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Town of Lockhart

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January 22, 2015

Governor Nikki Haley

I tried to contact you today concerning a landfill fire located across the Broad River on Highway 9 that I am very concerned about. This landfill is directly across from the Town of Lockhart. I am faxing a copy of the article written in the Chester Reporter in reference to this situation dated today, Wednesday, January 22 and an earlier article dated January 16, 2015. The fire started on November 1, 2014 as you will see in today's article.

I am also contacting Senator Harvey Peeler, Representative Dennis Moss, and Representative Mike Anthony. They represent Lockhart and Chester.

I can be reached at Lockhart Town Hall 864-545-2103 or my cell number is 864-251-3883.
I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

TOWN OF LOCKHART



Ailene Ashe, Mayor

803-734-5167

Issue 6, 2 Sections, 14 pages

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2015



FILE PHOTO

Lockhart residents say landfill fire making them sick

DHEC had cited the facility previously, was moving toward shutting it down at the time it closed

BY TRAVIS JENKINS

jenkins@onlinecheater.com

Lockhart Mayor Ailene Ashe summed everything up pretty well.

"Where there's smoke, there's fire," she said.

There's still worry of both at the Bennett Landfill located on the edge

of Chester County near the Broad River) and residents in nearby Lockhart want something to be done about it. Ashe, officials from DHEC and emergency personnel met at Lockhart Town Hall Tuesday afternoon to discuss the continuing problem and what can be done about it.

The fire is believed to have begun

on Sunday, Nov. 2, 2014. Fire personnel arrived on the scene at 5:04 p.m. that day, with responding agencies including Crossroads Fire Department, West Chester Fire Department, the Lockhart Fire Department, Chester and Union

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LANDFILL

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County Emergency Management and the Department of Health and Environmental Control. Over one million gallons of water was expended fighting the blaze which veered between being contained and burning out of control for most of the next week. The fire was "put to bed" on Nov. 11, 2014, according to Chester County Emergency Management Director Eddie Murphy. There was still some smoldering, however. At the Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting on Jan. 15, Murphy said emergency workers fought the fires at the Bennett C&D Landfill before terminating operations because the fight was putting a strain on resources and equipment. It was starting to cause trouble again, though, he said, a point bared out by eyewitness testimony at Tuesday's meeting.

Glenn Boothe lives in Greenville but comes to the area frequently to hunt. He said he encountered smoke back in November as he hunted about three-quarters-of-a-

mile from the dump.

"I thought it was fog at first. I got sick and ended up with a sinus infection," he said.

Tammy Moody lives in Lockhart and has a 74-year-old husband who is on oxygen. She said she has had to turn his oxygen up in the past few months and said her spouse can't go outside for more than 10 minutes or so because of the smoke and fumes. She has had to double-up on her own asthma medication recently.

"In the morning, you can look out and see smoke just laying on Lockhart," Moody said.

Moody said she also enjoys fishing but is concerned what sort of pollutants might be finding their way into the water and thus into the fish.

"I don't want to eat contaminated fish," said Moody, who also complained of nosebleeds since the fire started.

Gus Poulos owns the Broad River Mart, which sits within view of the landfill area. He said his wife developed sore throats once the fire started that haven't easily subsided. When his employees arrive to work each morning, the

smoke is so thick they can't see the driveway, he said. He was one of 180 people to sign a petition claiming they had suffered some type of health problem or difficulty since the fire first erupted. Another woman at the meeting said she was diagnosed with asthma recently...something she'd never had in her life. Chris Staten with DHEC's emergency response team said the federal Environmental Protection Agency did come to Lockhart to do some sampling of air quality at the height of the fire and on two occasions thereafter.

"We know asbestos has gone into the landfill," Staten said.

Staten said a number of pollutants and toxins could be given off by a fire, particularly one at a landfill. Using handheld monitors that force air through a filter, which is then sent for testing, though, the asbestos fell within government acceptability limits. Of course, Staten said different people could be affected in different ways by asbestos or other materials.

Fran Marshall, who still works with DHEC

and formerly was one of the agency's toxicologists, said people have been exposed to asbestos in ceilings, car brakes and through other means for years.

"There's a background level we're all exposed to," she said.

She said there is no way to know if the fire and smoke from the landfill is actually causing the stated health problems, but said she hoped the EPA would return to the area for further testing to provide more answers.

Rob McDaniel with DHEC's enforcement division, said his agency knew there were problems at the landfill and were taking steps toward doing something about it. He said the landfill was issued an operational violation notice in 2012. He said landfill owner Ron Olsen entered into an order on the violation. McDaniel said the landfill should have been operating on 2.5 acres but had 9.5 acres open. Work to correct the problem started but wasn't finished.

"They didn't do all the work," McDaniel said.

Later on, McDaniel said, money that has to be

posted for the potential clean-up and closure of any landfill was withdrawn by Olsen.

"At that point, we took legal action. I can't really talk about it at this point," McDaniel said.

What he could say is that a cease-and-desist order, which he called nearly unprecedented, was issued against Olsen and Crisis Hill Management, owners of the property. "They were told to fix the issues at the landfill and if they failed to do so in a certain amount of time, the final action would have been to close the landfill. They elected to do nothing at Bennett. They locked the gate somewhere in the April, May timeframe," said McDaniel, who noted that it had been closed down since then.

Further legal action is likely forthcoming on the matter, McDaniel said.

Ashe asked what she and other town leaders are supposed to do if things get worse.

"What if we have to evacuate?" Ashe asked. "What then?"

Ralph Fraim is the emergency management director for Union County. He said a plan was origi-

nally put together to move evacuated citizens into the Lockhart School. That was deemed too close to the fire, though, so another site (the old Lockhart Armory) was chosen. Fraim had school district buses lined up for the evacuations and had put Wallace Thompson Hospital in Union on alert. He said he communicated with Murphy quite a bit on the plan, since Murphy did have to evacuate a town (Great Falls) during a huge mill fire several years ago.

All the DHEC officials on hand looked at pictures that showed Lockhart covered in smoke and asked for copies to be sent to their office. They said they would do what they could to have the EPA come back for further testing, but said they didn't want to mislead anyone into the thinking that would happen by the next day with the snap of a finger. They pledged to do what they could and to communicate any new developments to the public. Moody urged them to move things along as quickly as possible. "We're asking you to hear our cries," she said.

crossing guard on Jan. 18.

• Melton Gore, 51, was charged with disorderly conduct on Jan. 16.

• Tonya Michelle Vin-

cent, 44, was charged with disorderly conduct and assault and battery third degree on Jan. 16.



THE NEWS & REPORTER

CHESTER COUNTY'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1869

Issue 5, 1 Section, 12 Pages

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2015

Fire again smoldering at landfill

BY BRIAN GARNER
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Chester County Emergency Management Director the Murphy said emergency workers fought the fires at Bennett C&D Landfill in November 2014 for nearly a

week before terminating operations because the fight was putting a strain on resources and equipment. Now the problem of the fires at the landfill near Lockhart has reared its smoky head once again.

Murphy provided an

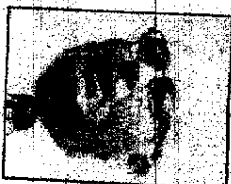
update on the landfill situation at the January meeting of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), held this month at Omrova.

Murphy told the LEPC members, made up of representatives from emergency

services, local government, and local industries, he returned Wednesday to the landfill site.

"When we stopped operations after a week on the landfill fire... our concern was 300-500 people just across the county line in Union

County. What happened was, we had a lot of heavy equipment there, we had the fire, and it wasn't smoking, and we had to just shut down. We couldn't just keep renting the equipment, we



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Murphy

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same type of event where we had to have 24-hour-a-day operations," he said.

"When we left there, you could feel heat under the ground, and you knew something was going to come back. And it started back — it started with a little bit of smoke, then it increased and got bigger. We started getting phone calls and we started talking to S.C. DHEC

(Department of Health and Environmental Control) again. We've communicated within the last two weeks. The way the

system works is, we work with DHEC and then they move the report on the incident up to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)," Murphy said.

"DHEC had to get the EPA to come back and to get them to review the case, so we could explain the need; there's not another active landfill fire in South Carolina, and not many on the East Coast. But there are some, and some of them have been burning for decades. We do not need one to burn for

decades," Murphy said. He said the EPA is seeking a solution to put the fire at the Bennett site out.

"There's a lot of dry vegetation at the Bennett site, and what we don't want to have happen is for the low humidity we're going to get in February and March to create a surface fire, that could spread to that vegetation."

"What's burning at the landfill is wood and plastic and all kinds of building materials. We don't want it to burn back to the surface and set the whole thing on fire. That might mean the fire burns back down into the cavities underground and instead of having half an acre burning, we could have three or four acres."

Murphy said the plans to eradicate the fire will probably mean the return of heavy equipment and water sources, but this time, the work will be done by people contracted by the EPA.

We've already told them not to look for our small-mannpower fire

departments with limited equipment, that already took a good lick (the last time we fought the fire) to be the supporting agency, they need to use contractors," said Murphy.

He said the last time the fire was fought, local emergency workers laid half a mile of fire hose, and fire trucks made 28 trips an hour, including night operations.

"We have a plan and a direction," Murphy said. He called the fire situation "an ordeal that's just not going away right now."

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