

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Office of Communication Services, Region 1

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Kerim Odekon, MD, MRP, MSc
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Brookhaven, NY

Dear Dr. Odekon:

This is in response to a series of questions from Brookhaven Landfill Action and Remediation Group (BLARG) members relating to private well sampling in the vicinity of Brookhaven Landfill.

Overview of SCDHS Private Well Sampling Initiative

The private well sampling initiative is a Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) program conducted in coordination with NYSDEC and the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH). SCDHS identified private well survey areas downgradient of locations (e.g. airports, landfills, fire training areas) where information indicated a PFAS source impacting groundwater may exist and sampled wells in these survey areas. SCDHS sampled wells in these survey areas in 2017/2018. Where the wells were downgradient of a known Division of Environmental Remediation (DER) site, the funding source for the PFAS laboratory analysis was generally either the site's owner/responsible party, New York State Department of Health, or the NY State Superfund. At the time of the initial surveys, there was no specific NYS promulgated MCL for PFOA or PFOS, so the USEPA's health advisory level (HAL) of 70 nanograms/liter (parts per trillion or ppt) for each compound, or combined PFOS/PFOA concentration, was used as an action level in considering offering the well owner an alternative water supply (AWS). SCDHS, DEC, and NYSDOH coordinated to identify well owners that qualified for AWS, which initially consisted of bottled water before an evaluation was made to determine whether a point of entry treatment system (POET) or public water supply hookup was warranted.

With New York State's promulgation of specific MCLs for PFOA and PFOS (10 ppt each) in August 2020, the new MCLs replaced the old HAL as the action level. Currently SCDHS, in coordination with DER, is identifying private wells that tested below the HAL in testing conducted prior to the specific NYS MCLs, but above 5 ppt (the current MCL divided by a safety factor of 2), so that they may be resampled and the owners offered AWS if needed. Two wells in the Brookhaven Landfill vicinity survey area met these criteria. One property has



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since been connected to public water, and the other is going to be offered a resample.

For further questions on the private well sampling initiative the SCDHS's Office of Water Resources can be reached at (631) 852-5810.

Specific Question Responses

1. What subsequent communication was sent to these private well owners?

As part of the 2017 Brookhaven Landfill survey the SCDHS sent letters with the 2017/2018 sampling results to the owners of the seven private wells sampled during the survey. NYSDEC has had no subsequent communication with the owners of any of these wells.

2. Have they been linked to SCWA?

Of the seven private wells tested by SCDHS in 2017/2018 sampling, none was found to have PFOA or PFOS concentrations above HALs. Concentrations in two of the seven wells were found to be lower than HAL, but above the newly promulgated New York State MCL for PFOA. The owners of one of these properties has since connected to public water. DEC has not been involved in connecting the owners of any of the other five private wells to public water, nor does it have knowledge that any of them did so independently.

3. How was the boundary determined in the sampling of private wells?

The SCDHS delineated the Brookhaven Landfill Private Well Survey area by evaluating available hydrogeological information in the vicinity of the landfill such as the groundwater flow direction and hydrogeologic features that could act as groundwater flow boundaries (river, streams, etc.). Scientific reports on the landfill from agencies such as the United States Geological Survey were also reviewed. Once the groundwater flow pathway from the landfill was determined, a margin of safety was applied to the survey area to ensure all potentially impacted private wells would be included within the private well survey area boundaries.

4. What percentage of private well owners agreed to be sampled?

Twenty properties potentially served by on-site private wells were identified in the survey area. Seven of the 20 potential private wells, or 35%, were sampled by SCDHS. Twelve properties never responded to SCDHS outreach and the 13th location responded that they wanted their private well sampled, but have not yet made themselves available for sampling.

5. Is there any plan to resample and monitor?

There is a plan to resample the private well that tested below the HALs but above the current MCLs and have not connected to private water.

6. What was the source of this contamination and how was this determined?

The source of the contamination has not yet been determined.

All future inquiries regarding Brookhaven Landfill operations and community Environmental Justice concerns can be addressed to Region One Office of Communication Services staff members.

Please reach out to both Regional Public Participation Specialist Bill Fonda and / or Public Participation Specialist and Regional Environmental Justice Coordinator Aphrodite Montalvo. They can be reached at (631) 444-0350.

Thank you again for sharing these concerns and questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Fonda". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "B" and "F".

Bill Fonda