

Veolia's Gerrards Cross Landfill Site

We regulate industry to make sure their activities do not affect the local environment. We aim to prevent pollution happening and where it does, to minimise the risk that it poses to human health and the environment.

We regulate Gerrards Cross Landfill, a non-hazardous waste site at Wapsey's Wood. We are working with the operator, Veolia Environmental Services Ltd, to ensure the site is meeting the standards set out in its Environmental Permit and to resolve the issues raised by local residents. This newsletter explains what we are doing.



Odour problems

The Environmental Permit requires Veolia to use appropriate measures to avoid causing significant pollution to the local environment.

When the waste breaks down landfill gas, a mixture of methane, carbon dioxide and other trace gases is produced. The levels of landfill gas escaping the site have in some areas been above the limits allowed

in the permit and there has been a history of local residents complaining to us that the landfill is causing unpleasant and unacceptable levels of odour in the surrounding area.



We believe that there are two potential causes of odour pollution. Firstly, the smell of waste can occur when new rubbish is deposited each day. This is minimised by tight control of the tipping activity and by covering the deposited waste daily with inert material (materials that will prevent the odour escaping). Odour neutralisation is also used at the site to deal with this problem.

The second type of odour is a landfill gas smell. This arises when some of the gas produced by the older decomposing waste escapes from surfaces of the landfill. This is normally collected by the gas extraction system and is used to generate nearly ten megawatts of electricity in the engines of the gas utilisation plant, enough to power 30,000 homes.

Site improvements

We have been challenging Veolia on the efficiency of their pollution controls and landfill gas management systems.

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Options for improvements on site have been explored and some of these are now being implemented.



One of the improvements being made is the installation of more extraction boreholes and pipe work, which are designed to recover landfill gas from the waste. Veolia have recently replaced over 60 of these and have also installed new boreholes to further improve gas recovery. This has resulted in an overall increase in the amount of gas collected, an increase in the amount of electricity generated, thereby reducing our reliance on fossil fuel power stations.

An odour neutralisation system has also been installed, which involves spraying a fine mist of odour neutralising solution across the landfill. This helps to reduce both types of odour, after it has escaped from the surface of the site.

We have made it clear to Veolia's site management team that they must actively monitor how effective the improvement works are in preventing unacceptable odour pollution. We have also explained that we shall maintain our vigilance through regular contact and site visits.

Keeping you informed

We want to keep you informed about the site and what improvements have been and will be made.

We have agreed with Veolia that they will take steps to ensure local residents are informed. Veolia will be distributing their own leaflet to you with details of their plans. They intend to set up a 24 hour telephone number which will give you the opportunity to discuss any comments, queries or concerns about the landfill site. It is important for Veolia to hear your feedback through their helpline as they will be able to respond to your queries and concerns directly and take action



Your feedback

We still value your feedback. If you notice a strong odour at your home and wish to call us, please use our **incident hotline** on **0800 80 70 60***. Please provide full details of when and where you noticed the odour.

**This is a free phone number operated 24 hours a day. Calls from mobile phones to this number are not free and will be charged at normal network operator's call rates.*