



ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT

ENGLAND, WALES & SCOTLAND

Incident Reporting

No 32

September 2011

(update July 2012 for KNet)

Changes to Environmental Incident Reporting

An environmental incident occurred that was not reported to one of the MWH Environmental Advisors. From the investigation it was found that the incident was thought to be a near miss through misinterpretation of the environmental incident reporting categories.

The Incident Reporting Guidance Note (EVG 602) has now been changed to ensure that this does not happen again. It specifies that if pollution is not appropriately contained or affects outside of the site boundary it should be reported to one of the Environmental Advisors as soon as it is safe to do so.

Definitions of Environmental Incidents and Near Misses

An **environmental incident** is when environmental damage, harm, pollution or nuisance has occurred. MWH Treatment incident classification is covered by three categories:

Category 1 – Where a major environmental incident results in a prosecution.

Category 2 – Where an environmental incident has occurred and external assistance was required, for example from the Environmental Regulator, Police, or Fire service.

Category 3 – Where there was an incident affecting the environment, however the effects were minor, but it could have led to harm to human health, wildlife or pollution of land and rivers. This also applies to a nuisance occurring. A Category 3 has had no external assistance.

Note: The incident category will be confirmed by an Environmental Advisor.

An **Improve It** is classed when:

- there was the potential to cause an incident but it was prevented and did not cause damage to the environment or human health;
- and/or it had the potential to affect land or persons outside of the site boundary;
- the event and its effects are stated as an Improve It (near miss) in the Guidance Note 602.

Reporting of Incidents and Near Misses

If an environmental incident occurs then the Project Manager, client's representative and an Environmental Advisor need to be notified as soon as possible. The Environmental Regulator is to be informed, where necessary, by either the client or the Site Manager/Project Manager as soon as possible.

For Improve Its, an Environmental Advisor is to be informed if specific assistance is required and/or it affects an area or persons outside of the site boundary. The Client's representative is to be informed by the Project Manager or Site Manager. For all other Improve Its these are to be reported through the Improve It cards and monthly returns to the QSE Administrator.

Review of Incidents and Near Misses

The number of environmental incidents and improve its have to be reported internally, including to Senior Management, and to our clients on a monthly basis. The causes of these are reviewed and analysed. For 2010/11 the main cause of incidents and near misses were oil and diesel spillages (55%) and waste disposal (19%). The oil/diesel spillages were all near misses mainly regarding use of drip trays or hydraulic bursts, which were dealt with appropriately and cleaned up immediately. For waste these were all near misses dealing with housekeeping, escape of waste and incorrect segregation.