

Wedgewood Community Update: June 2015 Final Florida Department of Health Report Now Available on Hydrogen Sulfide (H₂S) Levels in the Air Near the Rolling Hills Landfill in Pensacola



Hydrogen sulfide monitor near the landfill
at the Wedgewood Community Center

History of Report:

In March 2015, Florida Department of Health (DOH) released a health consultation report, distributed a community update to nearby property owners, issued a press release, and held a public meeting. In its final report, which is now available, DOH summarizes and responds to the comments/health concerns it received.

The conclusions and recommendations in the final health report are largely the same as those of the draft report.

Conclusions:

- H₂S levels in air near the Rolling Hills Landfill from July 21 to December 31, 2014 were a public health hazard because the highest level measured for 30 minutes was too high to rule out the possibility of headaches, sore nose, or sore throat.
- H₂S levels near the landfill were often above the point at which people can smell it.
- H₂S levels in the air near the landfill were highest at night when the wind was still.
- It is unlikely the highest levels of H₂S measured near the landfill caused heart problems, kidney problems, cancer, or many other health concerns nearby residents reported.
- It is unclear if levels of H₂S measured in the air near the landfill caused itchy/sore eyes, breathing problems, or fatigue/weakness.
- DOH cannot conclude what the public health threat was before July 2014 as no air testing data exists before that time.
- DOH cannot assess the public health threat due to dust because the agency has little dust testing data from July–December 2014.

Recommendations:

- Landfill staff should keep the levels of H₂S below 70 ppb in the Wedgewood community.

While the Rolling Hills Landfill remains active, Escambia County should:

- Keep testing the air for H₂S around the clock in the Wedgewood community.
- Test for airborne dust near the landfill.

Planned Public Health Actions:

- Consider review of new data upon request.

See the final report online at:
www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/hazardous-waste-sites/health-assessments.html
For a hard copy, please call 877-798-2772 (toll-free)
Or send an email to PHToxicology@FLHealth.gov

Please share this community update with your friends and neighbors.