



Township of Monroe

County of Middlesex

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:

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GERALD W. TAMBURRO
Mayor

September 18, 2020

By Overnight Mail and Electronic Mail
Mr. Peter D. Lopez
Regional Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2
290 Broadway
New York, NY 10007-1866
lopez.peter@epa.gov

RE: Landfill Superfund Site in Monroe Township, Block 148, Lot 37, EPA ID# NJD980505671

Mr. Lopez,

As you are the EPA's Regional Administrator for Region 2, which oversees the Remedial Project Manager for a Landfill Superfund Site located in Monroe Township ("Landfill Site"), I am writing to you today to put you, Republic Services ("Republic"), and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP") on notice that immediate action is required to investigate, stop and prevent certain chemical odors from emanating out into part of a residential neighborhood known as Inwood Estates, consisting of portions of Michelle St., Lori St., and Lani St., close to the Landfill Site.

By way of brief background, this site operated as a landfill from the 1950s through the 1970s as a collection site for household waste. The DEP closed the Landfill Site in 1978. It was later declared a Superfund site, with the DEP as the lead oversight agency, and with monitoring by the EPA Superfund and Emergency Management Division. Browning-Ferris Industries, Inc., and now Republic, has been managing the closure and monitoring of the site, which also includes a leachate collection system, under DEP and EPA oversight since 1991.

A few residents who live on Michelle Street and Lori Street, just north east of the Landfill Site in the neighborhood described above, notified the EPA and the Township about an odor in August 2020, but our Township officials were not able to witness it at that time. On September 16 and 17, 2020, those same residents, and several additional neighbors on Michelle Street and Lori Street, reported significant and constant chemical odors both inside and outside their homes.

Township officials, including our Township Engineer, Utilities Director and Sewer Superintendent, investigated this situation to identify the source of the odor for our residents. We determined that the Township's sewer collection system was operating normally and without any malfunction. I offer the following facts and observations from our Township professionals so that your office, Republic, and the DEP can swiftly and effectively diagnose the cause of this problem and remedy it immediately, as the Landfill Site and its wastewater pumping equipment are not within the Township's control or responsibility.

First, this problem is not limited to one home. At least six homeowners on Lori Street and Michelle Street reported a strong chemical odor between September 16 and 17. Our Township officials confirmed on September 17 that this strong odor was present both inside and outside several homes on these two streets. These officials removed manhole covers at the corner of Lori Street and Michelle Street, as well as at the corner of Michelle Street and Lani Street, and observed the same chemical odor at the street level as the residents experienced at their homes. These facts indicate the source of the problem does not appear to be a simple indoor plumbing issue.

Our Utility Department continually monitors wastewater flow rates from the Landfill Site, because that wastewater ultimately flows into the Township's sewer collection system, and eventually to the Middlesex County Utilities Authority for treatment. The average wastewater flow during the weeks leading up to September 16 demonstrated a relatively steady state operation. However, on September 16, the pumping pattern changed significantly with a flow increase of ten times normal flow rates. Pertinent to the issue at hand, these high pumping rates on September 16 and 17 caused significant turbulence in the Township's collection system along the flow route from the Landfill Site, through Michelle Street and Lori Street, which is the exact route where the chemical odor has been observed.

As you can see from the attached printout from the Township's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, Republic operated all three of its effluent pumps simultaneously for several hours on September 16, and this pattern continued throughout the rest of the day and into September 17. As noted above, these flow rates and the resulting turbulence within the Township's Sewer collection system resulted in odors venting through the manhole covers outside of the homes in the street to levels that necessitated the residents calling the local Fire Department to investigate on the afternoon of September 17. I demanded that Republic shut down all three of their effluent pumps on September 17 at approximately 5:45 p.m., and they complied.

We strongly urge that Republic, the DEP, and your office immediately investigate the cause of Republic's abnormally intense wastewater pumping and off-gassing of chemical vapors into the air on Lori Street and Michelle Street. It is critical that you keep local officials and residents continually updated throughout all investigation and mitigation efforts.

No matter what the cause or causes of these chemical odors emanating from the Landfill Site, the responsible party, namely Republic, and the oversight agencies, the DEP and EPA, must immediately identify and abate all conditions that led to this problem. These conditions are unacceptable and this site and its operations need your immediate intervention and investigation

for the protection of all Monroe Township residents. The Township stands ready to assist with your investigative efforts. Please contact our Township Engineer Mark Rasimowicz at 732-605-9440 or mrasimowicz@centerstateengineering.com, and Project Manager Shannon Cenci at 732-610-9856 or scenci@centerstateengineering.com, with any questions or updates. I thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Gerald W. Tamburro
Mayor, Township of Monroe, Middlesex County

CC:

United States Senator Robert Menendez

United States Senator Cory Booker, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

United States Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman

Pat Evangelista, Director, Superfund and Emergency Management, Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2

John Osolin, Remedial Project Manager, Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2

Patricia Seppi, Community Involvement Coordinator, Environmental Protection Agency

New Jersey State Assemblyman Dan Benson

New Jersey State Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo

New Jersey State Senator Linda Greenstein

The Honorable Catherine R. McCabe, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Gwen Zervas, Section Chief, BCM, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Mickey Gross, Division Head, Middlesex County Environmental Health Commission

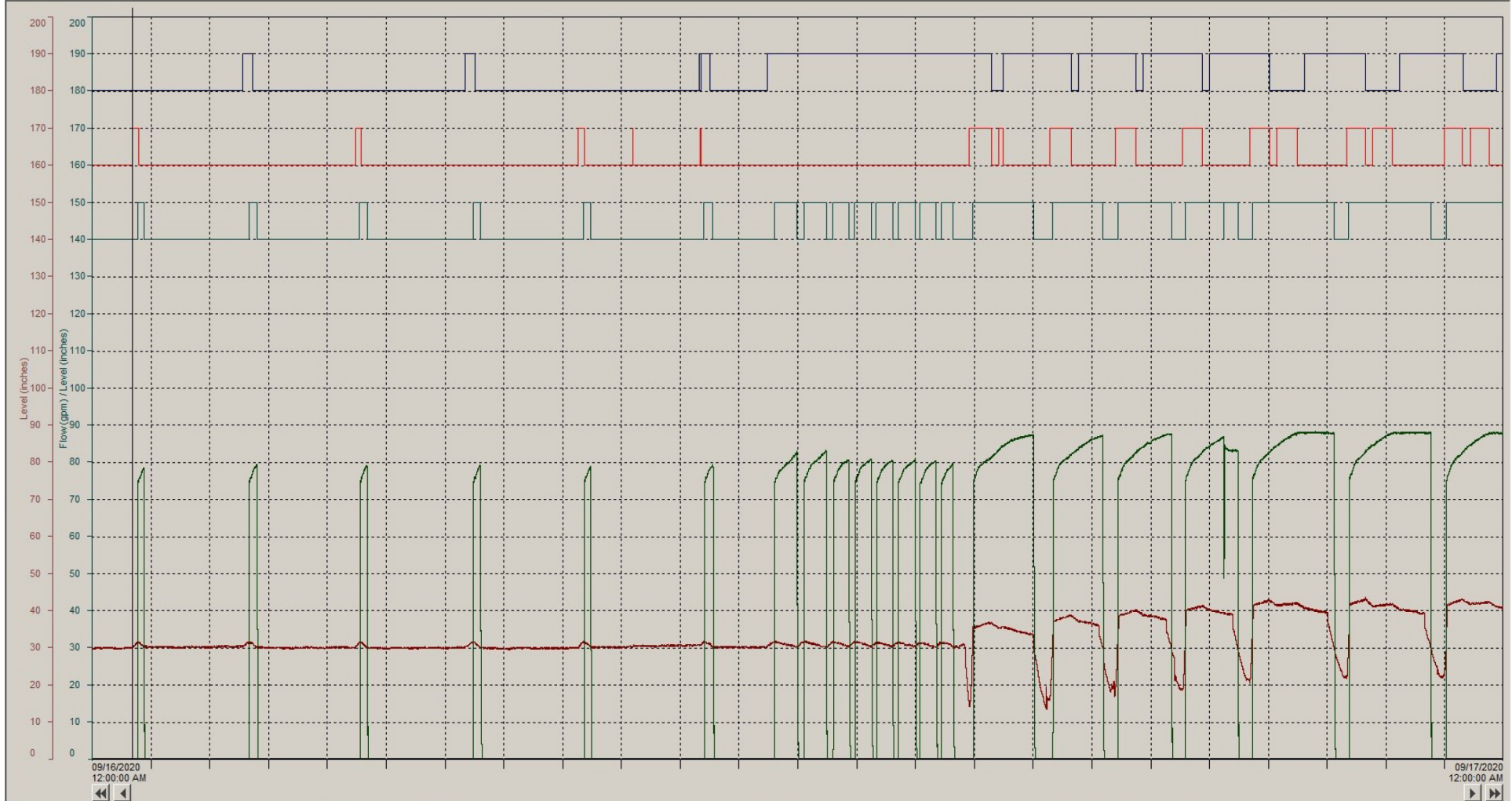
Joseph P. Cryan, Executive Director, Middlesex County Utilities Authority

Monroe Township Council Members

Louis N. Rainone, Esq., Monroe Township Attorney

Catharine Ellingsen, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer and Corporate Secretary, Republic Services

Randy Deardorff, Republic Services



Line ID	Slider Value	Description	Line ID	Slider Value	Description
Pump #1	0	Pump RUN Indicator	BFI Effluent Flow	0	PS BFI Effluent Flow
Pump #2	1	Pump RUN Indicator	BFI Storage Tank Level	29.85	PS BFI Storage Tank Level
Pump #3	0	Pump RUN Indicator			

Slider Date: 09/16/2020 Slider Time: 12:41:10 AM