

Project Example – Kerosene Impact to Surface Water - Lancashire

Project Start – March 2011

Project End – July 2011

A scenario that Complete Tank Solutions frequently encounter are cases in which a kerosene spill has occurred which has not had any impact on any buildings but has contaminated nearby watercourses. As there is generally no trace of kerosene odour, the first thing the householder knows about the spill is a knock on the door from the Environment Agency, who have been called to investigate oil in a nearby stream or drainage ditch.

A recent example of this was an incident on a former farm in which a slow leak from a corroded metal oil tank contaminated the soils beneath the tank. From the soil, the kerosene found its way into an abandoned and long-forgotten land drain which connected with an old culvert and then discharged into an open stream some distance from the original site of the spill. Once in the stream, the kerosene was able to travel some distance off site and contaminated a number of locations downstream including grazing land, highway drainage, residential gardens and a poultry farm. This was a complex case which involved remediation of soil, culverts, road drains, and open water. The commission was also complicated by the number of parties involved (private land owners, regulators and the various insurance companies) and the threat of prosecution of the owners of the tank.

Complete Tank Solutions were able to quickly mobilise to site to address the soil contamination issues so that the source of contamination was removed. The abandoned land drain and culvert, as well as the highway drainage downstream, were then flushed with large volumes of clean water and all wash-water and oil that had been removed from the drainage network collected for disposal to appropriately permitted facilities. Areas of open water course with oil contamination were provided with floating booms to prevent further spread of the oil and then remediated by washing down the banks and foliage to release any retained oil and then skimming the free oil from the surface of the watercourse – again for proper disposal.

Complete Tank Solutions undertook all project management, coordination between interested parties and remediation works. The completion and validation report that Complete Tank Solutions produced once all works complete was accepted without issue by the Environment Agency and as a result of the rapid and effective clean up that was achieved, the Environment Agency lifted the threat of prosecution.

