



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Bennett Landfill Fire Removal Site
 (Chester, Chester County, South Carolina)

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) are committed to informing residents affected by the Bennett Landfill Fire of ongoing and future activities at the Site.

SITE LOCATION/BACKGROUND

The Bennett Landfill Fire Site (“the Site”), located at 4399 Pinckney Road, Chester, South Carolina, and is approximately 16 acres in size. The Site was permitted as a Class II landfill for construction debris, and was also approved to receive certain types of asbestos wastes. The landfill was issued a cease and desist order in 2014 based on improper management of asbestos wastes, repeated failures to regularly cover disposed waste, and other maintenance and management issues.



RESPONSE ACTIONS TO DATE

On November 2, 2014, the landfill was found to be on fire by the local fire department. Several local and state agencies responded to the fire. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) requested assistance from the EPA. On November 3rd, a Federal On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and the EPA’s Superfund Technical Assistance, Response and Training (START) staff observed heavy smoke from the fire and bags of asbestos waste around the landfill. The EPA’s Emergency and Rapid Response Services contractor was mobilized to assist with firefighting operations. The fire was mostly extinguished by November 7th; however, heat from within the landfill rekindled the fire later in December.

On December 17, 2014, at the request of DHEC for additional monitoring of the smoldering area, the EPA START contractor began checking particulate readings near residences, and collecting air samples to analyze for asbestos. Air samples were analyzed using several methods and asbestos fibers were not found. Due to increasing smoke concentrations in January 2015, DHEC requested that the EPA conduct a Removal Site Evaluation (RSE), which included:

- (1) the deployment of air monitoring units throughout the nearby community of Lockhart, SC;
- (2) collecting samples from air, water and soil at the Site; and
- (3) conducting surveys of current Site conditions and distribution of asbestos wastes.

RECENT UPDATES

- The EPA has determined that the Site meets the threshold for a time-critical removal action.
- On April 30th, the EPA authorized funds to address the fire and asbestos waste.
- Contractors for the EPA arrived on site during the last week of May.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 Region 4**
 Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
 61 Forsyth Street, SW
 11th Floor
 Atlanta, GA 30303

Kerisa Coleman
 Community Involvement Coordinator
 (404) 562-8831 or Toll Free (877) 718-3752
 coleman.kerisa@epa.gov

**Federal On-Scene Coordinators
 Superfund
 Emergency Response and Removal Branch**
Matthew Huyser
 (404) 562-8713
 huyser.matthew@epa.gov

Perry Gaughan
 (404) 562-8817
 gaughan.perry@epa.gov

**South Carolina Department of Health and
 Environmental Control**

Richelle Tolton
 Community Liaison and Radon Coordinator
 (803) 896-2333
 toltonrd@dhec.sc.gov

**Please visit EPA’s website for additional
 information:**

www.epaosc.org/bennettlandfill



ACTIVITIES

The EPA has determined that the Site meets the threshold for a time-critical removal action, and is evaluating strategies to address conditions at the Site. During the month of June, crews are expected to begin:

- Addressing the fire, which will include installation of cover, compaction and encapsulation, and
- Addressing the asbestos cell, which will include re-grading, installation of cover, compaction and encapsulation.

PROJECTED



Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

The ATSDR is evaluating the EPA air sampling results. ATSDR is looking at the sampling results to see if any chemical, asbestos, or particulate matter (PM) levels in air are high enough to cause health problems for people who live or work near the Lockhart community. ATSDR will send reports to the EPA after each set of sampling results is completed. The results will be shared with the public.

People who have trouble breathing, experience an increase in coughing episodes, or have tightness in their chest should talk to their doctor or health care providers. People with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or emphysema are more likely than others to have these symptoms.

The ATSDR will continue to work in collaboration with the EPA and DHEC to ensure that activities are conducted in a way that should protect people's health.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Additional community input is needed to understand community concerns about the Site and the EPA's involvement.

Information can be found at the Information Repository located at:

**Lockhart Town Hall
118 Mill Street
Lockhart, SC 29364**

The EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) invites your participation in community interviews, which will be used to develop the Community Involvement Plan.

If you are interested in participating in an interview, please contact Kerisa Coleman, CIC, at (404) 562-8831 or coleman.kerisa@epa.gov



South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

COMMUNITY MEETING

On April 23, 2015, the EPA and DHEC held a community meeting to discuss the landfill fire and the impacts to nearby residents, including assessment of the fire, air monitoring results, and resources needed to address the fire. The EPA informed the community that it would seek federal funds to address the fire and the asbestos waste located at the landfill. Community members shared many concerns related to safety and health impacts potentially resulting from the fire.

While DHEC cannot offer medical advice, DHEC's Upstate Medical Director is

available to discuss health concerns related to the smoke with health care providers. Residents can ask their personal health care provider to contact DHEC's Upstate Medical Director at **(864) 372-3131**.

SMOKE

Most often there is no visible flame at the landfill; therefore, smoke is the main indication that material is burning. The community will continue to see smoke coming from the landfill until the fire is completely extinguished. When weather conditions are calm, such as overnight, smoke can accumulate in the river valley and in the town of Lockhart. The smoke forecasts provided by DHEC warn the community when the smoke is likely to be trapped close to the surface or may otherwise impact the town of Lockhart and neighboring communities.

Whether from a campfire, wildfire, or landfill fire, all smoke is made up of very small partially-burned particles and chemicals, such as formaldehyde and benzene, which form as a result of combustion. Sampling results show that chemicals associated with the landfill smoke become diluted and are much less concentrated before they leave the landfill property; however, DHEC recommends avoiding or minimizing exposure to all smoke, when possible.

CONTINUED AIR MONITORING

Since early February, EPA and DHEC have been continuously sampling the air near the landfill. Air monitoring stations have measured the levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in the air and some basic meteorological data, such as wind speed, wind direction, and temperature. Now that EPA's evaluation has been completed, its monitors have been removed. However, DHEC will continue to operate monitors near the fire, where higher impacts were recorded, and at other locations that best represent the air quality in Lockhart. EPA is providing equipment that will allow both EPA and DHEC to remotely check and review concentrations at the Broad River Mart and near City Hall. The monitor southeast of the landfill will also remain in place, but may be relocated within the community, as needed. DHEC plans to continue monitoring the air until the smoke is eliminated.

SMOKE FORECASTS

DHEC provides daily (Monday through Friday) air quality forecasts to inform the public of weather conditions that affect smoke levels in Lockhart. These forecasts are available each afternoon for the following day or weekend. Anyone interested can call **1-888-815-3509** to receive the most updated smoke forecast for Lockhart.

If you would like to be added to DHEC's mailing list for updates or forecasts, please contact Richelle Tolton, DHEC Community Liaison, at **(803) 896-2333**, or by e-mail at toltonrd@dhec.sc.gov.