



# Township of Monroe

County of Middlesex

**Stephen Dalina**  
Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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May 7, 2021

By Electronic Mail and First-Class Mail  
The Hon. Shawn M. LaTourette  
Acting Commissioner  
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
401 E. State Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor East  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
[Shawn.LaTourette@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Shawn.LaTourette@dep.nj.gov)

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

Commissioner LaTourette,

I am seeking your direct and personal intervention on a matter of extreme importance to the Township of Monroe.

By way of brief background, the above-referenced Landfill Site is a Superfund site operated by Republic Services, and under the control of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”) and the Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”). Certain chemical odors emanated out into part of a residential neighborhood, including inside homes, adjacent to the Landfill Site, in August and September 2020. Every indication is that Republic Services’ leachate discharge into the Township’s sanitary sewer collection system caused these odors. The Township shined a light on this problem.

Republic Services was ordered to cease discharge of leachate through the sanitary sewer pending an investigation and utilize a truck and haul operation to remove leachate daily from the site. Dozens of tanker trucks daily in a residential neighborhood is creating a nightmare in our Township, including an increased hazard along small Township roads. Republic Services is responsible for six leachate spills since November 2020, into residential streets and storm sewers, without penalty from the NJDEP. In eight months, the Township has not received satisfactory answers from the responsible party or the regulatory agencies, and we still await a long-overdue plan from the NJDEP to safely solve this problem.

Further, our residents near the Landfill Site are experiencing odors in the vicinity of their homes *eight months* after Republic Services ceased discharge of leachate through the Township’s sanitary sewer. We clearly need a more aggressive and comprehensive investigation into the Landfill Site, which the NJDEP regulates, regarding the cause of these additional odors. My residents are entitled to know about other problems that require remediation. The Township has inspected both its sanitary sewer system and storm sewer network in the vicinity of the Landfill Site. Our Township officials have found no concerns with

the structural integrity of either sewer system. We will continue to monitor the operation of both sewers, but they are merely conveyance systems. We are led to conclude that the source of odors is the Landfill. We need to understand the full extent of the Landfill's impacts on the neighborhood.

The NJDEP appears unwilling to conduct a full investigation of the Landfill Site, or to force Republic Services to examine potential root causes of these additional odors. We understand that the NJDEP is reviewing a leachate reintroduction plan, but that may be only a short-term solution to one of the problems at the Landfill Site. Furthermore, I am not an engineer or environmental expert, but these recent odor complaints, *after* the operator ceased discharging leachate into the sanitary sewer, lead me to believe that problems at the Landfill Site appear to be broader than the discharge of leachate into the sanitary sewer, and require further investigation.

I ask that you order a full and comprehensive investigation regarding the totality of the circumstances at the Landfill. In the meantime, in order to protect the health and safety of my residents, the Township will immediately hire its own independent environmental expert to examine the Landfill's operation and impacts on the surrounding community. We would expect the State to reimburse the Township for any and all expenses associated with this environmental investigation, as it is not typically in a municipality's purview to investigate Superfund sites. I simply cannot wait any longer for answers to questions that my residents and I have posed.

It is unacceptable that our residents continue to struggle daily, not only with the presence of tanker trucks as the residents await a long-overdue leachate reintroduction plan, but also struggle with mysterious and concerning odors around their homes. I ask that you assemble a meeting with all State and Federal regulatory officials who have oversight over this matter, and representatives from Republic Services, to get to the bottom of this problem once and for all. I will attend the meeting.

Please contact me as soon as possible to further discuss this matter.

Sincerely,



Stephen Dalina  
Mayor, Township of Monroe, Middlesex County

Cc: (by Electronic Mail)  
Governor Phil Murphy  
New Jersey State Senator Linda Greenstein  
New Jersey State Assemblyman Dan Benson  
New Jersey State Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo  
U.S. Senator Cory Booker  
U.S. Senator Robert Menendez  
U.S. Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Walter Mugdan, Acting Regional Administrator, EPA, Region 2  
Monroe Township Council  
Louis N. Rainone, Esq., Monroe Township Attorney