

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

SUBJECT: Environmental Improvement	CONTACT OFFICER: Colin Batchelor
TEL/EMAIL :No.Ext 2219	BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

## INFORMATION:

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION SAVES LOCAL BUSINESS THOUSANDS



When Crittalls Windows Ltd moved their manufacturing base to a new site in Witham in November 2007 it was their intention to take all their old processes with them and carry on largely as before. However an eagle eyed Environmental Health Officer who issues the permit for them to operate, spotted an opportunity to improve their environmental performance with respect to their discharge to water.

The manufacturing process requires the galvanised metal window frames to be thoroughly cleaned in a series of baths, one of which contains chromic acid. The next bath contains water which washes off the excess chromium and quickly becomes too contaminated to use effectively. The contaminant in the form of the hazardous chromium 6 was then discharged to the sewer, but only with significant dilution to enable the company to meet its discharge consent with Anglian Water.

Environmental Health recognised the unsustainable nature of this approach and challenged Crittalls to find a solution! The resultant self built treatment plant within the factory processes the nasty chromium 6 and converts it into the more environmentally friendly chromium 3, which is settled out and squeezed dry to create a cake which is acceptable in landfill. The remaining water is clean enough to discharge straight to the sewer, although investigations are being made to consider recycling it back into the original cleaning process.

The reduced water usage is saving the company tens of thousands of pounds per year and inspired them to seek additional environmental savings through other means such as prudent energy management. They are improving their environmental impact and significantly reducing their carbon footprint, all thanks to the encouragement from Environmental Health.