

AIR CP CG_Fort Bend_CP_20151222_Investigation_1301200
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Investigation Report

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Customer: Generic Incident Principal
Customer Number: CN602295370

Regulated Entity Name: GENERIC INCIDENT ZIP CODE 77584

Regulated Entity Number: RN104046545

Investigation # 1301200

Incident Numbers

225043

Investigator: GARY ACKERMAN

Site Classification

Conducted: 12/22/2015 -- 12/22/2015

No Industry Code Assigned

Program(s): AIR QUALITY NON PERMITTED

Investigation Type: Compliance Investigation

Location:

Additional ID(s):

Address: ,

, ,

Local Unit: REGION 12 - HOUSTON

Activity Type(s): AIRCOMPL - AIR CMPL - AIR
COMPLAINT INV
AIR RECON - AIR RECON -
RECONNAISSANCE
INVESTIGATION

Principal(s):

Role

Name

RESPONDENT

GENERIC INCIDENT PRINCIPAL

Contact(s):

Role

Title

Name

Phone

Other Staff Member(s):

Role

Name

QA Reviewer

CESAR BAUTISTA

Supervisor

MICHAEL HUTTO

Associated Check List

Checklist Name

Unit Name

AIR COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

Sitewide

AIR INVESTIGATION - EQUIPMENT

Sitewide

MONITORING AND SAMPLING revised 06/2013

Investigation Comments:

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Complaint Incident No. 225043 is comprised of 129 individual complaints received between the dates of 12/14/2015 and 12/21/2015 at various times by phone and email. Most of the complaints had very generic

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information in their descriptions concerning odors from an unknown source in and around the Shadow Creek Subdivision (SCS) in Pearland. The complainants alleged the odors to have occurred between 12/14/2015 and 12/21/2015. The complaints described the possible odors as being similar to garbage, sulfur, natural gas, rotten eggs, sugar factory waste, hydrogen sulfide mulch, feces, sweet and/or burnt chemicals, and fertilizer. Alleged health effects included feeling nauseous, burning eyes/throat, and vomiting.

Meteorological conditions (from WeatherUnderground.com site: KTXPEARL35) for each date/time of the alleged complaints were as follows:

12/14/2015 8:10 PM:

Temperature: 57.9 degrees Fahrenheit (F)
Wind speed; direction: 0 miles per hour (mph); south southeast
Humidity: 89%

12/17/2015 from 4:30 PM – 9:30 PM:

Temperature: 64 - 50 degrees F
Wind speed; direction: 0 mph; west southwest
Humidity: 28 - 87%

12/18/2015 from 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM:

Temperature: 48.9 – 46.9 degrees F
Wind speed; direction: 0 mph; northwest - east southeast
Humidity: 77 - 90%

12/19/2015 12:00 PM/7:00 PM:

Temperature: 63.9/56.3 degrees F
Wind speed; direction: 4.3/3.4 mph; east/south southeast
Humidity: 57/80%

12/20/2015 7:00 PM:

Temperature: 59.4 degrees F
Wind speed; direction: 0 mph; east
Humidity: 99%

12/21/2015 3:00 AM/ from 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM:

Temperature: 70.3/70.2 – 66.9 degrees F
Wind speed; direction: 0/0 mph; east northeast/south - south
Humidity: 94/96 - 99%

Due to the extraordinary number of complaints received and the ongoing nature (other related, open investigations) of this particular issue, the complainants were not contacted prior to conducting the field investigation on 12/22/2015.

Investigation Narrative

TCEQ Investigators Mr. Gary Ackerman, Lead, and Ms. Eresha DeSilva arrived in the Shadow Creek Area just off of McHard Rd./ Shadow Creek Parkway (SCP) east of Kingsley Drive on 12/22/2015 around 8:10 A.M. to begin the odor investigation. At that time, (according to WeatherUnderground.com station ID: KTXPEARL37) the meteorological conditions were as follows: 58.1 degrees F, winds at 0 mph out of the west northwest, and 94%

humidity.

The investigators began the odor survey route at that point and continued west down SCP to the Fort Bend Parkway Tollroad with the windows of the vehicle rolled down; no wind or odors were noted. Another stop (8:19 A.M.) was made on McIntyre Lane just south of the Akzo Nobel facility; no wind or odors were noted. Further west, the investigators stopped (8:28 A.M.) at 8001 FM 2234 (SCP) after noting a strong odor that was characteristic of garbage with slight notes of petroleum and fertilizer odors mixed together. The odor lasted only for a minute and was only detected while the vehicle was moving. After walking up and down the shoulder of the roadway for several minutes no odor could be detected.

The fourth stop (8:45 A.M.) was made between Blueridge Rd. and Chimney Rock Rd. where there were oil and gas wells with an active ground flare. There was an immediate strong odor characteristic of oil and gas sites noted. There was a slight (1-2 mph) east to northeast wind every four to five minutes that would last only briefly. Based on such calm wind conditions, it was difficult to determine where the odor was coming from. While surveying the flares and tanks at the site from the shoulder of FM 2234 with an optical gas imaging camera, a potentially large volatile organic compound (VOC) cloud was noted emanating from the back of the site. The investigators drove north on Chimney Rock Rd. and found the cloud to be coming from the oil and gas site. They returned to the previous location and entered the open gateway and drove towards what appeared to be VOC emissions. The emissions were identified to be originating from two ground flares towards the north end of the site. However, while attempting to gain a better view of the flares without obstructions a site work truck drove in and over to the flare controller area. Within minutes the flares turned off and the emissions stopped before footage could be recorded. The investigators waited for about five minutes but no emissions were seen from the flares, even after they came back on.

The investigators continued on the route to stop five (9:40 A.M.) at FM 521, just south of FM 2234 and north of Cherry Crushed Concrete. There was a very strong to moderate garbage/petroleum odor detected and no wind. The odor only lasted briefly. The next stop (9:45 A.M.) along the route was near an Energy Transfer mercaptan station a little further south on FM 521; no odors were detected but a light east northeast wind had just began blowing.

The route continued south on FM 521 and then west on Trammel-Fresno Rd. to the Fort Bend Parkway Tollroad. A stop was made (10:15 A.M.) at Trammel-Fresno Rd. and Liberty Square Trail. A moderate garbage/petroleum/fertilizer odor was briefly detected again; winds still out of the east northeast at about 1 – 2 mph. The investigators left and continued north to Winfield Lakes Trail and Green Lane where a very light odor of unidentifiable mixed odors were detected. Again, no wind was present but very brief, light gusts were still coming from the east northeast. The investigators departed this area and continued next through the SCR neighborhood.

While driving through the neighborhood, the same garbage/petroleum odor was not detected again. However, several areas had strong mulch and fertilizer odors. Those areas looked to have been very recently landscaped with new manure-based mulch. The investigators eventually departed the neighborhood around 12:15 P.M.

Facility Authorization Narrative

Since an actual source of the odors could not be determined, no facility authorizations were reviewed.

Exit Interview

An exit interview was not conducted since there were no alleged violations, additional issues, or records requested.

In addition, the complainants were contacted by email with the results of the investigation on 03/01/2016 at 1:47 P.M.

GENERAL FACILITY AND PROCESS INFORMATION

Process Description

No applicable process description since an actual source was not identified.

BACKGROUND

Agreed Orders, Court Orders, and Other Compliance Agreements

NA

Prior Enforcement Issues

NA

Complaints

Based on a review of CCEDS during the past five years, hundreds of odor complaints have been received relating to this area and other TCEQ nuisance odor investigations are being conducted concurrently by the Region 12 Office.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Current Enforcement Actions

Based on the TCEQ's Odor Complaint Investigation Procedures and application of the FIDO Chart, an "offensive" odor with an intensity of "strong" would have to be present on a daily basis continuously for at least 1 minute to constitute a nuisance. Although the investigators confirmed an odor, a nuisance condition and source of the odor could not be confirmed at the time. No violations or areas of concern were noted during this investigation.

Additional Issues

No additional issues were noted during this investigation.

REPORT ATTACHMENTS

1. Area and Survey Route Map

No Violations Associated to this Investigation

Signed


Environmental Investigator

Date

4/29/16

Signed


Supervisor

Date

4/29/16

Attachments: (in order of final report submittal)

___ Enforcement Action Request (EAR)

___ Letter to Facility (specify type) : _____

Investigation Report

___ Sample Analysis Results

___ Manifests

___ Notice of Registration

___ / Maps, Plans, Sketches

___ Photographs

___ Correspondence from the facility

___ Other (specify) : _____

Attachment 1

Area and Survey Route Map

GENERIC INCIDENT ZIP CODE 77584

RN #104-046-545

PEARLAND/ FORT BEND COUNTY

December 22, 2015

Area and Survey Route Map

Shadow Creek Subdivision Area



Investigation Type: CMPL

Air Account NO: None

Attachment: 1

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