

The Environmental & Waste Management Group will be hosting a webinar on **'bioaerosols in waste management facilities'** on **Wednesday 5 August 2020, 13.00-14.00 (BST)**.

In the session, Dr Ikpe Ibanga, lecturer in Health, Safety & Environmental Management at Greenwich University will provide information on a recent study aimed at assessing the performance of four pilot-scale biofilters for the removal of bioaerosols from waste airstreams in a materials recovery facility (MRF) based in Leeds, UK.

[Register here for the webinar.](#)