



ODOUR ABATEMENT TASKFORCE

Update on odour issues

Cleanaway New Chum site update

The department continues to have a presence at the New Chum site with officers visiting at least three times a week to meet with Cleanaway representatives, make site observations and verify progress.

Senior staff from the department and Cleanaway meet twice a week to understand what is being done, what challenges have arisen and what Cleanaway is yet to focus on.

Prior to the recent rain, the department ensured Cleanaway had a plan for managing stormwater on site and further diversionary earthworks were subsequently undertaken.

The main focus on-site continues to be reducing odour and the water level in the affected cell.

Ground water continues to enter the cell at a rate of about 2ML per day, continuing to make reducing the water level a slow process. Cleanaway continues to work on a plan to address the ground water.

Cleanaway is also continuing investigations around landfill gases as required by the Environmental Protection Order issued by DES in June.

The number of community odour complaints has remained relatively low over the last fortnight.

As the regulator we are committed to keeping you up-to-date and we are continuing to encourage Cleanaway to engage with the community and provide more information about their forward planning.

On June 22, Cleanaway [announced](#) the site is likely to remain closed until the end of June 2023. Cleanaway provides site updates at their [website](#).

New air monitoring trial

New air monitoring equipment is being trialled by the department to analyse air quality samples from the Cleanaway New Chum site.

The New Zealand-made SIFT-MS equipment is capable of testing for more compounds than the current technology used by the department.

For example, the technology can measure reduced sulphur compounds such as mercaptans which can be odorous at very low concentrations. Mercaptans are organosulfur molecules composed of carbon, hydrogen, and sulphur that are known for having a pungent odour at very low concentrations similar to rotten cabbage or garlic.

The increased sensitivity of the SIFT-MS is being evaluated for creating air quality 'fingerprints' for various industries and individual sites.

The key compounds in the fingerprint can then be compared to those detected in communities, helping to provide a more accurate indication of the source and an improved environmental regulatory response to address the issue.

Air quality samples are collected in an inert polymer bag which is then taken to the QUT Central Analytical Research Facility for analysis by the SIFT-MS instrument.

DES is working in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) who owns and operates the instrument.

It is early days for the trial – the first site visit occurred on 9 June and results are being analysed and compared with results from the current technology.

The trial will continue with further visits planned to sites in the Swanbank area in the coming months.



DES staff on-site at Cleanaway New Chum taking air samples using the new technology and, for comparison of results, the current canister technology (the silver spherical device on the ground).



DES Compliance Officer and QUT's Laboratory Coordinator at the lab with the SIFT-MS air analysis equipment (pictured on the right).

Air quality monitoring

The static [air quality monitoring web page](#) has been updated to include hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) data from 10 departmental air monitoring sites in the local area up until 5 July.

As at 5 July, the results reflect almost three months of measuring hydrogen sulfide in the community. The highest levels during this period were measured toward the end of May. Levels have been trending down since then.

Live H₂S data is also available at our [website](#). The live data comes directly from the department's air monitoring stations in the Swanbank and surrounding suburbs and has only undergone a preliminary quality check. The static page established for the Cleanaway New Chum odour issues includes (static) graphs and tables, key findings commentary and information about how to understand the data.

Results from a further five community air quality canisters have been provided to residents and are available on the [static air quality monitoring](#) page. The latest results are from canisters in Quartz Court, Tone Drive, Maudsley Crescent, Reerden Street and Alawoona Street in Collingwood Park.

Stay up-to-date

The dedicated [Cleanaway New Chum odour issues](#) web page features updates and previous editions of this newsletter. It also includes [frequently asked questions](#), the links to [air quality monitoring results](#) and [live hydrogen sulfide air data](#).

If someone you know is interested in receiving regular email updates, you can forward them this email and they can subscribe to the [OAT Update newsletter](#).

Report odour

While we are working to address the current situation, we encourage all community members to continue to report odour issues to assist us with our ongoing response efforts.

Phone: 1300 130 372 (option 3) or [report online](#).



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