



# FACT SHEET

## Brookhaven Landfill, Town of Brookhaven, New York

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### Addressing Air Quality Issues at the Brookhaven Landfill

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has prepared this fact sheet to inform the public about the actions being taken to improve air quality in the communities surrounding the Brookhaven Landfill.

### Brookhaven Landfill History

The Brookhaven Landfill is located in the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York and is operated by the Town. The landfill was opened in March 1974 and consists of six compacted areas called cells. Four of these cells which previously accepted municipal solid waste have been permanently closed. The landfill does not accept municipal solid waste anymore. Cell 5, which accepted construction and demolition (C&D) debris and ash from local Resource Recovery Plants, is currently being capped and prepared for closure. Cell 6 is currently active and is accepting C&D debris and ash. The landfill has a gas collection system for methane and other gases and a permanent flare to burn the gases to reduce odors and emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Nearby residents have raised public health concerns about landfill odors and emissions over the years which continue to be investigated by NYSDEC. Previous investigations about public health concerns have been investigated by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the United States Public Health Service Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). A public health consultation jointly prepared by NYSDOH and ATSDR in November 2005 concluded there was no apparent health hazard associated with the Brookhaven Landfill. The consultation recommended that NYSDEC continue to monitor activities at the landfill to ensure compliance with all state regulations.

### Activities Being Undertaken

The Town of Brookhaven has retained a consultant (RTP Environmental Associates, Inc.) to develop an Odor and Dust Monitoring Program (Plan) for the landfill, which was approved by NYSDEC in August 2015. The overall objective of the monitoring plan was to identify the specific sources and areas at the landfill that were generating odors. The Plan required on-site and off-site collection of ambient air samples to assess sources of odors at the landfill and the establishment of a dust (particle) monitoring network around the perimeter of the landfill.

The information collected under the Plan identified the odor episodes to be associated with the landfill. It also identified areas of the landfill where corrective actions needed to be taken to reduce odorous hydrogen sulfide emissions. The Town is currently taking these corrective actions under the supervision of NYSDEC.

The Plan was recently updated to include a more thorough assessment of hydrogen sulfide emissions

in areas of the landfill that have been recently identified by NYSDEC as a source. The collection of this additional information will inform the development of corrective actions by the Town to reduce off-site odor events at the landfill.

NYSDEC recently conducted on and off-site hydrogen sulfide monitoring and identified an area of the landfill that was a problem which required a further evaluation by the Town for corrective actions. The Town hired a landfill odor remediation expert to address these issues and NYSDEC is actively monitoring their progress by installing continuous hydrogen sulfide monitors at two off-site locations.

These air monitors were installed at the end of June 2017 and will enable NYSDEC to evaluate the frequency and duration of odor episodes associated with hydrogen sulfide releases. One of these monitors is located at the Frank P Long Intermediate School which is south of the landfill and the other is along an entrance to a business north of the landfill. The results collected will help NYSDEC assess the effectiveness of current corrective measures in reducing off-site odor episodes.

To evaluate complaints of dust or ash migration from the landfill, NYSDEC collected samples from the surface of the landfill to be used for comparison to particle samples collected by concerned residents. All particle samples are analyzed by NYSDEC's Microscopy Laboratory. The first round of particle analysis in 2016 was inconclusive. The particles collected could not be attributed to ash being disposed on at the landfill. A second round of particle sampling is currently underway.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, NYSDEC will continue to work with the Town of Brookhaven to minimize odorous emissions and dust from the landfill. NYSDEC recognizes there needs to be an improvement in the air quality for communities around the landfill and, together with the Town, is actively pursuing remedies that will bring on those improvements to reduce or eliminate odor episodes. NYSDEC has responded to numerous inquiries about air quality in the community around the landfill. These responses are available upon request.

## **For More Information**

Please contact Aphrodite Montalvo, Public Participation Specialist  
Phone: (631) 444-0249  
Email: [R1info@dec.ny.gov](mailto:R1info@dec.ny.gov)

## **To Report an Odor Complaint**

### **DEC Odor Hotline: (631) 444-0380**

Please leave your name, phone number, date of call, location and description of odor.