

Position Statement

Firewater from Waste Storage Sites.

Background

This Position Statement (PS) covers the potential run-off of Firewater.

Firewater is not classed as trade effluent within the meaning of the Water Industry Act 1991, however the run-off can contain potentially hazardous constituents.

Fire Prevention Plans drafted as part of a site emergency procedures or as a regulatory requirement for Waste Sites to comply with the Environment Agency (EA) Guidance under The Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) as revised.

Our Approach

- Contaminated firewater may harm the network and other assets and should be, where possible, contained and removed from site later by a licensed waste carrier. **The sewerage network and wastewater treatment works should not be part of any fire prevention plan.**
- The effects of the discharge on the receiving wastewater treatment works should also be considered, as damage to the treatment process may result in greater environmental harm due to the discharge of raw or partially treated sewage.
- In some emergency situations, Sewerage Undertakers (SU's) may consider accepting uncontaminated fire water; this will require consultation with the sewerage undertaker. **This option should only be used as a last resort and should not be relied upon.**
- SU's will treat each request to dispose of fire water in isolation, at the time of the incident, taking into account conditions at that time and location; the site of the fire, the sewerage network, the receiving waste water treatment works, and distance between the fire and the waste water treatment works.

Enforcement

Enforcement action in respect of any illegal discharges will be in line with the local Sewerage Undertaker's Enforcement Policy. In addition, if there is an environmental impact caused by Firewater, the Sewerage Undertaker will seek to demonstrate to the Environment Agency under 'Schedule 21 of the Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) that the impact was caused by a 3rd Party (i.e. the relevant Waste Site).