



KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

August 22, 2016

RE: Precaution Testing – Kentwood Landfill Methane Migration Precaution

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Dear Kentwood Resident,

The closed Kentwood Landfill is under regular monitoring by the Kent County Department of Public Works (DPW) with oversight by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Methane gas naturally forms in old landfills. Recently, routine testing of the existing methane gas collection system found methane at various depths to the west of the landfill site. Although the migration of methane beyond the landfill boundary is of concern, there has been no detection of methane inside any neighboring buildings.

The Kent County DPW consulted with environmental health experts at the Kent County Health Department regarding the findings. The Health Department confirmed that methane is not toxic and dissipates quickly when it is exposed to air, but it can be flammable, specifically when trapped in closed-in spaces.

While there is no indication that the migration has moved very far from the landfill, Kent County DPW will notify about 150 residents who live nearby in the coming days. Residents within 1500-feet of the landfill's western boundary will be able to request quick, on-site testing for methane at no cost to the homeowner. To arrange testing, call the Kent County DPW at 616.632.7920.

Kent County Department of Public Works will hold Question and Answer session on Wednesday, August 31 at 7:00 p.m. at Kentwood City Hall, 4900 Breton Ave. SE. Officials from the City of Kentwood will be there as well. The meeting is open to the public.

Safety is our priority as we move forward with this investigation. We are hiring an engineering consultant and already have started identifying efficient and prompt ways to resolve the gas migration. Our partners on this site, MDEQ and EPA are aware and involved in this matter. Efforts to resolve the migration are expected to start before September 1. If you have additional questions, please call 616.632.7920 or email me at Darwin.Baas@kentcountymi.gov.

Thank you for your patience as we continue our work on this site.

Dar Baas

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