

A Rochdale company and its director have been ordered to pay £14,484 in fines and costs, after they pleaded guilty to operating a waste transfer station at Klondike, Rochdale without the relevant environmental permits to make their operations legal.

The Environment Agency brought the prosecution against Roeacre Limited and its director Peter Cordwell on Wednesday 26 October, following numerous complaints from local residents, including reports of excessive noise from metal workings.

The Environment Agency visited the site in April 2010, records showed that the site didn't have an environmental permit in place to operate as a waste transfer station. During visits to the site, officers witnessed large wagons unloading skips containing metals, cardboard, wood, plastic and tyres. Waste disposal is closely monitored by the Environment Agency, and sites which operate without permits risk serious harm to the environment and human health.

Permits are issued to manage the risk of pollution or harm to human health as a result of waste management activities. Further visits and meetings with Mr Cordwell resulted in the company applying for the right environmental permit. However, this application was unsuccessful as the site had problems getting planning permission from the local authority. It is a requirement of the legislation that a permit cannot be granted until the required planning permission is in place.

On numerous occasions, Mr Cordwell was advised by the Environment Agency that by operating without a permit he was committing an offence. Despite this advice, he continued to run the site.

Jennie Powsney, prosecuting for the Environment Agency said, "Mr Cordwell was aware that he was required to have a permit as he operates another waste management site elsewhere in Rochdale. The operations were of a considerable scale involving large amounts of waste estimated at around 400m³. "The site is near to Stanley Brook, Buckley Brook and the River Roch, and as such the operations had the potential to cause harm to these rivers. Had a permit been in place for the operators, conditions would have been imposed to control the potential risks."

The Environment Agency encourage any waste company to speak to us for advice and guidance, rather than find themselves on the wrong side of the law. If anyone is unsure if a site needs to be permitted, or how to go about getting a permit, please contact the Environment Agency for help and advice on 08708 506 506.