

# A statement from the City of Bristol, Tennessee addressing concerns surrounding the Bristol, Virginia landfill

August 27, 2021

Over the past year, a significant topic of concern for many residents of Bristol, Tennessee has been the pervasive odor emanating from the Bristol, Virginia landfill. In an effort to keep Bristol, Tennessee residents apprised of the ongoing efforts to mitigate this situation, we wanted to share the most recent updates provided this week by Bristol, Virginia City Manager Randy Eads. The full document, posted on August 23, 2021, may be viewed by clicking the attachment link on the following Bristol, Virginia webpage: <https://www.bristolva.org/Blog.aspx?IID=14>

Among the items addressed by Mr. Eads in the update are:

- **Gas wells:** “The gas wells have not been added yet. As a local government, the City must follow the Virginia Procurement Act which requires the locality to accept bids from potential vendors. The City began this process in July and it concluded in early August. On August 10, 2021, the City Council awarded the contract. Once the company was awarded the contract, the company contacted its suppliers for materials. Due to a supply shortage, the company will not be able to install gas wells until September 7, 2021. This will take several weeks to complete. I would hope citizens will be able to see a decrease in odors 4-6 weeks after the completion of the gas well installation.”
- **Landfill covers:** “The landfill staff has continued to increase daily cover in an effort to prevent landfill gas escaping from the landfill.”
- **Questions regarding closure of the landfill:** “The permit the DEQ gave to the City has a closure plan which requires the surface of the landfill be brought up above the top of the quarry site.”

Again, further detail regarding remediation efforts to date, along with corresponding documentation may be found on the Bristol, Virginia webpage linked above.

The City of Bristol, Tennessee sees and acknowledges the frustrations and requests for help from our residents who continue to disproportionately suffer from the landfill odors. Bristol, Tennessee City staff remain in regular contact with enforcement officials at both the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to monitor the outcomes of ongoing mitigation efforts. Additionally, the members of the Bristol, Tennessee City Council are also in communication with their elected colleagues in both the Tennessee General Assembly and the U.S. Congress to ensure that this matter is addressed with the greatest possible degree of urgency. This response may fall frustratingly short of what many would hope to hear in terms of immediate steps that the City is able to take, particularly for our residents whose daily lives are constantly intruded upon by these odors. Our statutory authority to take more direct action regrettably does not extend across the state line. As difficult as this is, we offer our assurances that we continue to explore all possible avenues for working with our state and federal partners to resolve this issue in the hopes that our families, friends, and neighbors will soon be able to peacefully enjoy their homes in Bristol, Tennessee once again.



# EPA Completes Air Monitoring In Bristol Area



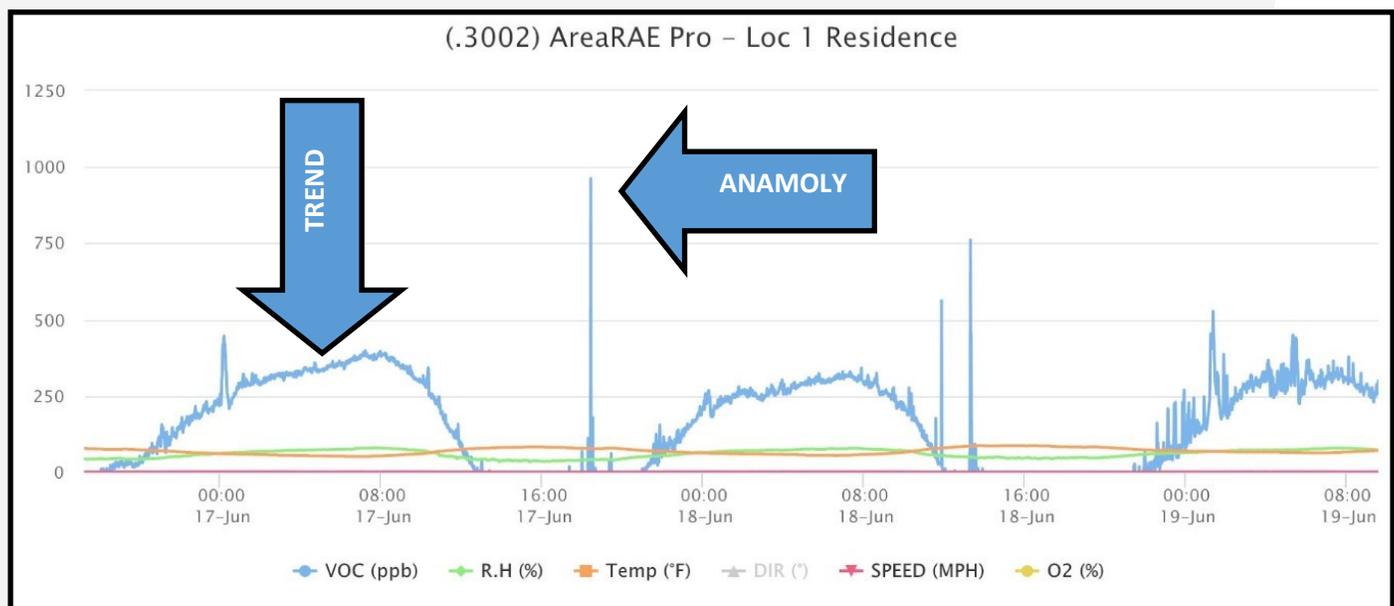
July 2021

## Key Information

- As of July 22, 2021, EPA, in coordination with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VADEQ), completed a six-week period of continuous air monitoring and collection of air samples.
- An initial review of the monitoring and sampling data indicates there is no immediate risk to human health.
- Once a summary report of the data is received and reviewed, EPA will make this information publicly available.

## What Was Done?

Over the course of six-weeks between June and July 2021, EPA and VADEQ conducted 24/7 real-time monitoring from six stations at five distinct properties. During the six-weeks, EPA and VADEQ continually observed the monitors for any trends or abnormalities in the data. For this monitoring event, trends are considered to be when an individual or class of chemicals is detected over a relatively similar period of time each day. When visually depicted in graph format, trends look like a bell curve. Anomalies are an abrupt rise and fall of concentrations that are short in duration. These look like sharp “spikes” when visually depicted on a graph. Anomalies can often be attributed to situations such as a passing car, lawn mowing, spray painting, or other influences. Any trends or anomalies in the data were examined closely and often resulted in the collection of an air sample for laboratory analysis. To date, VADEQ has collected 15 air samples for laboratory analysis.



Real-time air monitoring from June 17-19, 2021 in Bristol, VA/TN

## What Was Found?

The equipment utilized to monitor the areas is capable of detecting extremely low concentrations of compounds. Several chemicals were detected at low levels, in some cases routinely. However, the levels were extremely low and/or in short duration of time. While the data for the full six-week period is still under a formal evaluation, an initial review did not show any concentrations or duration of detections that would pose an immediate concern for human health.

Many substances in the environment can produce odors. You typically smell these odors when you are outdoors and sometimes when you are indoors. As noted by public health agencies, you may smell and react to certain chemicals in the air before they are at harmful levels. During routine maintenance of the meters and roving data collection, strong odors were noted by the onsite personnel.

More information will be provided once EPA finishes an in-depth review and data summary report.

## What Is Next?

EPA expects to generate a summary report of the data within the next 30 days and will make the final data summaries publicly available via its website: <http://response.epa.gov/11184BristolAir>

EPA and VADEQ will share the full data set from this air quality investigation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). ATSDR will collaborate with state and local public health authorities in VA and TN on the review of data. A public health evaluation of this information is expected to be developed, but EPA does not have a timeline for this report from the public health agencies.

## What about Next Steps with the Landfill?

While the field data collection evaluating odors in the neighborhoods is complete, VADEQ will continue to regulate and work with the landfill to ensure ongoing regulatory compliance.

## Key Contacts

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