

Pearland Odor Complaints
Fact Sheet
Updated **January 3, 2019**

INVESTIGATIONS

- In August 2015, the TCEQ Houston Region Office began receiving odor related complaints from citizens in and around the Shadow Creek Ranch subdivision.
- As of **January 3, 2019**, citizens have filed **6,189** complaints and the TCEQ has conducted **194** investigations into these complaints. At a minimum, this information will be updated on the first business day of each month.
- Odors have been described as “garbage,” “chemical,” and “sewage” and are typically reported to occur overnight and during the early morning hours.
- The TCEQ issued a complaint investigation report and Notice of Enforcement on October 21, 2016, alleging that Blue Ridge Landfill was the source of the nuisance odors documented in investigations conducted May 4 and 5, 2016, May 23 and 24, 2016, June 6 and June 23, 2016. Information on the enforcement process is available on the TCEQ website at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/enforcement/process.html>.
- The TCEQ performed a surface emissions monitoring investigation to assess compliance with air regulations concerning emissions from landfills in October and November 2016. The investigation report and a Notice of Enforcement letter were issued on January 3, 2017, alleging that Blue Ridge Landfill failed to perform surface emissions monitoring in accordance with the requirements of the applicable rules. Information on the enforcement process is available on the TCEQ website at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/enforcement/process.html>.
- Investigators from the TCEQ Houston Region Office have conducted odor surveys beginning as early as 12:00 a.m. and as late as 11:00 p.m. These surveys often include multiple teams of two and have also included staff from the City of Pearland Public Works Department. **The latest odor survey was conducted December 22, 2018. No landfill odors were detected during this survey.**
- Staff from the TCEQ Houston Region Office have collected air samples during investigations to be analyzed for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). The analytical results have showed only trace levels of VOC in the samples collected.
- The TCEQ deployed its Strategic Sampling Work Group (SSWG) to collect and analyze air samples in locations in and around the Shadow Creek Ranch subdivision during the week of June 6, 2016. The SSWG collected and analyzed air samples between 8:00 pm and 8:00 am each day. The

SSWG was equipped with air sampling equipment as well as laboratory instruments to measure air quality. The primary constituents of concern were VOC and sulfur compounds (which are often associated with unpleasant odors). The completed report is located at the end of this summary.

- The TCEQ Houston Region Air and Waste sections conducted a joint focused investigation on October 18, 2016, in which all potential sources of odors from landfill operations were evaluated. The investigation report was approved, and a Notice of Violation (NOV) letter was sent on March 30, 2017, alleging Blue Ridge Landfill failed to document repairs to the landfill cover in the November 2016 MSW cover log and failed to record leachate levels in the sumps during the fourth week of February 2016. Both alleged violations have been resolved.
- On April 26, 2017, the TCEQ Waste Section conducted a Methane Monitoring investigation at Blue Ridge Landfill. This investigation was approved on January 3, 2018. A Notice of Violation letter was sent to the facility for one resolved alleged violation concerning monitoring of facility structures, three outstanding additional issues concerning calibration and monitoring records, and one addressed additional issue concerning calibration gases used during the methane monitoring. On May 18, 2018 the TCEQ Waste Section conducted a Records Review investigation of documentation provided in response to the April 26, 2017 Methane Monitoring investigation. An Additional Compliance Documentation letter was sent to the facility, as one additional issue concerning calibration records remained outstanding and two additional issues were addressed. The outstanding additional issue was addressed during an on-site follow-up investigation conducted on June 26, 2018.
- On May 2 to May 4, 2017, the TCEQ Waste Section began conducting a compliance evaluation investigation at Blue Ridge Landfill. This investigation was approved on April 5, 2018. A Notice of Violation letter was sent to the facility for eight outstanding alleged violations concerning training, inspections, recordkeeping, manifests, and notification requirements. A resolved alleged violation was also noted concerning submittal of a complete annual waste summary.
- On April 9, 2018, the TCEQ began conducting a Comprehensive Groundwater Monitoring Evaluation at Blue Ridge Landfill. On April 10, the TCEQ co-sampled groundwater from six monitoring wells. Prior to sampling, the monitoring and observation wells that serve as the groundwater detection monitoring system were inspected visually to determine the conditions of well casing, labeling, protective bumpers, surface pads, well heads and caps, survey points of water level elevation measurements, and total well depth measurements. No concerns were noted regarding sampling and field evaluation of the monitoring wells. This investigation was approved on July 12, 2018.
- On April 24, 2018, Blue Ridge Landfill notified the TCEQ regional office that it was planning to conduct regularly scheduled surface emissions monitoring. The region dispatched a team to observe and verify this

monitoring program on April 30 through May 4, 2018; May 14 through May 24, 2019; May 30, 2018; and June 6, 2018. The investigators returned to the site on July 7, 2018 to review records. The investigation was approved on October 12, 2018 and the Air Section issued a Notice of Enforcement letter to Blue Ridge Landfill alleging failure to: (a) maintain and operate the gas collection and control system in a manner consistent with good air pollution control practice for minimizing emissions, (b) include all exceedance information in the New Source Performance Standards periodic report, dated July 2, 2018, and (c) report all instances of deviations in the deviation report, dated July 2, 2018.

- The Blue Ridge Landfill complaint investigation conducted by the Waste Section starting May 9, 2018 alleged odors from the landfill which constituted a nuisance condition. On October 12, 2018, the investigation was approved, and a Notice of Enforcement letter was sent for nuisance odor conditions.
- On June 26, 2018, the TCEQ Waste Section conducted an on-site follow-up investigation. An Additional Compliance Documentation letter was sent to the facility, as two alleged violations noted during the May 2 - 4, 2017 investigation concerning recordkeeping and notification requirements remained outstanding and six alleged violations were resolved.
- On July 4 and 10, 2018, the TCEQ Water Section conducted a storm water Comprehensive Compliance Investigation and a Complaint Investigation alleging storm water management issues, storm water pollution, and the mechanical pumping of water from Blue Ridge Landfill. The investigation was approved on September 10, 2018 and resulted in three outstanding alleged violations, concerning monitoring and best management practices. **All three violations were subsequently resolved based on compliance documentation received on October 23, 2018, October 30, 2018, and November 6, 2018 as part of the October 23, 2018 investigation.**
- On October 23, 2018, the TCEQ Water Section conducted a Complaint Investigation and storm water Comprehensive Compliance Investigation following a complaint of sediment discharge from Blue Ridge Landfill. The investigation was approved on December 13, 2018. **No alleged violations or additional issues were cited in this investigation. The complaint allegation was unconfirmed.**
- On October 28, 2018, the TCEQ Waste Section conducted an odor survey in the area surrounding Blue Ridge Landfill. On October 31, 2018, the TCEQ Air Section conducted a focused flare investigation and Waste Section concluded the October 28, 2018 complaint investigation at Blue Ridge Landfill. The Waste complaint investigation was approved on November 30, 2018 with no alleged violations. The Air investigation is ongoing.
- On November 12, 2018, the TCEQ Waste Section conducted a leachate investigation at Blue Ridge Landfill. The investigation is ongoing.

- The city has created a dedicated web page (<http://www.pearlandtx.gov/scrairquality>) for information sharing. Completed TCEQ investigation reports are being posted to this web page.

Complaints about landfill odors can be made by telephone to the TCEQ Houston Region Waste Complaint Line (713-767-3641). Other air complaints may be filed with the TCEQ Houston Region Air Quality Complaint Line at 713-767-3714. For citizens unable to file a complaint by phone, information about how to file complaints with TCEQ online may be found at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/complaints>. Citizens are also encouraged to download and complete an odor log from the TCEQ website at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/compliance/odor-log-public.pdf>. When completed, these logs may be provided to investigators to assist them with their investigations. The odor log is intended to document how often an outdoor odor occurs and how long it lasts. Additional details about the nature of the odor, impact of the odor and weather conditions may also be provided. This will assist the investigator in scheduling their investigation and assessing nuisance conditions. Additional information about the TCEQ complaint investigation process can be found at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/complaints>. Sections of special interest include “What if Your Complaint is about an Odor” and “Gathering and Preserving Information and Evidence Showing a Violation.”

- The following link also contains helpful information about filing odor complaints, what you need to know, and tools for documentation, such as the Odor Log.
https://www.tceq.texas.gov/compliance/complaints/odor_complaint.html

ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

- The TCEQ Enforcement Division consolidated the two Notices of Enforcement and prepared a combined proposed Agreed Order on February 7, 2017. The proposed Agreed Order contains technical requirements designed to bring the landfill into compliance with applicable regulations and to minimize nuisance odor impacts on the neighboring community. Settlement with the proposed revised Agreed Order was achieved on April 7, 2017. The order became effective on July 12, 2017 and may be found at this link:
http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/CIO/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.download&agy_dkt_num_txt=2016-1923-AIR-E&agenda_dt=07/07/2017
 - On August 11, 2017, Blue Ridge Landfill submitted an Odor Control Plan (the Plan) to the TCEQ in accordance with Ordering Provision No. 3b of the Agreed Order.
 - On October 6, 2017, the TCEQ mailed a response letter to Blue Ridge Landfill informing them that the Plan could not be approved at that time and requested additional information to demonstrate that the Plan will effectively address odor control at the landfill. A response from Blue Ridge Landfill was requested within 30 days from the date of the letter.

- On November 2, 2017, Blue Ridge Landfill submitted an extension request to respond to the TCEQ's October 6, 2017 letter.
- On November 7, 2017, the TCEQ sent a letter to Blue Ridge Landfill approving the extension request and established a revised compliance deadline of December 1, 2017, which was met.
- On December 21, 2017, the TCEQ informed Blue Ridge Landfill that the Plan could not be approved and requested additional information to demonstrate that the Plan will effectively address odor control at the landfill. A new response from Blue Ridge Landfill was requested by January 18, 2018.
- On January 18, 2018, the TCEQ received the revised odor control plan from Blue Ridge Landfill. TCEQ staff are currently in the process of reviewing the revised plan. Once TCEQ staff completes its review of the revised odor control plan, a meeting will be held with Blue Ridge Landfill representatives to resolve any remaining issues so that an approved plan can be implemented.
- On February 16, 2018, a meeting was held between the TCEQ and representatives of Blue Ridge Landfill to discuss the revised plan. While progress was made, an additional meeting is necessary to resolve the remaining issues. This meeting is scheduled for March 1, 2018.
- On March 1, 2018, a meeting was held between the TCEQ and representatives of Blue Ridge Landfill to discuss the revised plan.
- On March 8, 2018, Blue Ridge Landfill submitted a revised plan to the TCEQ.
- On March 27, 2018, a meeting was held between the TCEQ and representatives of Blue Ridge Landfill to discuss the revised plan.
- On April 5, 2018, Blue Ridge Landfill submitted a revised odor control plan to the TCEQ, which was approved for implementation on April 10, 2018. <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/complaints/BRLF-OdorControlPlan.pdf>
- On May 10, 2018, Blue Ridge Landfill submitted written certification to the TCEQ that it had implemented the provisions of the odor control plan in accordance with the approved schedule.
- On June 2, 2018, Blue Ridge Landfill submitted documentation to the TCEQ demonstrating that: surface emissions monitoring had been performed quarterly; the 24-hour Odor Complaint Hotline/Message-line and web-site had been activated; the dual carbon canister had been installed; and that Blue Ridge Landfill began conducting 24-hour fence line monitoring in accordance with the approved plan.
- On June 8, 2018, Blue Ridge submitted a permit modification application to incorporate the approved Odor Control Plan into Section 4.10, Part IV-Site Operating Plan, in Municipal Solid Waste Permit No. 1505A.
- On August 2, 2018, Blue Ridge Landfill completed the Supplemental Environmental Project by contributing to the Texas Association of

Resource Conservation and Development Areas, Inc. for the Tire Collection Events and Cleanup of Abandoned Tire Sites project.

- On November 9, 2018, the Odor Control Plan was incorporated into Blue Ridge Landfill's Site Operating Plan in their Municipal Solid Waste Permit No. 1505A.