

The former Boo Hole landfill site

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April 2009

The former Boo Hole landfill site has been designated as contaminated land. However, although there is evidence of gas migrating from the site, investigations have not identified the presence of gas inside properties bordering the site where monitoring has been undertaken.

This leaflet explains what this means, tells you about progress so far and what will happen next.



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Boo Hole is in Heywood between Bury New Road and Bury Old Road, approximately 1.5km east of the M66, junction 2.

Tipping was taking place on the site in 1971 and continued until the 1990s. After the site closed we received information that the landfill was generating gas, which is produced from the breakdown of wood, paper and other organic wastes. We commissioned consultants to investigate whether the gas presented a risk to health or the environment.

Action taken

In 2003 an investigation done for a proposed development found ground gas at levels which could be a risk to the development. We then commissioned further investigations to assess gas migration from the landfill. In 2005 gas monitoring in properties on Bury Old Road took place. This did not identify the presence of landfill gas, however it showed that gases are migrating through the adjacent underlying natural sand deposits.

Latest

In 2008 more investigations confirmed the presence of landfill gas migrating from the site, but at a minimal rate. However this represents an unacceptable risk to neighbouring areas and Boo Hole Landfill meets the legal definition of contaminated land. We have therefore declared the site as contaminated land under Part 2A of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act.

What happens now?

Work will be planned to remove the risk from migrating landfill gas from the site, however we are currently at the beginning of a legal process to pursue the organisation responsible for the site. Now that the site has been designated as contaminated land they have 3 months to consider their options. Local residents will not be expected to meet any costs.

In the meantime we are organising a 'drop in' day to enable you to meet and speak to the staff involved and for us to answer any questions you may have.

Your questions answered



- **What are you monitoring for?**

Landfill sites can produce a number of gases, the most common being methane and carbon dioxide but others can be produced in small amounts such as hydrogen sulphide. Here it is methane and carbon dioxide which are causing us concern.

- **I regularly walk across the field and my children play on it, are they at risk?**

No. Part of the site investigation included taking soil samples and analysing for contamination within the soil. The investigation showed the landfill was 'capped' to prevent site users from coming into contact with the waste material. The investigation concluded there was no risk to site users.

- **What are the risks to my family if gas does enter my property?**

The main risk is methane entering a property in an enclosed space, for example a cupboard or cellar. The gas may accumulate to a level at which an explosion risk may exist.

- **Is there anything I can do to reduce the level of risk until a long term solution is in place?**

Main living areas of properties are not considered to be at high risk because the high frequency of use will prevent the build up of gas. To reduce the risk as much as possible we would advise you to open the cupboards at least several times a week. If your property has a cellar we would advise leaving the entrance door open for a few hours several times a week. This will allow any gases to be vented away and considerably reduce the level of risk. Should your property have a cellar and you wish to discuss this further, please contact us.

- **Why have we made this announcement?**

Designating the site as contaminated land is a step towards resolving the problem and means that we can target more resources to Boo Hole. This step is a positive one, and will help us to address the issue for the benefit of all current and future residents.

Contact

Michael Moore, Senior Contaminated Land Officer

t 01706 924107

e boohole@rochdale.gov.uk

w www.rochdale.gov.uk/pollution

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