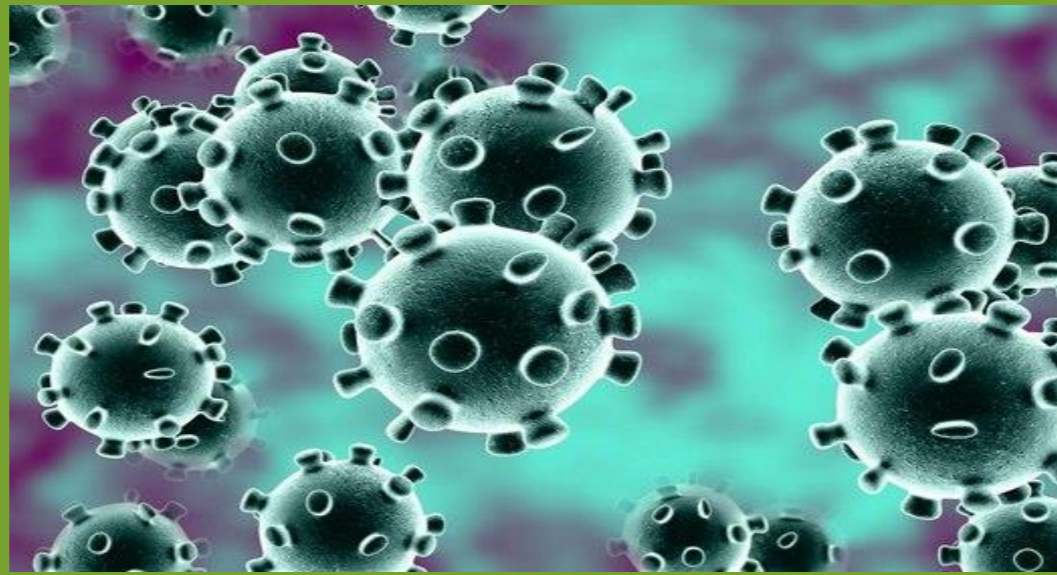


# The Environment Agency's regulatory response to COVID 19, specifically looking at the waste sector

TESSA BOWERING – SENIOR TECHNICAL OFFICER





- The Environment Agency's priority is to protect people and the environment and to support those we regulate.
- The EA recognize the difficulties faced by COVID 19 and expect operators to take all reasonable steps to comply with regulatory requirements, using contingency plans. If it is not possible to comply due to these  
If it is not possible to comply the EA would expect an operator to
  - notify the usual regulatory contact
  - minimise any unavoidable non-compliance
  - minimise the effects of any unavoidable non-compliance
  - prioritise complying with regulatory requirements that directly protect the environment and human health
  - keep records showing why a non-compliance occurred, for example records of staff absences, contractors being unavailable or supply chain failures

# COVID 19 Regulatory Position Statements

- Some time limited regulatory **position** statements have been published in regard to certain regulatory requirements
- They will help minimise risks to the environment and human health where, for reasons beyond an operators control, compliance with certain regulatory requirements may not be possible due to coronavirus. They also cover specific circumstances where the EA are relaxing normal regulatory requirements. This is to avoid increasing risks to the environment or human health during the particular circumstances of the coronavirus outbreak.

# Regulatory Position Statements

- ➔ Each COVID 19 RPS sets out when it applies and the conditions that must be complied with. All other regulatory requirements must be complied with
- ➔ If an operator wishes to use a COVID 19 RPS they must comply with the specific conditions and the requirements concerning pollution and harm to human health

- ➔ The EA are reviewing the ongoing need for each COVID 19 RPS shortly before its expiry date. If the RPS expires it will be removed from the listing or the expiry date may be extended. It is an operators responsibility to ensure they check the individual RPS in regard to its expiry date



# Exceeding waste storage limits at permitted sites because of COVID-19: RPS C2

- ➔ When you can temporarily store more waste than your permit allows during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- ➔ An operator will need to demonstrate they need to temporarily store more waste than the permit allows because of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions
- ➔ Only applies to wastes authorised to store under the permit



# Conditions that must be complied with: the operator must -

- ➔ comply with all the other requirements on your permit
- ➔ stop accepting waste at your site if there is a risk to human health or the environment
- ➔ notify the Environment Agency in writing, in advance of the types and quantities of waste stored over your permitted limits
- ➔ store all waste within the permitted site boundary
- ➔ manage the waste received on site on a strict rotation basis so waste received on the site first is removed from the site first
- ➔ Keep records to show that conditions have been complied with in this COVID-19 RPS for 24 months
- ➔ You must not store a waste that is not on the permit
- ➔ Store waste for more than 3 months unless agreed in writing

# Conditions

- ➔ You must make sure that temporarily increasing the amount of waste you store does not endanger human health or the environment
- ➔ You must not cause a risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals
- ➔ Cause a nuisance through noise or odours
- ➔ Adversely affect the countryside or places of special interest (SSSI, national parks, marine conservation zones etc.)



- This COVID 19 RPS will be withdrawn on 30 September 2020 unless the EA extend it. After this date the operator must comply with their permit
- The RPS Does not apply to radioactive waste or mobile plant



# Social distancing when signing and handing over waste transfer and consignment notes in person: RPS C8

- ➔ When waste is transferred, to comply with the regulations, you can use: paper waste transfer notes (including season tickets), hazardous waste consignment notes (including multiple collections) an electronic handset
- ➔ You normally, sign and hand over paper copies or obtain a digital signature in person.
- ➔ If you follow the conditions in this COVID-19 regulatory position statement, you do not have to do either of these in person

# Conditions:

- ➔ Instead of a signature the responsible person must provide their full name and business contact details. This includes a telephone number, an email address or a postal address
- ➔ you must give (or receive) all the information and data normally provided in the note. This must be done before the waste transfer or at the time of the transfer – but not later.
- ➔ For each waste transfer you must send or receive (as appropriate) the completed copy of the consignment note (without the signature). No later than 10 days after the transfer
- ➔ Keep records and comply with the waste duty of care
- ➔ Activities must not endanger human health or the environment

# Recycling target for glass in display screen equipment: RPS 242

- RPS issued on 25<sup>th</sup> August which temporarily allows sites to send cathode-ray tube (CRT) glass to hazardous landfill
- The WEEE Regulations set out recovery and recycling targets for waste electrical equipment. For display screen equipment such as TVs and monitors, the recycling target is 70%.
- The RPS is for Approved Authorised Treatment Facilities who can no longer recycle leaded or mixed (leaded and unleaded) glass in display screen equipment.
- The RPS was issued to reflect immediate challenges faced by operators involved in the treatment, recovery and recycling of CRTs. While the RPS applies, recyclers can landfill CRT glass without it affecting their obligation to meet the 70% recycling target for display glass in categories 3 and 4 of the waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) regulations. The RPS expires on 1 November 2020.

# Envirocom

- ➔ One company affected by the RPS is Grantham-based WEEE recycler Environcom, which until early 2018 recycled CRT glass through its former Welsh subsidiary Display Recycling Ltd.
- ➔ Display Recycling had end of waste approval from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to create a product from CRT glass at their site in Mold. Having moved Display Recycling's standalone plant and machinery to the West Midlands in 2018, Environcom was recently refused Definition of Waste (DoW) approval from the Agency for its sand-like product.
- ➔ Environcom has now ceased its glass recycling operations. The company says that by July 2020 it was processing 95% of all UK CRT glass.

Environcom processes white goods at its Grantham site (pictured) and had processed CRT glass in the West Midlands



# Other COVID 19 RPS: EA Regulatory Response

- ➔ Range of time limited Regulatory Position Statements to deal with certain regulatory requirements
- ➔ Covering:
  - Agriculture (spreading slurry or milk on land/ storing slurry)
  - Monitoring and Reporting (Monitoring emission from some environmental permitting activities)
  - Radioactive substances regulation
  - Regulated industry installations (non-waste)
  - Water Industry



# Thank You

Tessa Bowering  
Senior Technical Officer  
07770 476629

[Tessa.bowering@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Tessa.bowering@environment-agency.gov.uk)