



October 27, 2010

A number of residents within the Point Richmond neighborhood have voiced concern recently over odors caused by emission of hydrogen sulfide gas through confirmed leaks from the covers of the anaerobic digester at the City's wastewater treatment plant operated by Veolia Water. The City Council and Staff take this very seriously, and have been working with the Contra Costa County Department of Public Health Services and the Bay Area Air Quality Management Department to identify the public health concerns related to exposure to hydrogen sulfide. The City has also hired an Industrial Hygienist to perform monitoring of hydrogen sulfide gas within Point Richmond and at the Washington Elementary School.

City Staff provided an update to the City Council on Tuesday, October 26, 2010, which included comments by Dr. Wendell Brunner, the Contra Costa County Public Health Director. Based on the data that has been collected, Dr. Brunner's assessment is that the hydrogen sulfide gas detected within Point Richmond and at the wastewater treatment facility is below levels that cause exposure-related tissue damage or toxic illness. Dr. Brunner confirmed that the physical reactions that have been reported are consistent with response to the strong hydrogen sulfide odor.

Much of the immediate concern of the residents has focused on the City's and Veolia's lack of providing a clear understanding of the procedures and expected response in the event sewer gases or odors are reported by citizens. The City is working with residents to improve the dissemination of information and has developed this specific letter to clarify the reporting and response procedures for wastewater treatment plant concerns. The City is continuing to monitor hydrogen sulfide levels and will regularly update residents and the Council on issues related to measurements of hydrogen sulfide within the Point Richmond neighborhood as well as the corrective measures taken at the wastewater treatment plant.

As discussed at the Council meeting, the City will also be installing continually monitoring hydrogen sulfide data loggers at areas within Point Richmond which will include a mechanism to notify the City and public in the event levels exceed established air quality standard levels.

Status updates regarding the efforts to repair/replace the anaerobic digester covers and mitigate any other potential odor causing processes at the treatment facility or within the sewer collection system will be provided for residents and Council members as they become available. The City will notify the public through future correspondence, upcoming City and Neighborhood Council meetings, as well as a dedicated page on the City's website.

Attached, please find the procedures for reporting sewer gas related odors as well as the required response by Veolia and the City.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Chad Davisson, the City's Wastewater Manager, at (510) 620-5486 or e-mail at chad_davisson@ci.richmond.ca.us.

****ODOR COMPLAINT AND RESPONSE PROCEDURES****

As required by contract, Veolia Water maintains a **24-HOUR ODOR HOTLINE NUMBER-(510) 412-2001**. In the event that residents experience odors, they are instructed to call this HOTLINE NUMBER. Veolia utilizes an after-hours answering service so residents will talk to a live person. This answering service will forward the complaint to Veolia on-call personnel.

Veolia will respond to all odor complaints **within 30-minutes** to investigate. Findings of the investigation will be documented on standardized forms and will be provided to both the complainants and City staff.

In the event any resident believes an emergency condition exists, they should call 911. The City's Fire Department and HazMat Division is available to respond to assess whether immediate actions must be taken to address health or environmental hazards.

It is very important that the community follow the established "Odor Complaint" procedures, as deviation may prolong response and investigation.

The City has also included, on the website home page, a direct link to the 24-Hour ODOR HOTLINE NUMBER as a newsflash. The City's website is www.ci.richmond.ca.us. The City will also be posting , on the website, hydrogen sulfide monitoring reports and data as it's collected.

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