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## Environmental News Bulletin



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## Tesco scraps plastic from cans of alcohol in UK stores

In a move to reduce plastic pollution, the UK grocery giant Tesco is removing all plastic rings and shrink wrap that keeps the cans of alcoholic beverages together in multipacks from its stores.

The ground-breaking move which the company claims will remove 50 million pieces of non-recyclable plastic from the waste stream, is the first of its kind in the UK and forms part of the company's 4Rs (Remove, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) strategy. That strategy aims to remove a billion pieces of plastic, as well as reduce the size of packaging by 2000 tonnes a year, as well as improve the recyclability of thousands of pieces of packaging.



Beer and cider brands who wish to sell to Tesco will now need to replace the materials they use for multipacks and use more environmentally-friendly options, such as cardboard sleeves, boxes or rigid plastic, which is easily recyclable through kerbside collections.

The store will continue to sell the leftover stock of beverages bound by plastic, but from early May will not be ordering any more for sale that does not meet the criteria.

Tesco's quality director Sarah Bradbury said: "We are working hand in hand with some of the world's biggest brands to tackle the problem of unnecessary plastic.

"Our mission is to remove, reduce, reuse and recycle so we use as little material as possible to ensure that all the packaging in our stores can be easily recycled."

This move was welcomed by environmental groups, with WWF's sustainable materials specialist, Paula Chin, saying: "Plastic pollution is one of the most visible symptoms of the environmental crisis and is devastating our natural world. We welcome this positive action from Tesco.

"If we are to achieve our shared goal to halve the environmental impact of the average shopping basket, we need collective action across retailers and brands to remove and reduce all problematic plastics."

## Two male raptors missing from Cumbria

Local residents are being asked by the RSPB to keep watch over two hen harriers that have made a nest on a nature reserve in Cumbria. Concerns have been raised after two other endangered raptors disappeared from Geltsdale nature reserve.

The Police are investigating the disappearance of the birds and said, "The two male birds were servicing nests, and as a result both nests have now failed. In 2020 another male bird went missing in suspicious circumstances. The male was servicing two nests and as a result both nests failed. These birds were in good health, in a perfect environment for them to thrive, with plenty of food. It is highly unlikely that the Harriers have died of natural causes."



This is a known problem, and conservationists have highlighted that these birds are often illegally persecuted on grouse moors as they kill red grouse and can have an impact on the grouse shooting business.

Since 2018, Ruth Tingay, an expert in raptors, said up to 56 hen harriers have disappeared or been confirmed illegally killed on or close to grouse moors.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, hen harriers are a protected species.

Warden at RSPB Geltsdale, Steve Garnett said, "This is devastating news, for hen harriers, for our hard-working team here at RSPB Geltsdale and for everyone who is rooting for a better outcome for these birds."



Hen Harrier

## Man prosecuted for illegal waste activities in Lincolnshire

A man from Lincolnshire has been given a suspended prison sentence and his van and funds confiscated, for storing and burning waste illegally at a site in Holbeach, despite repeated warnings from the Environment Agency.

The man was found to have burned a variety of waste at his property without an environmental permit or registered waste exemption. He was also found to be storing more than 600 fridges at the site.

His eight-month sentence was suspended for two years on the condition he completes 250 hours of unpaid work and complies with a three month, 7pm to 7am curfew. His available assets of £8,317 were ordered to be confiscated after it was calculated he benefited from his illegal waste activities by £144,000. No order was made for costs because of the mans limited means.

The man was a registered waste carrier and told Environment Agency officers that he had operated a waste business at the site for several years. He collected waste from house clearances and was paid by an electrical store to take away waste fridges. He burned some of the waste and stored the rest at his property.

Officers visited the site on six occasions from April 2018 and told the man verbally and in writing to stop bringing waste to the site and burning it. They told him to take the waste to an authorised waste site for recycling or disposal and issued him with statutory notices. Nevertheless, when they returned to the site, they found that more waste had been brought to the site and burned.

Rubbish at the site included:

- household waste;
- furniture;
- mattresses;
- clothing;
- paint cans;
- toilets;
- televisions; and
- fridges.



Some of the rubbish had been burned, causing neighbours to make complaints about the smoke. Fridges are classed as hazardous waste and need specialist disposal.

Judge John Pini QC told the man: "You started running this waste disposal business. You went into it with staggering naivety. It's obvious to absolutely anybody that you can't dispose of this waste by burning it, putting toxic fumes into the environment. I fail to understand why you did not grasp that".

Helen Clayton from the Environment Agency's Waste North Team said: "Storing and burning waste in this way saved the cost of legal disposal and put the environment at real risk. This result should serve as a warning for others that we take illegal waste activity extremely seriously and we will take enforcement action against those who flout the law".

## Biffa fined £1.5 million over paper exports

Biffa Waste Services Ltd has been ordered to pay £1.69 million after being found guilty of breaching legislation over the export of mixed paper to Asia in 2018 and 2019.

It is the second legal action of its kind in as many years for the waste company, which has found itself outside the law on which materials can be exported to developing countries. The latest breach involved rolling contracts to send vast amounts of waste to India and Indonesia. Material exported illegally included 50,000 tins; 40,000 plastic bags; 25,000 items of clothing; 3,000 nappies – and even a frying pan, condoms and a souvenir New York t-shirt.



Inspecting the waste, investigators recorded "a strong putrid" smell and an "acidic aroma."

Biffa said the prosecution brought by the Environment Agency had not been in the public interest, a statement removed from its website after sentencing. They have since stated: "We take our responsibility for environmental stewardship very seriously and we accept the court's judgment. We no longer export wastepaper outside the OECD and will carefully review our processes to ensure they fully meet the implications of this judgment."

Judge Shane Collery QC told Wood Green crown court Biffa had shown no contrition and that the breach in export law was "reckless, bordering on deliberate." He went on to say that he found the company's previous comments about being picked on by the Environment Agency and no public interest served in being prosecuted a second time as "aggravating and unattractive".

In a statement, Malcolm Lythgo, head of waste regulation at the Environment Agency, welcomed the conviction. "We are pleased with the court's decision. We want all producers and waste companies to be responsible and make sure they only export material that can be legally and safely sent abroad for recycling.

"Illegal waste exports blight the lives and environment of those overseas. The Environment Agency will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those found to break the rules."

Mr Lythgo also said that the regulator was working with the Government on several measures to tighten controls, including charging higher fees to improve compliance and the increased monitoring of international waste shipments.

Biffa Waste Services Ltd were convicted of four breaches of the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations SI 2007/1711, fined £1.5m with costs of £153,827.99 and a proceeds of crime order of £38,388.

Biffa's previous conviction in September saw a fine of £350,000 with costs of £240,000 and a proceeds of crime order of £9,912, for sending contaminated household waste, described as wastepaper, to China between May and June 2015.

## Spill Kit User – Toolbox Talk

<b>What?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accidental releases of oils and chemicals from construction sites make up many pollution incidents that occur each year.</li> <li>2. Many spillages can be prevented. It is important that everyone on site knows how to control a spill to minimise its impact and what preventative measures are in place.</li> </ol>
<b>Why?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Avoid environmental harm: spills spread very quickly and can cause damage to the environment.</li> <li>2. Avoid prosecution: fines and clean-up costs can be expensive.</li> <li>3. Public relations: avoid negative publicity for the company and clients to maintain workload.</li> </ol>
<b>Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the spill control procedures on areas of the site?</li> <li>2. Where is the nearest spill kit located?</li> <li>3. Where and to who are spills reported to on site?</li> <li>4. What should be done with contaminated soils? 5 Where is the designated place for concrete washout on site?</li> </ol>
<b>DO's</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Know where all spill kits are and how to use them</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Practice annual spill response drills to ensure knowledge of plans and how to use clean-up equipment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If a spill occurs stop work immediately</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If possible and safe to do so contain the spill in accordance with the spill plan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If spillage is flammable, extinguish all possible ignitions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Contain the spillage – on land use earth/sand to construct a bund around the spill to stop it spreading</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Protect sensitive areas (e.g. watercourses or surface water drains), and use drain covers or use earth/sand to construct a bund</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In watercourses consider oil boom downstream of all possible spillages before work starts</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Clean up the spill. Use absorbent granules/pads to mop up spills. Large pools of oil or spills that cannot be absorbed should be removed by gulper</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ensure to have the correct spill clean-up equipment, eg oil booms, chemical absorbent mats</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dispose of all contaminated materials (soil/absorbent materials) correctly – those containing substances such as oil, diesel or paint will be hazardous waste</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ensure any contaminated water is taken to an appropriately licensed disposal site</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Notify a line manager of actions taken.</p>	
<b>DON'T's</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Ignore it! STOP WORK and ACT immediately</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hide the incident – ensure it is reported to the line manager and controls implemented</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tackle spills if it is not safe</p>	

## Environmental Legislation Changes this Period

- Environment (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1313
- Ozone-Depleting Substances and Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1616
- Official Controls (Plant Health and Genetically Modified Organisms) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations SI 2021/302
- Plant Health (Amendment etc.) (Wales) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1628
- Official Controls and Phytosanitary Conditions (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations SI 2021/187
- Plant Health (EU Exit) (Scotland) (Amendment etc.) Regulations SSI 2020/466
- Draft Ecodesign for Energy-Related Products and Energy Information Regulations 2021
- Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (Protection from Detriment in Health and Safety Cases) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) SR 2021/103
- Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) SR 2021/114
- UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 (Commencement No. 1) Regulations SSI 2021/141
- Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Act 2020 (Commencement No. 2) Regulations SSI 2021/42
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Commencement No. 11) Order SI 2021/532
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) Order SI 2021/236
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (No. 2) Order SI 2021/548
- Removal and Disposal of Vehicles (Amendment) (England) Regulations SI 2021/461
- Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2021/543
- Transformers containing PCBs: new rules
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012: Post implementation review
- Ecodesign for Energy-Related Products and Energy Information (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1528
- Genetically Modified Organisms (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1421
- Detergents (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1617
- Animal Welfare and Invasive Non-native Species (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1590
- European Union Withdrawal (Consequential Modifications) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1447
- Electricity Capacity (Amendment) Regulations SI 2021/901
- Motor Fuel (Composition and Content) and the Biofuel (Labelling) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations SI 2021/894
- Receiving hazardous waste wood at household waste recycling centres
- Wheelabrator Kemsley K3 Generating Station Order SI 2021/173
- Wood Recyclers' Association (WRA) - Waste Wood Assessment Guidance for the UK Waste Wood Industry



- Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) - Waste Wood Assessment Guidance for the Construction and Demolition Sectors
- Using shredded waste carpet in equestrian surfacing
- Waste codes for sewage sludge and sludge containing other materials
- Medical Devices (Northern Ireland Protocol) Regulations SI 2021/905
- Designing a framework for transparency of carbon content in energy products: call for evidence
- Third-party intermediaries in the retail energy market: call for evidence
- Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board Order SI 2021/919
- Consultation on jet zero: our strategy for net zero aviation
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Auctioning (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations SI 2021/917
- Ecodesign for Energy-Related Products and Energy Information (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2021/924
- CD290 - Consultation on proposed minor administrative changes to the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015
- Taxes (State Aid) (Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations SI 2020/1499
- Consultation on Hydrogen for heat: facilitating a grid conversion hydrogen heating trial
- Consultation on designing the Net Zero Hydrogen Fund
- Consultation on designing a UK low carbon hydrogen standard
- Consultation on the design of a business model for low carbon hydrogen
- UK Hydrogen Strategy
- European Union (Future Relationship) Act 2020 (References to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement) Regulations SI 2021/884
- Agriculture, Animals and Aquaculture (Health, Identification, Welfare, Trade etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) SR 2020/324
- Shoreham Port Authority Harbour Revision Order SI 2021/41
- Weymouth Harbour Revision Order SI 2021/43
- Treating waste carpet and carpet tiles for recovery
- Storing and recovering cropper dust and carpet shearings from carpet manufacture
- Storing waste carpet from the manufacturing sector
- Storing waste uPVC window frames
- Storing and treating waste divan bed bases
- Manual treatment of waste windows and doors
- Treating uPVC plastic and rubber

## Environmental Bulletin September 2021

Briefed By:		Briefers Role:	
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**By signing below, I confirm that I have received and understood the briefing material contained within this bulletin.**

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