

Subject Powys Community Safety Partnership: Refuse derived fuel warning issued to farmers and landowners

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Refuse derived fuel warning issued to farmers and landowners

Farmers and landowners in the county could be targeted by criminal groups who are looking for land to illegally store a combustible type of waste, the Powys Community Safety Partnership has warned.

The partnership is now urging the farming community and landowners to remain vigilant after farmers have discovered bales placed on their land that contain refuse derived fuel (RDF). The bales have been stored on land without permission.

RDF is produced by shredding and dehydrating solid waste. It consists largely of combustible components of municipal solid waste such as plastics and biodegradable waste.

Its storage, export and uses must be done in accordance with tight regulations, imposed by Natural Resources Wales, due to the risk of inappropriate disposal and the risk of fire and pollution of stored incorrectly. An environmental permit is required in order to store the waste legally.

The partnership is also urging anyone who is offered money to store RDF on their land to reject any approach and report it to Natural Resources Wales or Dyfed Powys Police.

Cllr John Powell, Powys County Council's Cabinet Member for Community Safety, said: "We want to warn farmers and landowners of this underhand activity both to protect their interests and the environment. We don't want them to fall foul of this illegal activity.

"We are aware that organised crime groups have targeted Carmarthenshire landowners and they could already be targeting farmers and landowners in Powys.

"By posing as individuals acting alone, or operating under a company name, these unscrupulous individuals are offering landowners money to store large quantities of RDF (usually wrapped in bales), and claiming it is a temporary measure before the waste is sent for incineration.

"However, this is not the case and the landowners face persuasion or intimidation for the bales to remain on their property, and legislation holds them responsible for the storage and eventual expensive removal of the RDF, which could run into several thousands of pounds.

"We would also urge anyone who is offered cash to store RDF on their land to reject it and report it. While it may seem like a tempting proposition to make some extra cash, landowners could find

themselves risking enforcement action, or substantial clean-up costs if the waste is abandoned by the perpetrators.

"We fully support Natural Resources Wales in their investigations, and would advise anyone who believes they've been approached in this manner to contact their incident hotline on 0300 807060, or if you feel intimidated or threatened in any way contact police by calling 101."

ENDS

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