



**BRITISH AGGREGATES ASSOCIATION – PRESS RELEASE**  
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**WASTE NOT, WANT NOT – Environment Agencies declare recovered fuel oils to be waste!**

The British Aggregates Association (BAA) has lobbied the Scottish Minister for the Environment over the dangers of the dumping of waste oil caused by a misinterpretation of the European Waste Framework Directive by the British Environment Agencies.

Both the Environment Agency (EA) in England and SEPA in Scotland have decided that recovered fuel oil (RFO) comes within the Waste Framework Directive and as a result it will no longer be practical to use it as an alternative fuel in asphalt plants and various heating plants from 28 December this year.

Currently, specialist licensed oil companies throughout the country collect some 400,000 tonnes of waste oil from garages and industrial outlets each year, mostly free of charge. This waste oil is filtered, treated and blended into a fully acceptable fuel oil - an alternative to using virgin gas oil. This industrial process has grown up over the last 40 years and the UK is one of the leaders in this field. As a result there is a sensible use of this material, less call on natural resources – and little incidence of waste oil being dumped illegally in the UK.

All this is about to change warn the British Aggregates Association. Both the Environmental Agency in England and SEPA in Scotland have decided that RFO is still a waste, and if it is burnt as a fuel, then it comes under another piece of EU legislation known as the Waste Framework Directive (WID). The regulations surrounding the WID make it prohibitive for RFO to be used an alternative fuel in most installations. This begs the question of just what is going to happen to all that waste oil if it cannot be disposed of in a controlled manner. Fridge mountains and tyre mountains are one thing, but waste oil stored in drums up and down the country is a ticking environmental time bomb.

To date the UK environment agencies have adopted an ostrich like approach by saying that they have to carry out the rule of Brussels. They imply that there is not a problem because the waste oil can be used in steel works where it is burnt as part of steel processing rather than as a fuel, and as such does not come under the WID!

The BAA has recently received written confirmation that the environment agencies of several other EU states do **not** regard RFO as a waste. They say

that once the waste oil has been treated appropriately and is available to be used as an alternative fuel then it is no longer a waste and does not come with the WID.

Richard Bird, BAA Executive Officer said, "We have passed this information on to the Scottish Executive and hope that finally they will see reason and change their mind on the interpretation of RFO before a major pollution incident hits our salmon rivers."

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Notes to editors:

1. The British Aggregates Association is the representative trade body for independent quarry operators [www.british-aggregates.co.uk](http://www.british-aggregates.co.uk)
2. The Association represents some 70 members across the UK producing around 10% of national output from over 100 individual sites
3. The Association was formed to campaign for the interests of SME quarry operators, to protect the independent quarry sector from the increasing dominance of the major operators, and to oppose the ill-conceived Aggregates Levy.
4. The Association participates fully with all EU and UK consultations on environmental, economic, and health and safety legislation; and is an active member of the *Confederation of British Industry* (CBI) Minerals Committee, and the *Construction Products Association* (CPA). It operates its own mutual restoration fund for quarry restoration.