



***Flycapture News***  
**Edition 13 – December 2009**  
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## WELCOME

Welcome to the latest, 13<sup>th</sup>, edition of the Flycapture News as we enter a new year and a new decade according to the media. I trust everyone had a well earned and peaceful break over the Christmas and New Year period, returning to work vowing to ensure their Flycapture returns are made in time.

As we enter the final quarter of the financial year we ask that you check your returns and forward any outstanding data to us for entry. This will stop us chasing you after the end of April.

## SYSTEM CHANGES

We advised in the last newsletter that there are to be some small changes to the system. These will go live in January, to expand on them...

There will be a requirement the first time you log on after the changes have gone live to change your password. The passwords are being upgraded to 'strong' passwords. You will have to enter a new password which will be; a minimum of 8 characters and include at least one upper and lower case letters, number and symbol, i.e. Bedford1886!

You will also note on the log in page a 'Forgotten your password?' option. To make the system easier to use we have added this facility. If you click on this you will be given another screen asking for your email address which you then 'submit'. The system will then email you a new password. On entering the system with this new password you will be asked to change it. As soon as this goes live please use it if you cannot remember your password.

There will be a new system check on screen 2, if your investigations are more than 10% greater than your incidents it will pop up a warning screen asking if you wish to continue.

Finally you will notice a change at the bottom of the screen as the Northern Ireland logo has been updated to NIEA, their new name and logo.

## FINES DOUBLE AS WASTE CRIME CRACKDOWN SHOWS IT HAS TEETH

Environment Agency warns that businesses caught breaching waste rules will face increasingly tough penalties – report by James Murray, Business Green Publication

Firms caught breaching waste regulations can expect increasingly tough financial and even custodial penalties, according to new data released today confirming that the Environment Agency's crackdown on waste crimes appears to be working.

The figures show that during 2008/09 the Environment Agency secured more than £525,204 in fines relating to serious waste offences such as illegal dumping and large-scale fly tipping. A significant increase compared to the 2007/08 figure of £425,000.

In addition, the average fine more than doubled to £6,000, while eight offenders received custodial sentences.



"The increase in the level of fines reflects how seriously the Environment Agency is pursuing people who dump waste and the dim view that the courts hold of this crime," said Liz Parkes, head of waste and resource management at the Environment Agency.

"This is not about people putting rubbish out on the wrong day, or in the wrong bins. We concentrate on those individuals and companies whose illegal activities have the potential to cause serious damage to the environment and human health."

There were also signs that the Environment Agency's crackdown on waste crimes - which began in 2008 with the launch of a dedicated National Environmental Crime Unit staffed by former detectives - has been successful, with the number of illegal waste-dumping incidents falling by around four per cent.

In addition to a drop in serious waste crimes, the figures also revealed that the occurrence of low-level fly tipping fell 9.3 per cent last year to 1.16 million incidents.

Environment minister Huw Irranca-Davies welcomed the improvement, but said that the issue was still costing local authorities £54.9m a year and presented an "unacceptable... stain on our environment".

The government is currently reviewing legislation designed to make it easier for businesses to dispose of their waste correctly and is planning a series of campaigns to make it clear to firms how they should dispose of waste.

### **VANS SEIZED IN ILLEGAL VEHICLE CRACKDOWN**

Three vans were seized by Police and Council officials during a major crackdown on unsafe vehicles on a major road leading out of Wolverhampton.

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September, South Staffordshire Council and Staffordshire Police joined forces with Customs and Excise, Trading Standards and VOSA (Vehicle Operations Standards Agency) as over 130 vehicles were stopped as part of 'Operation Bulldog' on the A460 Cannock Road, just off Junction 1 of the M54 near the village of Featherstone.

Three vans were seized after their owners were found to be driving without insurance whilst five other vehicles were found to be on the road with no MOT and two others were driving without tax.

One lorry driver was also banned by Police from driving for eleven hours after he'd been found to have exceeded the amount of time he was legally allowed to drive.

South Staffordshire Council led the operation which is the latest in a series of similar operations designed to clampdown on unsafe vehicles, rogue traders and drivers without MOTs and insurance that are travelling around the District.

The Council also issued 3 fixed penalty notices to drivers who were carrying waste without a licence and 7 letters demanding to see waste carrier licenses within the next 10 days. Those drivers who fail to do so could be hit with a fine of up to £300.

The Council's enforcement team also inspected food vehicles and taxis.

Councillor Mrs Joan Williams, (Deputy Leader), Environmental Services at South Staffordshire Council said:

"Operation Bulldog has been another successful operation and we've been able to pull vehicles off the road which are dangerous.

“I hope this will reinforce the message to those who are driving without insurance or driving vans and taxis that are not roadworthy in South Staffordshire, that it won't be tolerated and that they're risking big fines or even prosecution if caught”

**WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST**

On 25th February 2009, Watford Community Housing Trust reported a fly tip in two garages, in one of their garage-blocks at Newhouse Crescent, Watford , Hertfordshire.

On investigation two garages were found crammed from top to bottom with construction waste. Due to health & safety issues only a minimal search was made, but evidence was found relating to a local Watford builder . A more detailed search was made the following week when the waste was cleared, and further evidence was found relating to the same man. On the 24th March 2009 this man was interviewed, under caution, at Watford Borough Council Town Hall. He admitted to being a builder and a producer of controlled commercial waste, which he had been keeping at the address he was living at, and in his van.



He stated that two Polish men knocked on his door asking if he wanted his waste cleared. A sum of £250 was agreed and they removed two loads in a transit truck. He did not check if they were licensed waste carriers, and could give no information that might identify these men or their vehicle. He stated that some of the waste at the garage block was his, but not all of it.



He denied being involved in dumping the waste at this location.

The man appeared before Watford Magistrates Court on 27th July 09 on a charge under S34(1)(C) Environmental Protection Act 1990. He pleaded not guilty.

The case was adjourned till the 10th September 2009, where he pleaded guilty to the offence. Magistrates accepted his plea and he was sentenced to a fine of £265, a victim surcharge of £15 and costs of £1000.

**FINED FOR FLY-TIPPING**

A man from Ware, notorious for fly tipping has been left with a £1,530 bill for fines and costs after being convicted at Hertford Magistrates Court on September 10th.



The offender was spotted by joggers dumping a huge amount of rubbish including building waste, mattresses and furniture at Sacombe Road, Hertford on Saturday October 4th, 2008. He pleaded guilty to fly tipping after East Herts Council's environmental crime team mounted an investigation with support from local Police Community Support Officers.

After being charged with the offence the man failed to attend several interviews and court summons and was finally convicted nearly a year after dumping the waste illegally.

Executive member for environment and conservation, Cllr Terence Milner said:

"This case is a good example of the council's commitment to reducing fly tipping. Not only is it costly to clear at around £60,000 a year, but the waste can also pose a significant threat to the surrounding environment and wildlife.

"Always make sure that you dispose of your waste safely and properly. If you have a contractor take your waste away, it's your responsibility to check their paperwork beforehand – don't just give your waste to a man with a van or you could end up facing a fine of £300".

### **THREE ARRESTED IN RAIDS LINKED TO MASS DUMPING OF CHEMICAL DRUMS**

Three men were arrested yesterday in a series of early morning raids across three counties as part of an investigation into the organised dumping of drums containing chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

Environment Agency crime teams working with police, swooped on homes and industrial areas, in Lancashire, County Durham and Merseyside in a carefully co-ordinated operation.

In all nine sites – including six between Preston, Leyland, Tarleton and Skelmersdale; two in Hartlepool and one in Moreton-in-the-Wirral – were targeted.

The raids come after a six-month investigation that followed the discovery of three abandoned lorry trailers loaded with 96 large drums containing various chemicals including acids, solvents and pharmaceuticals.

Senior Environmental Crime Officer, Eddie Platt, said: "Dumping waste illegally puts human health and wildlife at risk – and undermines the legitimate waste industry. These trailers were loaded with barrels containing hazardous and highly flammable chemicals that were left abandoned in remote areas of Shropshire, Lancashire and Yorkshire earlier this year."

"These are dangerous chemicals that need to undergo a number of specialist treatments before disposal, to prevent harm to the environment.

"Dumping waste illegally is a serious crime with serious penalties - up to five years in prison and unlimited fines. The Environment Agency's specialist crime teams have worked hard to gather intelligence that links these crimes together."

"Our message today is simple: waste crime will not be tolerated and every effort will be made to arrest, convict and punish those involved."

A major search of property and offices is underway across the nine sites, while the three men arrested were taken to various police stations for questioning. All were detained on suspicion of committing environmental offences.

Environment Agency officers suspect that at least three of today's raid sites are being used to handle illegal waste in breach of Environmental Permitting Regulations. While the chemical drums were dumped in contravention of the Environment Protection.

## BARCOMBE RESERVOIR

A father and son conducting a waste clearance business in East Sussex appeared at Lewes Crown court in June for an offence of fly-tipping at Barcombe water treatment works within Lewes District. After a 'Not Guilty' trial both men were found guilty. The father was sentenced to an 18 month conditional discharge and ordered to pay £1,250 costs whilst the son was sentenced to a four month tagging order and ordered to pay £1,250 costs. The crown court also ordered the forfeiture of the open back ford transit tipping vehicle used in the commission of the offence. This vehicle has now been added to the Lewes District Council fleet where it is used on a regular basis and it makes guest appearances at local public events.

The father and son had cleared a large quantity of waste from a hotel refurbishment in Eastbourne and then drove twenty miles to the Barcombe water treatment works which is located in a quiet rural area and tipped several tonnes of builders waste.



On inspection of the builders waste by Lewes District Council Street Wardens documents were found that identified the Eastbourne hotel and in turn they identified the offending family.

Lewes District Council have been committed to identifying, interviewing and prosecuting offenders for the offences committed under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and since the implementation of the Clean and Green team

in the last two years Fly Tipping has decreased by up to 50%.

Since October 2008 six prosecutions have been pursued through both Magistrates and Crown Courts all of which have been successful. 6 recordable Cautions have been issued together with 44 Formal warning letters.

Costs in the region of £3,000 have been recovered over the last year to assist with prosecution and clear up costs.

The efforts initiated by Lewes District Council Clean and Green team have been the catalyst for the establishment of a County wide waste crime practitioners group to share best practice and provide mutual support.

## COSELEY MAN FOUND GUILTY AFTER PENKRIDGE FLY-TIP

A man from Coseley has been ordered to pay over £600 by magistrates after rubbish belonging to him was found dumped in a country lane near Penkridge.

The man, aged 26, had originally failed to attend his court hearing which had been scheduled for Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September but surrendered to the police after a warrant was issued for his arrest.

He eventually appeared before magistrates in Cannock on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September where he pleaded guilty under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for paying someone to dispose of his waste without them having an environmental permit.

Miss Venice Archer-Dyer, prosecuting for South Staffordshire Council told Cannock Magistrates Court how Council officers had been contacted by a member of the public who had found the rubbish in Minton Road in Penkridge which was blocking a farmer's gate on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2009.



Council officers sifted through the rubbish and found details linking the defendant to the rubbish.

When interviewed by Council officers, he admitted that he had paid a man £10 to dispose of the rubbish for him but he could only give vague details about the description of the men who he'd paid.

The defendant pleaded guilty to the charge and was fined £100 and ordered to pay £500 of the Council's costs, with a victim surcharge of £15.

### **WOLVERHAMPTON MEN FOUND GUILTY AFTER 'BIZARRE' FEATHERSTONE FLY-TIP**

Two men from Wolverhampton have been found guilty of fly-tipping in the South Staffordshire village of Featherstone in what Council bosses have described as one of the 'most bizarre cases' they've encountered.

The two offenders were arrested in Cat and Kittens Lane in Featherstone by Staffordshire Police on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009 after nearby residents had reported that a truck had driven into a nearby field and was dumping rubbish.

When the police arrived, they found the hapless duo and their yellow Ford Transit stuck in the muddy field whilst a friend's tow truck attempted to pull them out.

The police also found bags of rubbish and an upturned industrial wheelie bin which had been pushed off the back of the van

The two men, who had been operating an unregistered car washing business called Sponge Bobs in Cannock, pleaded not guilty to the fly-tipping charges at an earlier hearing at Stafford Magistrates last month.

Magistrates found the pair guilty after trial on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2009 under section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and today (17<sup>th</sup> November), Defendant one was sentenced to a 12 month Community Order whereby he must carry out 150 hours of unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay £260 towards the Councils costs.



Defendant two failed to appear in court due to illness but has been ordered to attend court again on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

Councillor Mrs Joan Williams, Deputy Leader, Environmental Services at South Staffordshire Council said:

“This has been one of the most bizarre cases of fly-tipping we’ve been involved with. They dumped their rubbish in the middle of the field but apparently didn’t have the forethought to take into account that the field was muddy and that they’d get stuck”.

### **‘SWAT TEAM’ CARRIES OUT LOCAL AUTHORITY ENFORCEMENT TRAINING ACROSS THE NORTH EAST**

Environmental crime officers from the Environment Agency’s ‘Swat’ team recently held fly-tipping enforcement training for council officers across the North East. The aim was to ensure that consistent and rigorous procedures are being used across the whole region to catch and prosecute fly-tippers.

The Environment Agency’s ‘Swat’ enforcement team of ex-police and military staff carried out tailor-made training over four days. The environmental crime officers shared best practice on a range of enforcement techniques including surveillance, crime scene investigations, evidence gathering and waste legislation.

Kate Halka, the Environment Agency’s project manager said: “Our ability to detect environmental crime is improving all the time. In recent months we have introduced forensic capabilities that will enable us to make a greater number of prosecutions against fly-tippers.



“We already work closely with many of the councils across the North East to share intelligence, work on undercover operations and manage clean-up projects within communities. This regional training has really helped us to strengthen our joint enforcement capabilities.”

68 council enforcement officers from across the region took part in the training. They included officers from Northumberland County Council, Durham County Council, Stockton Borough Council, Newcastle City Council, Gateshead City Council, Sunderland City Council, Middlesbrough Council, South Tyneside Council,

Sunderland, North Tyneside Council and Darlington Borough Council.

Andy Rutherford, head of neighbourhood services for Northumberland County Council said: “It is important for local authorities and the Environment Agency to work together to stamp out fly-tipping in our region. This training enabled us to share expertise and knowledge, and further empower our officers to carry out detailed investigations that will lead to more prosecutions.”

Earlier this month, staff from the Environment Agency took part in an annual training conference for magistrates in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The aim of the presentation was to promote a better understanding of the impact of fly-tipping as a criminal activity.

Kate Halka said: “Our enforcement and education activity in the region means that more fly-tippers will be facing the courts. It is therefore important that we continue working with the courts, the police and local authorities to make sure that fly-tippers are brought to justice.”

## MEET A FLYCAPTURE COLLEAGUE



My name is **Matthew Parkin** and I joined the Environment Agency as a Regulatory Team Leader in September, based in Quadrant 2, Sheffield. Previously I worked for almost 10 years as a Branch Manager for Black Horse Personal Finance, a company owned by Lloyds TSB, during which time I managed branches in such exotic places as Grimsby, Wakefield and Sheffield. I am 36 years old and married to Sarah, we've no children as yet but we have a Jack Russell who keeps us very much on our toes!

For the last year or so we've lived in Barnsley, however I was born and raised in Sheffield which is the city I will always regard as home.

I decided to apply for a job at the Environment Agency for two reasons: a friend had recently joined the Agency in a similar Team Leader role and was full of praise for the organisation, and at the same time I was becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of progression opportunities at the bank and the state of the banking industry in general. The real appeal was the chance to work in a totally different industry, one of which I had no knowledge whatsoever, and the motivational challenges this would create.

I received a tremendously warm welcome when I joined the team, and I've settled in really well to life at the Agency; it quickly struck me just how friendly yet professional the staff are and although I've only been here a couple of months it feels much longer.

As a Regulatory Team Leader I oversee the work of a number of 'sub-teams', dealing with, fly-tipping, landfill allowances, waste returns and PCBs. Much of this work is of a technical nature, which I am gradually learning, but luckily for me I have a highly competent and reliable group of people working for me who are helping me learn more each day.

My aims for the team are to continue the high standard of work we already produce, thereby enabling us to attract other work-streams and projects where we can be relied upon to deliver successful outcomes. With particular regard to Flycapture I think we have a very strong team in Fergus, Carly and Wendy dealing with technical and day to day issues, and I know they appreciate the hard work and co-operation they receive from Inter Agency colleagues and Local Authorities.

## FEEDBACK

"Flycapture News" – *so what do you think?* Your feedback is valued, all comments are appreciated.

Thank you for reading "Flycapture News" right to the end. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to this Edition. Contributions have significantly increased and we would very much welcome for this to continue. This newsletter is for and by the users of Flycapture, so if you have any comments, please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you for our next edition, anything you would like to say or share is welcome. Seriously as mentioned at the beginning we really want to hear from you. Use this as away of spreading good practice or indeed asking for advice.

Please send in your contributions for the next Edition to [carly.ivanko@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:carly.ivanko@environment-agency.gov.uk) by the end of February 2010. Please email this edition of "Flycapture News" on to a colleague if you think they may find the content useful. Flycapture News is the voice of the Flycapture Users, Editor – D F Crombie, Technical Advisor, Flycapture. [fergus.crombie@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:fergus.crombie@environment-agency.gov.uk)