

DHSS Follow-Up Review of Air Monitoring Data from the Bridgeton Landfill Area, July 8-July 11 2013

The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) has reviewed air quality screening data collected by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) at Bridgeton Landfill from the afternoon of July 8 to the afternoon of July 11, 2013. On June 7, DHSS began issuing follow-up reviews of the daily air quality screening data on a twice-weekly basis.

On April 23, DNR began routine, twice daily, surveillance of hydrogen sulfide, benzene, and odor levels around the entire periphery of the landfill. In addition, DNR has provided continuous monitoring of reduced sulfur compounds (reported as hydrogen sulfide), sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and total volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at three fixed locations. DHSS has reviewed both sets of data to identify potential public health concerns for short-term health effects. Generally, samples are collected near the property boundary and dispersion is expected to reduce exposure downwind of the sample locations.

Odors

DNR reported light odors during this time period at locations south, southwest, and east of the landfill, with moderate to strong odors reported for a short time period on July 11 southwest of the landfill.

- Winds were predominantly from the south and southwest on July 8 and 9; from the south, southwest, and northwest on July 10; and from the south, southeast, and northeast on July 11.
- The DNR contractor detected light odors east of the landfill on July 8 and July 9; light odors south, southwest, and east of the landfill on July 10; and light to strong odors south and southwest of the landfill on July 11 using a Nasal Ranger olfactometer.
- DHSS continues to recommend that during periods of objectionable odor, sensitive individuals should stay indoors as much as possible, avoid outdoor exercise, and seek medical advice for any acute symptoms. Symptoms associated with exposure to strong odors include headache, nausea, and fatigue. Symptoms generally associated with strong odors typically disappear once the odors dissipate.

Hydrogen Sulfide and Other Reduced Sulfur Compounds

Hydrogen sulfide concentrations were well below levels of public health concern.

- The maximum concentration of hydrogen sulfide detected was 7.5 parts per billion (ppb) during routine monitoring. Hydrogen sulfide concentrations were detected by the Jerome meter, which is highly sensitive and specific to hydrogen sulfide.
- For three hours on July 8 and four hours on July 10 at the AreaRAE monitoring location west of the landfill, and one hour on July 9 and six hours on July 10 at the AreaRAE monitoring location east of the landfill, average concentrations of reduced sulfur compounds exceeded a health-based guideline for acute exposure to hydrogen sulfide. These compounds detected by AreaRAE monitors are not just hydrogen sulfide but primarily another reduced sulfur compound with lower toxicity.

Sulfur Dioxide

Average sulfur dioxide concentrations were below levels of public health concern.

- Sulfur dioxide was periodically detected at the monitoring locations west and east of the landfill. However, average concentrations were below 0.01 parts per million (ppm) and did not exceed health-based guidelines for acute exposure.

Benzene and Total VOCs

Benzene was not detected in ambient air at any of the surveillance locations around the landfill.

- Previous sampling has shown that, while several VOCs are present in the landfill source gas, benzene may be a primary VOC of public health concern.
- Average total VOC concentrations were not at a level that indicates a need for compound-specific sampling.

Carbon Monoxide

Average carbon monoxide concentrations were well below levels of public health concern.

Radiation Rates

Gamma radiation rates were well below levels of public health concern.

- Gamma radiation rates continue to be at levels that are at or near natural background levels.