



For Immediate Release:
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ADEM Announces Results of Air Monitoring Study From Eight Mile Area Mercaptan Release

MONTGOMERY - The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) announced today the results of the air monitoring study that was conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Eight Mile community. The study was conducted in response to citizens' complaints about odors and consisted of the collection of air quality data at eleven (11) different sites within the Eight Mile community. The samples were collected by EPA staff, in accordance with EPA quality and technical procedures, on April 24 – 26, 2012.

The results of the air monitoring study indicate that Methane was detected throughout the study area at levels below 0.1 percent, which is not indicative of a natural gas leak. In addition, three Sulfur compounds were detected during the study including, tert-Butyl Mercaptan, Ethyl Methyl Sulfide, and Diethyl Sulfide. The tert-Butyl Mercaptan was detected at seven (7) locations at concentrations that ranged from 4.1 parts-per-billion (ppb) to 230 ppb, while the Ethyl Methyl Sulfide was detected at three (3) locations at concentrations that ranged from 4.8 ppb to 72 ppb. Finally, Diethyl Sulfide was detected at one (1) location at a concentration of 33 ppb.

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None of the Sulfur compounds detected during the air quality study have been identified by EPA as Hazardous Air Pollutants, thus no EPA toxicity information is available for those compounds. Therefore, comparison levels, or screening levels, were selected based on the best available health benchmarks that could be found in the literature. The results of the air quality study indicate that the concentrations of tert-Butyl Mercaptan and Diethyl Sulfide did not exceed their respective comparison, or screening, levels, of 500 ppb. There was no comparison level available for Ethyl Methyl Sulfide.

At this time, the Department is working with local elected officials, EPA representatives, and other government agencies to establish a time/date/location to further discuss with members of the local community the results of the air monitoring investigation and other aspects of the overall investigation of the mercaptan release. An announcement will be forthcoming in the near future regarding this community event.

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