

Environmental Incident Impact Classification



Environmental impact

Category 1

Major, serious, persistent and / or extensive impact includes

- Long term remediation (more than 6 months) or destruction of property required
- Pollution that causes a persistent (7+ days) and / or extensive (>2 km) impact
- Pollution involving toxic, hazardous or infectious materials/wastes
- Water pollution causing death of 100 or more fish
- Unable to continue normal use of a nationally significant area of land and / or water by the public
- Closure of licensed potable water abstraction point
- Air pollution / land contamination resulting in fatality, serious injury (such as loss of limb or organ) or acute effect on human health
- More than 50 complaints in 24 hours
- Involvement of the national press
- Causing actual harm or damage to statutorily protected site or a European or Nationally protected species or its habitat
- Disruption to commercial interests leading to an interruption in production

Category 2

Significant impact includes

- Pollution / contamination of land / water / air that requires short term remediation (between 2 weeks and 6 months) or causes minor (repairable) property damage
- Pollution that has an impact over an area of at least 200m
- Water pollution causing death of 10 or more fish
- Unable to continue normal use of a locally significant area of land and / or water by the public
- Closure of a minor unlicensed potable water abstraction (e.g. serving 1-2 households)
- Air pollution / land contamination resulting in injury involving the need to attend hospital or effect on human health
- More than 10 complaints in one week
- Noise complaints that also involved a breach of consent
- Involvement of the local press or contact from the local MP
- Disturbance to statutorily protected site or a European or Nationally protected species or habitat
- Causing actual harm or damage to non-statutorily protected site or a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species or its habitat
- Damage to tree protected under a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- Confirmed spread of an invasive species
- Disruption to commercial interests having limited impact on production

Category 3

Minor or minimal impact includes

- Pollution / contamination of land / water / air that has no effect on its quality / use
- Pollution that has an impact over an area of less than 200m
- No effect on the normal use of land and / or water by the public, only individuals or a select group affected
- Release(s) to the atmosphere likely to cause only aesthetic impacts e.g. dust
- Less than 10 complaints in one week
- No press involvement
- Disturbance to non-statutorily protected site or a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species or its habitat
- Temporary impact on commercial / agricultural activities but no loss of production

Category 4

Negligible impact includes

- Spills of less than 20 litres
- Flytipping