

## Events and Festivals - Preventing Pollution

### Purpose

This fact sheet has been written to help event organisers:

- identify sources of pollution associated with events and festivals
- better understand their legal responsibilities
- know where to find further information.

The Environment Agency wants to help you avoid pollution. By contacting your local Environment Agency Officer early on in your event planning we can help you meet your environmental obligations.

### Waste Management

All events generate large quantities of waste especially when catering facilities are provided. We encourage you to recycle and there are companies who can help you with this. Ideally waste should be segregated at source by providing separate plastic, glass, cardboard bins. Alternatively you may decide to use litter pickers to collect waste and then sort it at a collection point. You do not need to register this activity with us as it falls under paragraph 2 of the Non Waste Framework Directive. However, you must comply with certain conditions:

- The waste must be stored and sorted on the site it was collected
- The waste must be stored in a secure place
- You should also consider the location of storage so you do not cause pollution

### Duty of Care

Everyone has a legal responsibility to ensure their waste is handled safely and responsibly, this is known as Duty of Care. You should check that anyone removing waste from your site has a current Waste Carriers License. You should also check that your waste will be taken to a site authorised to accept it. You can make these checks by asking your contractors for details of licenses and permits then checking this against the public registers on our website.

### Water Management

#### Water Supply

If you intend to use a non-mains water supply such as abstraction from a river or lake for your event you may need to apply for an abstraction license from the Environment Agency. We encourage all event organisers to be efficient in their water use and to prevent wastage.

#### Waste Water

If you are going to discharge any water (except clean rain water) to surface or groundwater you will need a permit or exemption from the Environment Agency. Wherever possible we encourage all waste water from catering units, showers etc to be directed to mains sewer or removed from site via tanker. If

you choose to direct waste water to sewer you should contact the local sewerage undertaker or water company first. If your waste water will be removed by tanker you must comply with Duty of Care.

## Toilets

Most events use portaloos which are removed from site and the contents disposed of at the local sewage treatment works. You should check the appointed company has a waste carriers license and that the contents will be disposed of at an authorised site. Consider the location of toilets:

- Away from watercourses
- Away from areas subject to flooding

## Oil and Chemical Storage

If you decide to use generators for your electricity supply, consider how you will manage fuel on site. Oil and diesel spills can pollute water, contaminate land and prove very costly to clean up. You should ensure that any oils, chemicals and fuels are stored with secondary containment. Spill kits should be made available and staff should be trained in their use. You should have a plan of how you will dispose of any contaminated materials; remember, spilt oil and fuel is hazardous waste and should be dealt with as such.

## Wildlife

When organising your event ensure you avoid disturbance to wildlife in the area. Some species and sites are protected by law so make sure you know if there is important biodiversity in your area and get advice on how to protect it during your event. Temporarily fence off areas such as rivers and wet areas to prevent access which could cause damage.

## Mud!

Rain and events equal mud! Large quantities of mud and sediment can cause significant damage to watercourses and the aquatic life within them. Where this is a risk, we encourage you to fence off any rivers and streams running through the site to prevent access and entry of muddy run off.

## Incident Planning

Make contact with your local Environment Officer and agree how they will contact you and access the site should an incident occur. Have a pollution incident plan and include in it the Environment Agency Incident Hotline number 0800 80 70 60.

## Flooding

You should always have a flood incident plan and be familiar with the potential risk of flooding. Flood maps and advice are available on our website or by contacting Floodline on 0845 988 1188. You can sign up for temporary flood alerts this way or contact your local Flood Incident Management Team.

## Other Sources of Information

- The Environment Agency [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)
- Contact your local Environment Officer through our Customer Contact Centre on 08708 506 506
- NetRegs provides free environmental guidance. [www.netregs.gov.uk](http://www.netregs.gov.uk)

customer service line

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