

COMMUNITY INFORMATION – NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2: BROOKLYN INDUSTRIAL AREA: IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Update November 2009

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

THE PROJECT AREA

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 reduced noise in the Brooklyn area. The group meets six-monthly, with additional teams working on specialised issues.

This Project works with industries and residents across the three local government areas of Hobsons Bay, Brimbank, and Maribyrnong, covering the suburbs of Altona North, Brooklyn, Sunshine West, Sunshine, Braybrook, Tottenham, West Footscray, Kingsville, Seddon, Yarraville, Spotswood and South Kingsville.

WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS?

Participants at the community workshop run in August 2008 identified odour to be their major concern, with dust and airborne particles and noise also key priorities.

A number of project teams made up of community, industry and government representatives focused on specific issues including odour enforcement, dust management and understanding industry operation.

The project is highly complex, with a long history of mixed land use, industry catching up to increasing environmental standards and intermittent pollution that can be difficult to trace and quantify. Industries are regulated to produce minimum emissions, but may produce odour, dust and noise as part of normal operation.

RECENT NEWS

Australian Tallow Producers (renderer)

The company has installed a second biofilter, with a third one due for completion by the end of 2009, 10 months ahead of schedule. The building ventilation stack will then be decommissioned so that all air from the buildings will be treated in the biofilters.

A fire at Australian Tallow Producers in late July caused significant odour concerns for the local community. Australian Tallow Producers circulated a formal apology and have developed a new incident management protocol to mitigate impacts of plant malfunction. EPA fined the company \$5841 over the incident.

SITA (composter)

SITA Environmental Solutions is in the final stages of commissioning a new Grease Trap Waste processing facility. The new facility will allow for controlled receival and mixing of grease trap waste, with all components of the facility connected to a suitably sized biofilter for odour treatment. The construction of the temporary facility will cost over \$300,000.

Swift (abattoir and renderer)

Swift is installing an upgraded biofilter system, which will be completed by the end of the year. In the 18 months since Swift purchased the site, over \$4 million has been invested in plant upgrades, with a further \$2.5 million set aside for the 2009-10 financial year.

EcoTyre (tyre recycling)

The director of Eco Tyre was convicted and fined \$5500 in Melbourne Magistrates' Court in September for stockpiling half a million tyres and creating an extreme fire risk at a site in Brooklyn. The owners have until late November to clean up the site. EPA has also issued a pollution abatement notice to prevent any additional tyres being deposited at the site.



Dust from Bunting Road

EPA has been informed by Tom Buxton that a date has been set in late November for the sealing of Bunting Road.

Brooklyn quarries

EPA is working to bring the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) into dust actions. DPI regulates quarry activities and has extensive experience in dust management.

SCIENTIFIC DUST MONITORING PROGRAM

EPA has begun a 10-month program to measure dust in the Brooklyn area and provide important information about local air quality. This program was initiated in response to community concerns about nuisance dust and the potential health impacts of fine dust emitted from the Brooklyn industrial estate.

Particulate matter, or PM, is made up of many sizes of particles, grouped into coarse particles (such as dust found near unsealed roads) and fine particles (dust found in smoke and haze). The monitoring program will measure fine dust particles with a diameter less than 10 micrometres in size, called PM_{10} , as well as measuring the total dust load.

In October 2009 monitoring equipment was installed at two sites in Brooklyn and at another in Yarraville. Monitoring instruments at the three sites measure particles continuously and will also provide wind direction and wind speed data to assist in identifying the areas producing dust.

All sites have been carefully chosen and the equipment used is the best available. All instruments are maintained and calibrated regularly by EPA scientists to ensure the ongoing collection of highquality data.

The machines have taken several weeks to calibrate and EPA is beginning to receive data. The data collected through this program will be made available to the public once it has been properly validated and analysed. This may take up to two months to complete. EPA will publish preliminary results closer to Christmas.

EVOLVING THE PROJECT ENGAGEMENT

At the September Brooklyn dust subgroup meeting, feedback was sought on processes for engaging and providing information. EPA presented a model to participants in which the BCRG meetings will remain every six months and subgroups evolve to a more targeted industry, community and authority strategic action group.

On 12 November, EPA brought together a small selection of industry and community members to explore ways to develop a more focused action group.

Participants decided that they did not want to set up a formal group, but instead wished to schedule a series of industry visits to better understand site operations and to communicate residents' needs. EPA will assist in coordinating site visits with BRAG and YOTN representatives and local government to a selection of local industries over the next six months.

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP MEETINGS

BCRG meeting dates – **19 May 2010** and **17 November 2010**.

The meetings are open to the community to attend.

REPORTING POLLUTION

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

EPA officers use information such as wind data, recent field investigations and information from the community to determine possible sources. Follow-up action may include on-site attendance, after consideration of the extent, nature and severity of pollution reports from the community.

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

JOIN THE MAILING LIST

Would you like to know more? Join the mailing list by calling EPA on **9695 2722**.

COMMUNITY CONTACTS:

There are three community-based groups participating in the BCRG:

Yarraville On The Nose (YOTN) Contact Bruce on 9332 2808 or email <u>coord.onthenose@gmail.com</u> (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.)

Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association (SunRRA)

Contact Darlene at **secretary@sunshine.asn.au** (Based in the Sunshine area.)

The BCRG Chair is Jen Lilburn (0418 373 352).

