

Monitoring your silage effluent tank levels regularly is not just common sense it is a legal requirement

Under the Control of Pollution Regulations farmers must keep all effluent collection channels and drains clear of blockages and check effluent tank levels on a frequent basis when effluent is being produced, and regularly throughout the year. This is because the effluent can have an extremely negative impact on water courses and water supply quality.

Failing to comply with the regulations can result in costly fines and have an impact on business. Additionally, as Natural Capital comes to dominate the way that farm subsidies are calculated, the importance of protecting the environment and being able to evidence what you are doing becomes even more important, as it will directly affect your income.

Effluent and slurry systems can produce noxious gases, so meeting the regulatory requirement of checking levels “on a frequent basis” carries a health hazard for personnel, which must be managed.

Whilst effluent systems are designed to be separate from any rainwater runoff, torrential rain can get past even well-designed systems. In these circumstances your attention will likely be focused on the highly visible effects of the rain, rather than the effect it is having on effluent levels.

All the above, mean that monitoring the level of your silage effluent tanks is not just desirable, nor is it simply Regulatory Compliance but is important financially, for safety and for the environment. A simple way of doing this is to automate the data gathering by installing a sensor, which is connected to the internet and delivers data and alarms to your phone and PC.

Here's an example installed in a tank to monitor the level. In this case it did pick up an unexpected rise during torrential rain, helping prevent a loss of containment and prompting work to identify and prevent future rainwater ingress.

