



ISSUE 3: BROOKLYN INDUSTRIAL AREA IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

March 2010

This newsletter provides updates on progress of activities to reduce noise, dust and odour from the Brooklyn area industries.

ABOUT THE BROOKLYN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

Since the establishment of Melbourne, the western suburbs have housed industry alongside residents. Air and water quality in the area has been a community concern as far back as the 1870s.

Today, while industry practice is improving, the environmental health and livability of the western suburbs for local residents still remains a priority for community, business and the Victorian government.

THE BROOKLYN COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP

The Brooklyn Community Reference Group (BCRG) is a collaboration between community, industry and government to work towards ongoing clean air and dust and noise reduction in the Brooklyn area. The group meets six-monthly, with additional teams working on specialised issues.

The next BCRG meeting is on:

Wednesday, 19 May 2010
6.30 pm
Brooklyn Community Centre,
Cyprus Avenue, Brooklyn

Local residents, businesses and industry are welcome to attend.

INTERIM FINDINGS FOR DUST MONITORING

EPA commenced a dust monitoring program in late October 2009, in response to community concerns expressed about nuisance dust and potential health impacts of fine dust emanating from the Brooklyn industrial area.

Three air quality measuring stations have been placed in Brooklyn and Yarraville. The stations are measuring the level of fine dust in the air, smaller than 10 micrometres (μm) referred to as PM_{10} . Measurements are compared with the Air National Environment Protection Measure (NEPM) air quality objective of under 50 micrograms of dust per cubic meter, averaged over 24 hours.

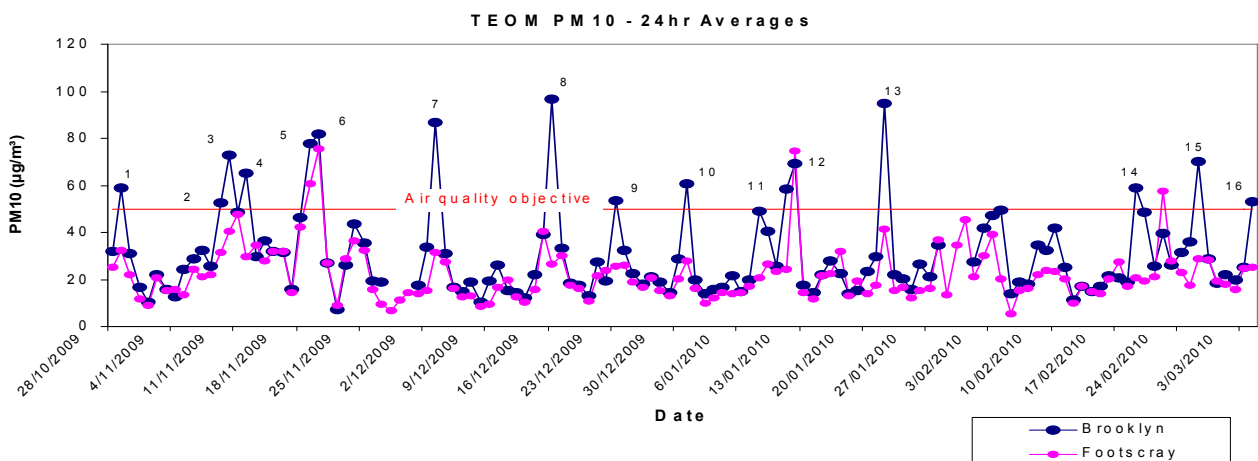
The Air NEPM air quality objective recommends a goal of not exceeding the objective more than five times per annum.

On 10 February 2010, interim findings were released at a community meeting, showing 13 instances where dust levels were above the national air quality objective in the first 100 days of monitoring.

Since the release of this data there have been further exceedences, a current total of 16 for the period 28/10/2009 – 03/03/2010 (see Figure 1).

EPA considers these results to be unacceptable and is expecting immediate action by local industry to manage dust from their premises.

Figure 1: interim results from Brooklyn air monitoring 28/10/2009 – 03/03/2010



HEALTH MESSAGES

EPA has made the interim findings of the monitoring available to the Department of Health. The Department issues advice to the public concerned about the effects of dust on their health.

The Department of Health has advised the levels of dust being experienced on hot, dry, windy days are at concentrations that can potentially cause health issues in children, the elderly or those with pre-existing respiratory conditions.

People suffering from pre-existing conditions such as cardio-pulmonary disease, asthma or acute respiratory diseases which can be aggravated by high dust levels should reduce their exposure to dust on days when the air quality is poor. Medication for these conditions should be taken as prescribed by your doctor.

WHAT IS BEING DONE

Councils, Department of Health and EPA are leading action to reduce dust.

- Dust monitoring: Monitoring will continue and an alert system has been set up to notify EPA of high dust levels for immediate investigation
- Dust composition: EPA will undertake analysis of the dust to determine what is in it and advise the community of the results. The composition analysis requires a different collection and analysis program to the current monitoring program.
- Enforcement action: A number of companies have been issued with Pollution Abatement Notices requiring them to stop generating dust from their sites. This must be done before the hot, north westerly winds return. EPA will progressively issue more pollution abatement notices in coming months as further sources of dust are identified through surveillance and other measures.
- Dust surveillance: EPA will continue to undertake dust surveillance work, which will enable collection of evidence to issue notices on companies found to be creating dust.
- Compliance Checks: EPA is continuing monitoring of Brooklyn industries and EPA officers are in the area most days at many different times. Joint Council-EPA site visits continue to enable each

agency to use its legislative powers to enforce improved performance.

OTHER NEWS

SITA Australia Pty Ltd was found guilty of breaching their licence by allowing offensive odour to discharge beyond the boundary of their Brooklyn composting facility in September 2008.

SITA was ordered to pay \$40,000 to fund a Brooklyn Environmental and Educational Sustainability Program run by Hobsons Bay City Council. The Program will conduct an energy-saving retro-fit of local community Brooklyn facilities, implement a community-based tree planting program and home energy audits.

The Program will also deliver a series of workshops on sustainability, covering topics such as reducing energy use in the home, water saving in the home, personal eco-footprint calculation and sustainable gardening. This proposal was originally submitted by Brooklyn Residents Action Group (BRAG).

REPORTING POLLUTION

The community supports EPA by reporting pollution in its area to the Pollution Watch Line on 9695 2777.

Local government can also respond to and prosecute complaints if companies are in breach of their planning permits:

- Brimbank City Council – 9249 4000.
- Maribyrnong City Council – 9688 0200
- Hobson Bay City Council – 9932 1000

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Yarraville On The Nose
Contact Bruce on 9332 2808 or email coord.onthenose@gmail.com
(Yarraville and Kingsville area west of Williamstown Road.)
- Brooklyn Residents Action Group (BRAG)
Contact Jan on 0417 637 503
(Based in the Brooklyn area bounded by Geelong Road and the West Gate Freeway.)
- The BCRG Chair is Jen Lilburn, Kismet Forward
ph: 0418 373 352.