



Dust from mineral extraction: regulation of emissions in England

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The United Kingdom, which includes England, has fairly high levels of rainfall but sporadic droughts occur especially in the east. Mineral working gives rise to dust. Concerns about dust soiling are major source of public objections to new minerals extraction operations. Dust emissions from mineral workings are a significant cause of public concern in the United Kingdom and are recognised as sources of health concerns and nuisance. Emissions are controlled through a number of complementary sets of regulations that are generally well observed by the industry and well enforced by the relevant public authorities. A comprehensive system of regulation, based on European and national law, to deal with all aspects of these operations including pollution control, planning, occupational health and safety and statutory nuisances. Most minerals applications are subject to EIA which forms the basis for planning and environmental conditions and monitoring of operations. There are limit values on PM10 and PM2.5 in air, and for potentially harmful elements (PHEs) in soils and water, derived from European regulations but, as yet, no limit values for PHEs (other than radioactive materials) in air. Stakeholder engagement is encouraged so that members of the public can express concerns during minerals operations and operators can quickly deal with these. While some effects inevitably remain, the levels of dust emissions are kept low through good site design and management, proper use of machinery which is equipped to minimise emissions, and good training of the workforce. Operational sites are required to have dust monitoring equipment located outside the site boundary so that any emerging problems can be detected and addressed quickly.