



# State of New Jersey

## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SITE REMEDIATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

401 East State Street

P.O. Box 420, Mail Code 401-06

Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420

Tel. (609) 292-1250 • Fax (609) 777-1914

[www.nj.gov/dep](http://www.nj.gov/dep)

**PHILIP D. MURPHY**

*Governor*

**SHEILA Y. OLIVER**

*Lt. Governor*

**SHAWN M. LATOURETTE**

*Acting Commissioner*

March 11, 2021

The Honorable Stephen Dalina, Mayor  
Township of Monroe  
1 Municipal Plaza  
Monroe Township, NJ 08831

Dear Mayor Dalina:

Re: Monroe Township Landfill Superfund Site  
Monroe Township, Middlesex County

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Acting Commissioner Shawn LaTourette has asked me to respond on his behalf to your letters dated January 26, 2021 and March 9, 2021 requesting a status report on actions taken at the Monroe Township Landfill Superfund Site since the leachate spill late last year.

As you stated in your January letter, odors were reported in the residential neighborhood in Monroe Township near the Monroe Township Landfill beginning in August. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region II, responded and addressed those initial complaints. It was believed odors were related to a high volume of prolonged discharges of leachate from the landfill to the sewer system. Because the odor issues continued on an intermittent basis in September, EPA, DEP and Browning Ferris Industries (BFI), the entity responsible for the landfill, agreed BFI should stop discharging leachate into the sewer system. BFI stopped discharging on September 23, 2020 when it began trucking leachate to off-site disposal facilities. BFI was further instructed by DEP and EPA to evaluate the cause of the odors and develop a plan to prevent odors in the future. Once completed, re-introduction of leachate into the sewer system could be considered.

In December 2020, there were two leachate spills – an underground storage tank over-flowed and leachate was flowing out of a manhole on the landfill property. These incidents were a result of increased leachate production due to precipitation and inadequate storage at the landfill. Immediate efforts were taken under the direction of DEP and EPA to mitigate the ongoing issues at that time and implement monitoring measures.

To address these issues, on December 29, 2020, DEP required BFI to increase temporary storage capacity at the landfill and increase trucking of leachate off-site to the off-site disposal facilities. BFI immediately complied and currently has more storage capacity than is needed for the leachate that is being produced. It also has adequate trucking to transport leachate from the landfill to the disposal facilities.

As a result of the spill, BFI provides DEP, EPA, and Monroe Township Utilities Department (MTUD) a daily update on the amount of leachate stored and trucked off-site. Since storage and trucking has increased, there have been no reported issues with odor or overflowing manholes or storage tanks. However, we are aware that the increased truck traffic to the landfill for hauling out of leachate has increased. This is expected to cease once leachate can be redirected back to the sewer plant.

An analysis is currently underway to establish a long-term solution to manage leachate flow and to ensure another spill will not occur, with the goal of re-introducing the leachate into the sewer system without odor.

BFI and their consultants have evaluated data related to leachate discharge flow rates and duration. It appears that they are the contributing factors to pressures within the sewer system that could result in odors in homes. To address this issue, BFI installed modifications to the leachate pump that controls the leachate so it can be discharged at variable rates. Remote controls were also installed that will allow leachate discharge rates to be controlled or stopped if issues like excessive precipitation arise in the future, and alternative disposal measures put in place to prevent future spills.

BFI has prepared documents explaining in detail the cause of the odor issues and steps that will be taken to safely re-introduce leachate to the sewer system without odor issues. DEP, EPA, and MTUD have reviewed the documents and have allowed BFI to conduct monitoring of the sewer system and discharge clean water into the sewer system while monitoring flow rates and pressure at various flow rates. These efforts will provide data necessary to evaluate acceptable flow rates for the leachate when it is re-introduced back into the sewer system.

The initial monitoring of the sewer system was conducted in February and involved the use of flow meters, pressure transducers, and photo-ionization detectors to document liquid flows, sewer gas pressures, and the presence of volatile gases in the sewer on a typical day without any discharges from the landfill.

Discharging clean water into the sewer system occurred on February 17, 2021 and March 2, 2021 to test varying flow rates and associated pressures at these varying flow rates. The data from these tests was provided to DEP, EPA and MTUD on March 9, 2021 and is currently under review. A meeting will be held with DEP, EPA, MTUD and BFI on March 16, 2021 to discuss the data and determine if it is appropriate to re-introduce leachate into the sewer system. If the discharge of leachate is approved, BFI will only be allowed to discharge leachate at a flow rate that will not cause an exceedance of the allowable air pressure in the sewer line in order to avoid odor issues.



The DEP will be happy to host a virtual public meeting to discuss the work that has been conducted at the landfill and the proposed next steps. Section Chief Gwen Zervas, of my staff, will work with Monroe Township staff to set that meeting up in the near future at a mutually agreed upon date.

Sincerely,



Mark J. Pedersen  
Assistant Commissioner

CC: Gwen Zervas, Section Chief, DEP

