



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

**Community Air Sampling
Pascagoula, MS**



FACT SHEET NO. 3

March 2016

MDEQ Will Conduct Air Sampling Study

Background

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) conducts ambient air sampling and monitoring, particularly ambient air toxics monitoring. Under the Urban Air Toxics Monitoring Program (UATMP), MDEQ performed ambient air toxics monitoring in connection with the School Air Toxics Ambient Monitoring Program (SATAMP) and in an effort to characterize air quality in a community near the abandoned Kerr-McGee plant site. More specifically, the MDEQ operated five monitoring sites across the state under the UATMP to measure and characterize air quality for hazardous air pollutants (HAP). MDEQ then operated a single site on school property as a part of EPA's SATAMP initiative. MDEQ also operated two monitoring sites in the Columbus, MS area to determine if an abandoned plant site might be impacting the air quality in the surrounding neighborhood. It is important to note that one of the monitors the MDEQ operated from 2001-2005 under the UATMP was located in Pascagoula. The data collected in Pascagoula during the UATMP effort did not indicate any issues with air quality.

Why Conduct this Study

While the data collected in Pascagoula during the UATMP effort did not indicate any issues with air quality, the monitor was approximately two miles northwest of the neighborhood east of Bayou Casotte. The MDEQ seeks to collect ambient air samples from a site in the neighborhood of concern. By collecting ambient air data in close proximity to both the neighborhood and the emission sources, we should be able to determine how the data compares to the previous monitoring effort and determine if any conditions exist that would warrant a more extensive study. The objectives of this project are to obtain ambient air quality data from a location in the neighborhood where the residents have expressed concerns about being exposed to elevated levels of toxic emission concentrations. The data obtained from this project should provide MDEQ with information to identify any significant VOC HAP concentrations and possible emission sources to investigate for regulation compliance and/or improvements.

What Will Be Done

For this study, MDEQ intends to collect five (5) VOC samples from a location in the neighborhood east of the Bayou Casotte Industrial Park in Pascagoula, Mississippi. In addition to these five samples, the MDEQ will also collect two (2) instantaneous/5-minute samples in an attempt to capture ambient air concentrations that exist during a period where the neighborhood is experiencing a condition of concern. These samples will be taken at times reported by a neighborhood representative when extraordinary odorous or other concerning conditions are being experienced. At the time an episode sample is taken, MDEQ staff will also deploy one of the 24-hour ambient air sample collection runs. The canisters will be sent to a contracted laboratory for analysis for volatile organic compounds (VOC).

When Will We Know the Results

Data analysis usually takes about 3-6 weeks. Once MDEQ receive the results, this information will be available for the public. MDEQ will also plan to provide data analysis results through a community meeting.

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