

Odours from Land spreading and Permitted Facilities - Information Sheet

We are aware that some local residents have been affected by odours in the Iwade and Kemsley areas. Two potential sources of these odours have been identified as landspreading of waste and non waste material and also the local composting site situated near Ridham Dock.

Ridham Dock Composting Site

Environmental Permitting

We regulate this site against the conditions of the environmental permit issued by us to Countrystyle Recycling Limited in 2006. We do this by carrying out site inspections, audits and responding to incidents such as odour complaints. All compost sites have a legal obligation to comply with their permit and manage their operations to prevent odour causing a nuisance to the local community.

The site is permitted to compost food and green garden waste from council collection rounds and commercial customers.

How the site manages odours

The operator has been proactive in investigating potential sources of odour and has made a number of improvements to help prevent or minimise odours outside the site boundary. In addition to this and to comply with their permit conditions we have required the operator to produce an Odour Management Plan (OMP) in accordance with our latest odour guidance.

Landspreading

In recent years, North Kent has seen increased volumes of both waste materials and non waste materials being spread on agricultural land. These materials include paper sludge, sewage sludge and compost and are of great value to the farming industry.

Environmental Permitting

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 introduced Mobile Plant Standard Rules Environmental Permits for the spreading of waste materials on land for agricultural benefit. These permits are required to control and minimise impacts from these activities.

We regulate against the conditions of these permits. Standard Rules permits carry a generic risk assessment but operators must send us a deployment form for each time they wish to use their permit to either stockpile or spread certain materials.

Spreading of compost

Some compost can be spread with no waste regulatory controls if certain criteria are met by the producing site. If the compost meets PAS100 specification and the Quality Protocol, then this material is seen as a non waste material and can be spread with no further regulatory waste controls. More information on these specifications can be found at www.wrap.org.uk

What are we doing about odours in North Kent?

We know that a large proportion of residents have been affected by odours in the North Kent area at some stage over the past 5 years. Since the major issues with odours in the summer of 2009, we have been working alongside local councils to influence operators and to remind them of their roles and responsibilities. We have also been working with the large producers of these materials including Countrystyle Group (compost) and Kemsley Paper Mill (paper sludge).

When a serious and sustained odour is reported to us, we will seek to attend and investigate to check its source. Before we consider formal action we need to determine what the source is, and establish whether the operator of either the composting site or landspreading activity has failed to take the appropriate action to reduce the odour. This will be done in conjunction with the local authority for the area the odours are coming from.

What does the Environment Agency do if the conditions of a permit are not being met?

If a business breaches the conditions of its permit, we will take enforcement action in line with our publicly available enforcement and sanctions policy. Options available include a warning, formal caution, prosecution and issuing of an enforcement notice to take action. However, it is not always clear cut whether an operator has breached the permit. There is often a test of reasonableness which we will need to investigate and review before we decide what action to take.

Who can I report odours to?

If you smell an odour that you think is coming from waste material being spread or stockpiled on land or the composting site then please report it straightaway to our free phone incident hotline (see below). Your report helps us build up a picture of the problem. We will contact the operator / contractor on your behalf, but will not share your identity.

Where can I find out more information or get in touch?

Environment Agency incident hotline: 0800 807060 (anytime)
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

If you want more general Environment Agency information please either call our National Customer Contact Centre on 08708 506506 or via email to enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

customer service line

08708 506 506

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

incident hotline

0800 80 70 60

floodline

0845 988 1188

customer service line

08708 506 506

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