

Reducing Fire Risk at Waste Sites

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Waste Fires

- Our role
- Impacts to the environment caused by fire
- Waste sites and Fire Risk
- Environmental Permits
- Addressing the Risk via a FFP and working together

The Waste Team - Our Role

- Regulating permitted waste operations
- Work with our permitting service to issue waste permits
- Attending waste incidents such as illegal fires and illegal un- waste operations
- Ensuring waste is transferred safely from cradle to grave
- Provide waste advice and guidance to business and industry

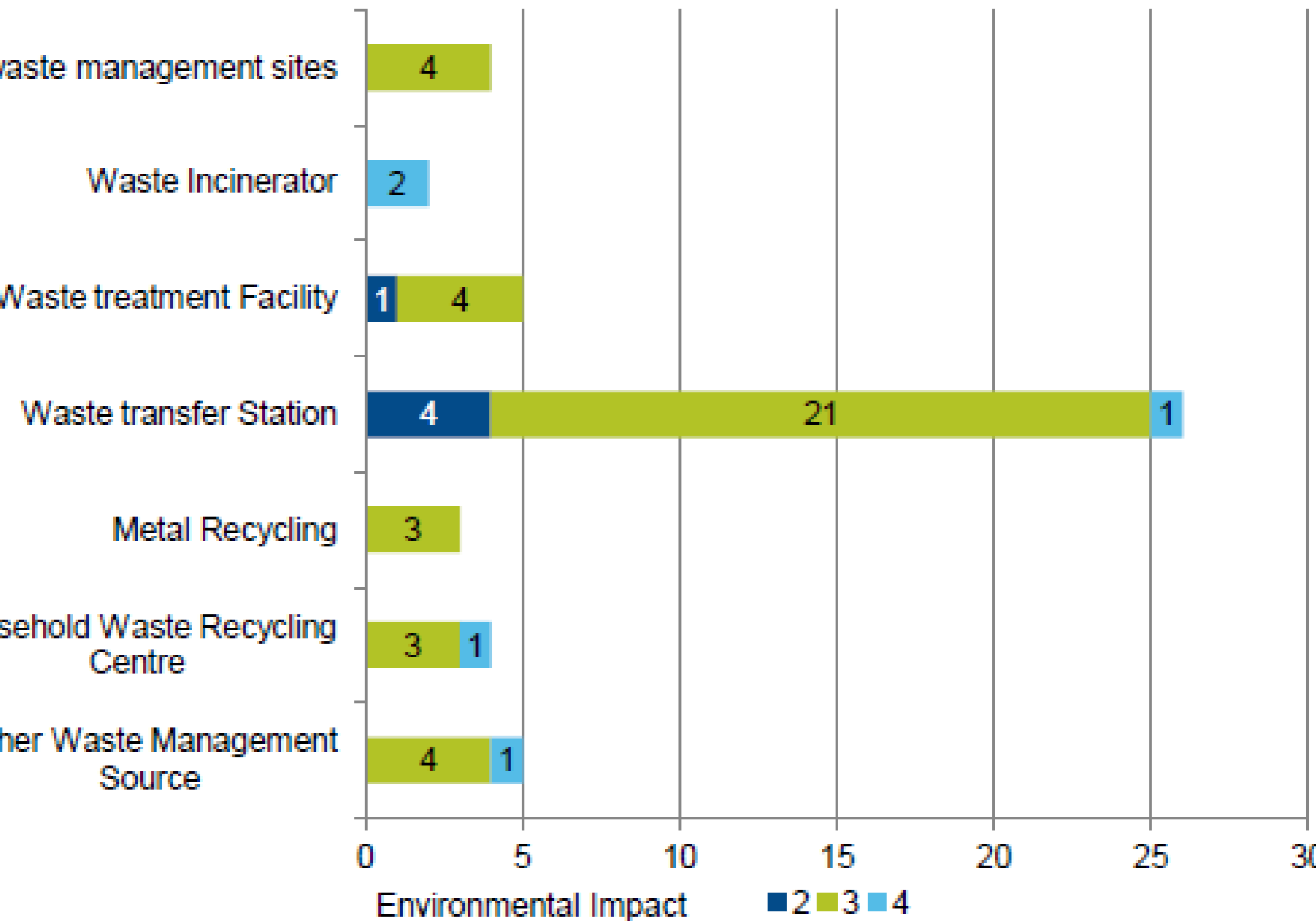


Fire incidents at Permitted Sites

- During 2012 there were **232 fires** at permitted and exempt waste management sites, with some of these sites having repeated fires.
- The number of fire incidents involving waste sites varies year on year. There is no discernable downward trend. Average 23000 pollution incidents a year, 3000 due to fire



From EA regulated sites in the NW during 2013 by Environmental Impact



Common causes of Fires at Permitted sites

- Arson/vandalism,
- Self combustion in stockpiles (due to chemical and biological processes)
- Storage of incompatible materials
- Ignition of flammable vapours
- Incidents related to welding and cutting
- Electrical faults, heating faults, plant and equipment failures,
- Naked flames or smoking
- Neighbouring site activities
- Dusty material in confined spaces self igniting or exploding.

Environmental Impacts from Fire

Fires pose a risk to the environment and people due to:

- Air pollution-Toxic smoke plumes
- Surface water pollution-firewater run-off
- Thermal radiation
- Hazardous waste and residues
- Physical risks
- Water use
- Difficult to control and can burn for weeks



Impacts on operator

- Disruption to business
- Increased insurance premiums
- Clean up costs/compensation claims
- Fines and potentially imprisonment
- Damage to business reputation



Waste fires

Combustible wastes (e.g. tyres, wood, plastics) and flammable liquids (e.g. waste solvents) are being stored on sites in a way which increases the risk of fire and/or the impact of any fire.

The risk is increased due to:

- poor storage practice
- poor management systems
- no or inadequate fire prevention, firewater management or response measures.
- Increasing number of sites as more waste is recycled

Environment Agency propose to:

- Increase intervention at poor-performing sites;
- review of the powers for suspending or revoking environmental permits;
- Increase regulatory fees paid by operators of poorly performing sites;
- greater scrutiny of newly permitted sites
- revisions to the systems for assessing operator competence.











HAZARDOUS
WASTE SKIP

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WARNING



Westfield
Transport

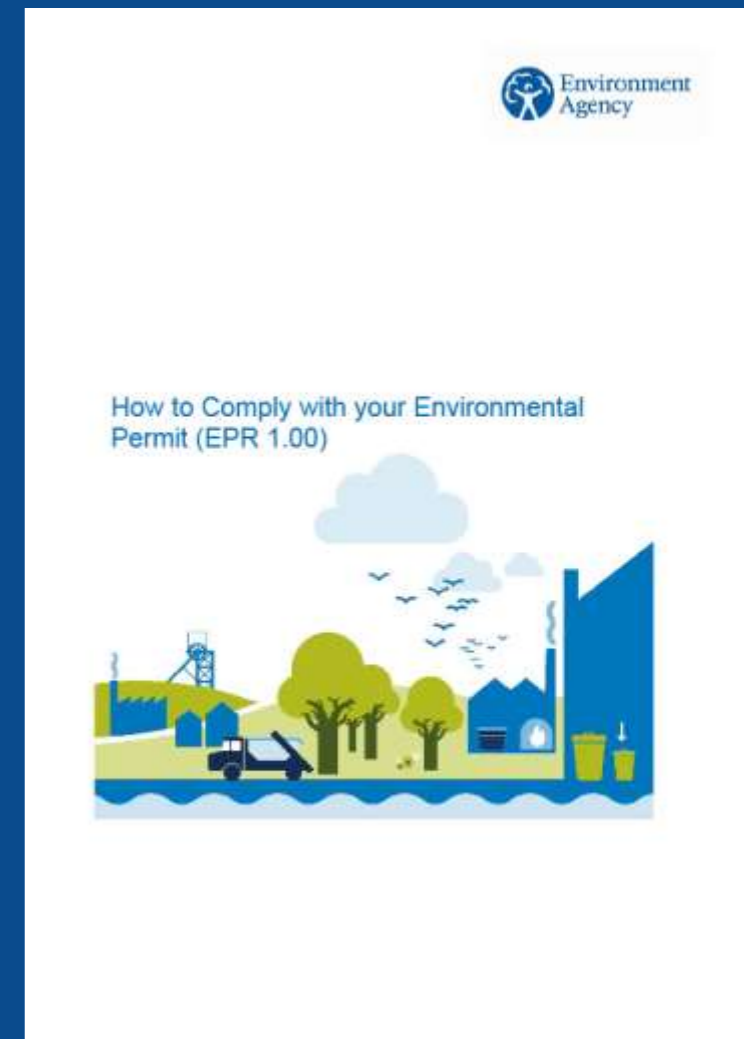
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Environmental Permits

- Operators must have a permit to store waste material
- Although the permits will have conditions relating to volumes and waste types, fire risk is not included
- However permit holders *do* have a duty to reduce the risk and impact of accidents including fires which should be addressed in their management system.



A Fire Prevention Plan

- What's the consequence of a fire?
- What's the risk of fire on your site?
- Preventing fires
- Detecting and suppressing fires
- Containing and mitigating the effect of fires
- Managing stacks
- Producing an accident plan
- Checklists

Is there a risk?

- Via our Fire Prevention Plan guidance we recommend operators carry out an environmental risk assessment based on three elements:

Source

Pathway

Receptor





Joint inspections with The Fire Service

- Shown to be very effective
- Sharing of risk analysis
- Prevents misunderstanding by the operator
- Sharing of knowledge and capabilities
- Visible multi-agency presence
- Evidence gathering and verification



Summary

Fire Prevention is Pollution Prevention

Defra and the Environment Agency want to see a significant reduction in fires at waste sites.

We want to:

- Ensure the standards set in The Fire Prevention Plan guidance are implemented.
- Prevent/mitigate the impacts of fire on people and the environment
- Conduct joint inspections to identified high risk sites

Consultation

The Environment Agency wants your views on the standards we intend to change in the guidance and those we propose to keep.

- We invite responses from operators, trade associations and businesses to ensure the guidance works for you and your industry.
- Responses are also welcome from other regulators, the public, community groups and non-governmental organisations with an interest in human health and environmental issues.

Thank you/Questions

- www.gov.uk