

AIR CP_104046545_CP_20160811_INVESTIGATION_1355207_
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 # 1355207

Incident Numbers

240927

Investigator: MENGISTU LEMMA

Site Classification

Conducted: 08/11/2016 -- 08/11/2016

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

Principal(s):

Role

Name

RESPONDENT

GENERIC INCIDENT PRINCIPAL

Contact(s):

Role

Title

Name

Phone

Other Staff Member(s):

Role

Name

Supervisor

ROBERT AGUILAR JR

QA Reviewer

ROBERT AGUILAR JR

Associated Check List

Checklist Name

Unit Name

AIR COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

Area Wide

Investigation Comments:

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

From August 5, 2016 through August 9, 2016 the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Houston Regional Office received 11 complaints as part of the ongoing complaint investigation of various odors near the Shadow Creek Ranch neighborhood in the City of Pearland, Brazoria and Ft. Bend counties of Texas. Some complaints were received by telephone and others by email. The TCEQ Incident number for this investigation is 240927.

The complainants stated through the online complainant form or via telephone that there is a foul odor that

smells like rotten eggs, or sewer in the area that is intermittent but has been going on for a long time. Some of the complainants stated that the odor has been going for over a year others stated that they started experiencing it more recently as within the past six months. The complainants also stated that they suspect the odor is coming from the Blue Ridge Landfill. The complainants describe the odor as stronger in the evening to night hours. The complainants identified the odor in different ways such as strong odor that smells like rotten garbage, burning trash, toxic gas, and rotten eggs.

The complaint was assigned to the investigator Mr. Mengistu Lemma on August 8, 2016. The investigator attempted to contact the complainants on August 9, 2016 and August 10, 2016. Several of the complainants did not answer and a message was left on their voice mail. Six complainants returned calls and talked to the investigator. Some complainants alleged that the odor gives them such a bad headache and others complained of nausea and vomiting when the odor is stronger. Some told the investigator that they could not come out of their house when the odor is strong and are worried about their long time health effect and their children's health. One complainant stated that the odor started seeping inside the house and gave them headaches. Others are worried about their property values decreasing. All of them claimed that the odor is strong at night and the investigation should be conducted at night. The investigator assured them that there are several investigations conducted in the area including an overnight investigation.

Investigation Narrative

On August 11, 2016 at 04:00 a.m. TCEQ investigator Mr. Mengistu Lemma arrived in the general vicinity where most of the complainants experienced the odor. The area is the north and northwest section of the Shadow Creek Ranch Subdivision.

The weather was overcast, temperature 82 degrees Fahrenheit, winds were 5 miles per hour from the South Southwest, and the humidity was 69%. There was no precipitation.

The Shadow Creek Ranch Subdivision is a large subdivision that is bordered to the east by State Highway 288, to the north by Sam Houston Parkway, to the east by FM 521 (Alameda Rd.) and to the south by South Fork Drive. The major part of the subdivision lies in Brazoria county, but the western part of the subdivision extends into Ft. Bend county. Most of the complainants for this investigation are concentrated north of Broadway Street, west of Kirby Drive, south of McHard Rd. (Shadow Creek Parkway), and east of Alameda Road.

The investigator started an audio, visual and olfactory (AVO) observation driving from State Highway 288 west on Shadow Creek Parkway. The north section of Shadow Creek Parkway is mostly a business area that includes retail stores, hotels, dining establishments and medical facilities. The south side of Shadow Creek Parkway is mostly residential with several schools and day care centers are located close to the Shadow Creek Parkway. No facility was identified on Shadow Creek Parkway as a potential source of the odor.

The investigator detected a strong odor of unpleasant rotten garbage at the intersection of Shadow Creek Parkway and Trinity Bay Drive. The investigator parked the vehicle and walked in the area. The investigator started logging the odor intensity time log (Attachment 2). A strong odor persisted for about three minutes. The investigator turned left on Trinity Bay Drive into the Shadow Creek Ranch Subdivision. The odor persisted but the intensity was moderate for about the next ten to fifteen minutes. During this time, the investigator conducted AVO observations driving and sometimes walking through the neighborhood on Swift Creek Drive, Harbor Pass Drive, Harbor Chase Drive, Indigo Sands Drive, Arcadia Bay Drive, Mountain Sage Drive, Morgan Bay Drive, Barton Shores Drive, and back on Trinity Bay Drive to West Broadway Drive exiting the Subdivision. As the investigator turn right on West Broadway heading towards the entrance of the Blue Ridge Landfill, the odor persisted but the intensity was lighter. The investigator then turn right onto Alameda Road. The odor was still persistent even though the intensity was much lighter in this area. The investigator then turned right on to Shadow Creek Parkway heading back to the area where the strong odor was experienced earlier. Arriving back at the intersection of Shadow Creek Parkway and Trinity Bay Drive where the strong odor was detected, this time the rotten garbage odor had dissipated to very light and hardly detectable.

The investigator then started driving back through the same neighborhood streets where some of the complainants' houses are located and continued the AVO observation. No detectable odor was observed. The investigator left the area at 8:00 a.m. and headed back to the office.

Facility Authorization Narrative

The investigator conducted a general area survey but did not enter any facilities because none of the facilities were identified as sources by the complainants or investigator except Blue Ridge Landfill. Blue Ridge Landfill was under investigation for similar odor complaint (Investigation # 1331231). Therefore, no site visit was conducted for this investigation.

Exit Interview

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

GENERAL FACILITY AND PROCESS INFORMATION

Process Description

N/A

BACKGROUND

Agreed Orders, Court Orders, and Other Compliance Agreements

Based on review of CCEDS and the regional office files, there were no agreed orders, court orders, or other compliance agreements for the site.

Prior Enforcement Issues

Based on a review of CCEDS and the regional office files, no violations have been issued by the TCEQ to the alleged source during the past five years.

Complaints

Based on a review of CCEDS during the past five years, there were numerous odor complaints received and other investigations are being conducted by the Region 12 Office concurrently.

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 "very light" would have to be present on a daily basis continuously for at least 12 hours to constitute a nuisance. A nuisance condition and source of odor could not be confirmed at the time.

Additional Issues

No additional issues were noted during this investigation.

REPORT ATTACHMENTS

1. Area & Survey Route Map
2. Investigator's Odor Intensity Time Log

No Violations Associated to this Investigation

Signed

Margie Lemm
Environmental Investigator

Date

9/22/16

Signed

Robert Aguilar
Supervisor

Date

9/22/16

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) :

AREA SURVEY MAP
INVESTIGATOR'S DOOR LOG.