

## SBI LANDFILL ODOUR: INFORMATION FOR GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

### PURPOSE

This factsheet provides information for general practitioners treating community members that may be affected by odours from the Stevensons Brothers Industries (SBI) inert landfill on Ballarto Road, Cranbourne. Community members may attend your clinic to seek medical advice due to concern about the nature and source of the odour, and any associated risk to their health.

Environment Protection Authority (EPA) recommends that community members who feel unwell or are distressed seek medical support.

### BACKGROUND

Since March 2022, EPA has received an increasing number of reports from community members in Botanic Ridge, Cranbourne and surrounding areas, of offensive odours coming from this landfill. EPA understands that this 'rotten egg' odour, characteristic of hydrogen sulphide, is due to decaying waste.

EPA officers have confirmed the presence of the odour being reported.

Community members have reported health symptoms which are contributing to their distress, including:

- coughing
- stinging/watery eyes
- irritation of the eyes and throat
- headaches
- nausea
- sore throats
- trigger of asthma symptoms
- impacts of wellbeing, mental health and quality of life.

These symptoms vary, depending on the degree of exposure and the person being exposed. Vulnerable groups tend to be more affected by this odour than others.

EPA's investigations at the SBI landfill have identified that hydrogen sulphide levels causing the odour are at much lower concentrations than those likely to cause any serious long-term health effects. Odours can stimulate the central nervous system causing reversible physiological effects, including triggering of asthma symptoms. Once those affected are no longer exposed to this odour, their symptoms should go away quite quickly.

Further information on environmental odours is available [from Report summary: landfill odours and human health](#) and the US [Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry](#).

## ODOUR AND AIR QUALITY MONITORING

EPA authorised officers have been investigating odour reports from this landfill and are taking necessary enforcement actions. EPA has been monitoring the odour through a combination of olfactory methods and air testing. It is important to note that the human nose is far more sensitive than any monitoring device available, and so it is likely that while the smell could be significant, monitoring equipment may not register any reduced sulphur compounds in the air.

EPA started air quality testing on Friday 22 July 2022 at selected locations most affected by this landfill odour. For further information visit EPA's dedicated page [epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/incidents/sbi-inert-landfill](https://epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/incidents/sbi-inert-landfill), which is updated regularly.

### Find out more

[epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/incidents/sbi-inert-landfill](https://epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/incidents/sbi-inert-landfill)

Contact EPA on 1300 372 842



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