

SWINDON RIVER BENEFITS FROM ANTI-POLLUTION PARTNERSHIP

Thames Water and the Environment Agency have teamed up to visit Slough businesses to give advice on how to lessen the risk of polluting a local river.

Pollution prevention experts visited 40 traders, including light engineering businesses and a vehicle servicing depot, on the Cheney Manor industrial estate. They offered guidance on the storage of oil and hazardous chemicals.

The visits were prompted by the discovery that the nearby River Wray had been affected by intermittent pollution. The two organisations suspected that pollutants had entered the watercourse via surface water sewers on the estate, which are designed to channel rainwater from roofs and roads into the river.

The team assessed the likelihood of pollution from businesses on a case-by-case basis, then gave advice and helped companies to make any site improvements needed to minimise risks.

Checks were also made to ensure that private drains at traders' premises were properly connected to the public sewers. At some businesses toilets and sinks had been mistakenly connected to surface water sewers, sending sewage and dirty water into the River Wray. They should instead be connected to foul sewers that take wastewater to the local sewage works in Rodbourne for treatment.

Traders have agreed to carry out the necessary improvements.

Chris Ralph, Thames Water's Environmental Protection Technologist, said: "We have been very pleased with the positive response from businesses on the estate, who have shown a strong commitment to working to minimise the risk of pollution incidents.

"We found during our visits that there were often simple improvements that could be made to dramatically reduce the risk of pollution through accidental spillage."