

Rockcliffe Industrial Estate Warehouse Fire

Friday 19 November 2021

Update

Work is ongoing to keep a warehouse at Rockcliffe Industrial Estate under careful review following a fire which occurred on Monday 8 November.

Public Safety is the top priority and on Thursday 18 November a number of agencies (including Cumbria Fire and Rescue, Environment Agency and Public Health) met on site with Robert Birtles, an independent National Tactical Advisor for Waste Fires from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service to assess the current situation. Following the site visit it was confirmed that the approach to leave the remains of the fire burning on site in a controlled manner, is the correct course of action.

This approach will be constantly kept under review and monitored to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the local community.

Fire crews will maintain a presence in the area over the coming days and they are also carrying out routine safe and well visits to provide information and advice to local residents as an extra precautionary measure.

Your questions answered:

Q: When did the fire start?

A: The fire started on Monday 8 November when Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service were called to the scene.

Q: Why did you choose to leave the fire as a controlled burn?

A: When the fire began, active firefighting from outside of the building took place immediately. This was successful in bringing the fire under control but did not fully extinguish it. After careful assessment, the decision was taken to move to a controlled burn. Since the fire began, this approach has been kept under careful review and we remain confident that a controlled burn is the correct course of action.

Q: Do you have plans to test the air quality following the fire?

A: The assessment carried out last week identified the risk of any air pollution as very low. However due to ongoing public concern all the agencies involved in this incident have reviewed the situation and have agreed there is no need to change the approach. If you feel this should be reviewed again please contact UK Health Security Agency, who are the government agency responsible for this area of activity in the UK.

Q: Has the fire had any effect on the water courses?

A: This is being carefully monitored and there have been no reported impacts on any local watercourses.

Q: Who owns the licensing for the site?

A: The site operates under an Environment Agency exemption licence but following a fire of this nature it is standard practice for an investigation to take place.

Q: Who is responsible for the clean-up of the site?

A: The site operator is responsible for paying for the clean-up which will be carefully monitored by a range of agencies to ensure all the correct practices and procedures are followed.

Q: What are you doing to keep us informed?

A: We are working hard to keep you informed and following feedback from the community, we are in regular contact with Rockcliffe Parish Council and we are publishing regular updates through the media and through the various agencies' social media accounts.

To view the latest updates, please visit Cumbria County Council's Facebook or Twitter accounts.

If you have any further questions, please email: corporate.communications@cumbria.gov.uk

This incident is being managed by a range of agencies and partners, including:

