

Louise A. House
Environmental Health Scientist
ATSDR
1 Congress St., Suite 1100 (HBT-OSRR)
Boston MA 02114

Dear Ms. House:

Over the past few months, there have been serious problems controlling the landfill gas at the Central Landfill in Johnston, RI. The odors resulting from the emission of landfill gas and other landfill operations have led to hundreds of citizen complaints from the surrounding community and verification of emissions and objectionable odors by Department of Environmental Management inspectors. Concurrently, Department inspectors have attributed many other objectionable odors in the community to the New England Ecological Development (NEED) Transfer Station and Recycling facility, which is adjacent to the landfill facility.

On October 21, 1999, Mayor William Macera of Johnston hosted an open forum for citizens in the community to express their concerns and pose questions to representatives from DEM, the RI Department of Health, the Environmental Protection Agency and elected officials. Many of the questions involved the health effects that may be caused by exposure to the gas, particularly since the landfill is listed on the Superfund National Priorities List.

I am writing to request your agency's assistance in conducting an independent assessment of the health impacts in the community from gas and odor emissions from these two facilities. Both DEM and the Department of Health are available to assist in your efforts.

If you have any questions or wish to begin your evaluation, please feel free to call Barbara Morin in our Office of Air Resources or Leo Hellested, Chief of the Office of Waste Management. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jan Reitsma, Director
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management