



## Environmental Management Services

### **Company Unaware Of Interceptor Case Study**

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#### **Summary**

Interceptors are a key defence to preventing oil pollution but unless they are adequately maintained they may not be fully functional. British standard BS EN 858-2:2003 provides advice on suitable maintenance regimes for interceptors, if these are not followed companies are at an increased risk of causing oil pollution.

This case study summarised from an article on the Environment Agency's website gives an example of where failing to maintain an interceptor caused a major pollution incident.



*“The pollution and resultant prosecution could have been avoided. We are always available to provide free advice regarding pollution prevention and environmental responsibilities.”*

Claire Bale - Environment Agency

A car dealership allowed oil to escape from an interceptor; the oil spill killed wildfowl and polluted a seven kilometre stretch of the River Wye.

The company were:

- Fined £27,000.
- Ordered to pay full costs of £12,711.54 and a victim surcharge of £15.
- Liable for clean-up costs under the polluter pays principle.

Magistrates were told that a failure to maintain and clear an oil interceptor led to an oily substance leaking into the River Wye for 12 hours. The spill led to the death of 12 birds and other birds were rescued and treated by the RSPCA.

The court heard that the site owners were unaware of the device so it had not been emptied, cleaned or maintained. The company had a maintenance regime in place on the other interceptors on site but a lack of understanding of their drainage system meant the interceptor was allowed to accumulate oil and silt beyond critical levels leading to the discharge.

If the company had an accurate drain plan of the site the interceptor would have been identified and could have been added to the maintenance schedule.

