



# Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill Community Meeting

March 25, 2021



**Protect PT** 

**EHP**   
ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH PROJECT  
SOUTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA

# Agenda

- Introduction & background on the landfill
- Information on what the local government is doing to help residents.
- Considerations for a public health approach from the Environmental Health Project.
- Information about what Protect PT is doing to help residents.
- What the PA DEP is doing “to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment.”
- Address resident concerns of health and quality of life impacts due to truck traffic, smell, and air pollution.



# Who is Protect PT?

Protect PT (Penn-Trafford) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring residents' safety, security, and quality of life by engaging in education and advocacy to protect the economic, environmental, and legal rights of the people in Westmoreland and Allegheny counties.

Since starting as a group of neighbors working together to protect their neighborhood from fracking in late 2014, Protect PT has grown to a community-based organization with staff, volunteers, and members.

Learn more at [protectpt.org](http://protectpt.org).

## OUR GOALS



**Educate** residents and local lawmakers with factual and important information so they may better protect themselves.



**Empower** residents to get involved in the local government process.



**Engage** our lawmakers directly at local meetings and hearings to ensure our rights are protected.

# Timeline

MAY 2019

Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill (WSL) began trucking leachate to several sites, violating their Waste Permit

JUNE 2019

PADEP informed WSL of need to apply for Minor Permit Modification

AUG. 2019

PADEP and WSL collaborated on Leachate Evaporator project

FEB. 2020

Consent Order Agreement to address violations

SEPT. 2020

WSL submitted Title V Air Permit Renewal, seeking exemptions for air permit for CNG facility and leachate evaporator

OCT. 2020

Second Consent Order Agreement for WSL's failure to cover waste, maintain mud, dust, and truck traffic and to maintain lateral escape of leachate

DEC 2020

PA DEP approved Title V Air Permit Renewal

Corrective Action Plan was approved by PA DEP to address violations and outstanding COA violations

# 2021 Violations

## January

Landfill received 7 violations.

Examples:

Failure to maintain access road, failure to control runoff

## February

Landfill received 8 violations

Examples:

Erosion and sediment control failures

## March

Landfill received 5 violations

Examples:

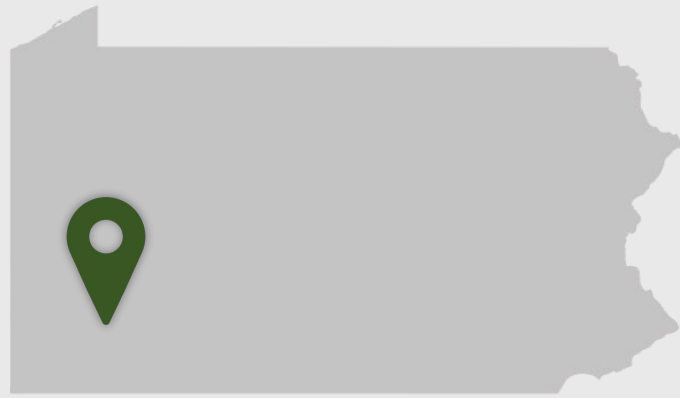
Daily Cover not properly placed, Vehicles Not Directed



Proposed location of the  
leachate evaporator near the  
current CNG facility

# Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill's operations are reducing residents' quality of life.

In our survey of 110 community members, we uncovered social, political, economic, and medical issues caused by the landfill.



WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PA



## 2020 SURVEY FINDINGS



Daily habits are being disrupted.



Residents have lost faith in local government.



Cost of living in the area is increasing.



Residents are noticing changes in their health.



# Information on what the local government is doing



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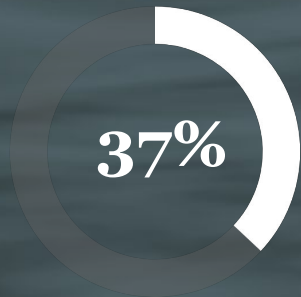
# Using Local Ordinances

## § 164-19. Stormwater hotspots.

- A. A “stormwater hotspot” is defined as a land use or activity that generates higher concentrations of hydrocarbons, trace metals or toxicants than are found in typical stormwater runoff, based on monitoring studies. If a site is designated as a “hotspot,” it has important implications for how stormwater is managed. First and foremost, stormwater runoff from hotspots cannot be allowed to infiltrate into groundwater, where it may contaminate water supplies. Second, a greater level of stormwater treatment is needed at hotspot sites to prevent pollutant washoff after construction. This treatment plan typically involves preparing and implementing a stormwater pollution prevention plan that involves a series of operational practices at the site that reduces the generation of pollutants from a site or prevent contact of rainfall with the pollutants. Table 3.2 provides a list of designated hotspots for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- B. Under EPA’s stormwater NPDES program, some industrial sites are required to prepare and implement a stormwater pollution prevention plan. A list of industrial categories that are subject to the pollution prevention requirement can be found in the commonwealth. In addition, Pennsylvania requirements for preparing and implementing a stormwater pollution prevention plan are described in the NPDES general discharge permit. The stormwater pollution prevention plan requirement applies to both existing and new industrial sites.

# The landfill is increasing residents' cost of living.

Concerns over air and water quality are forcing residents to incur additional costs to live in the area. For residents living at or below the poverty line, these added costs take up an even larger share of household income.



Are drinking bottled water



**+ \$2,270 / year**



Have installed air filtering systems



**+ \$2,507 / household**

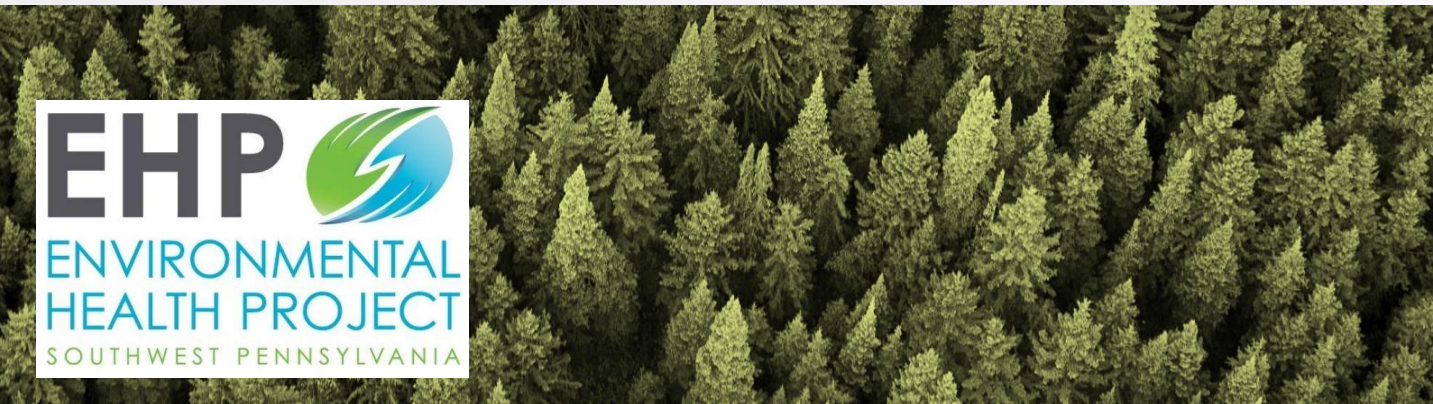
“ My car is covered with that sludge from the road, I have spent well over \$100 to wash my car and I'm sure I'm not alone.

– JOYCE A.



# Considerations for a Public Health Approach

Beth Weinberger, MPH, PhD – Director of Research and Policy  
Environmental Health Project



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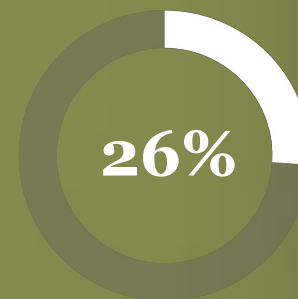
**Protect PT** 

# Residents' are noticing changes in their health.

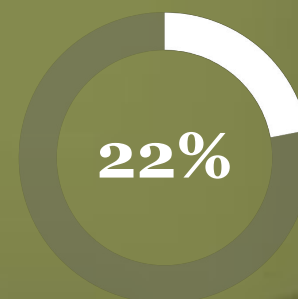
37% of residents consider the impacts created by the landfill damaging to their or their family's health. Many report changes to their health since the landfill has been in operation near their homes including some who have sought medical attention.

“ My son had cancer when he was 17 and again 19. Although it was never proven, we have often wondered if the landfill was a factor in his illness.

– DONNA B.



Have noticed changes in health



Have noticed dizziness and/or loss of balance



Have gone to a doctor because of changes in health

# What Protect PT is Doing

# Residents' daily habits are being disrupted.

70% of respondents reported seeing sludge on the road, which many car owners say they must regularly wash off their vehicles. Potentially toxic run off is only one part of the issue. Excessive truck traffic around the landfill and bothersome odors also plague residents.

“My only enjoyment was sitting outside on the porch. I can't even do that because of the smell. We're prisoners in our own house.”

– CAROL B.



60%

Consider the impacts created by the landfill bothersome



27%

Are spending less time outside



50%

Have changed driving routes to avoid traffic

# Air Monitoring

On March 25th, 2021, 10:11:30 AM EDT

**10 Minute Average US EPA PM2.5 AQI is now**

# 84

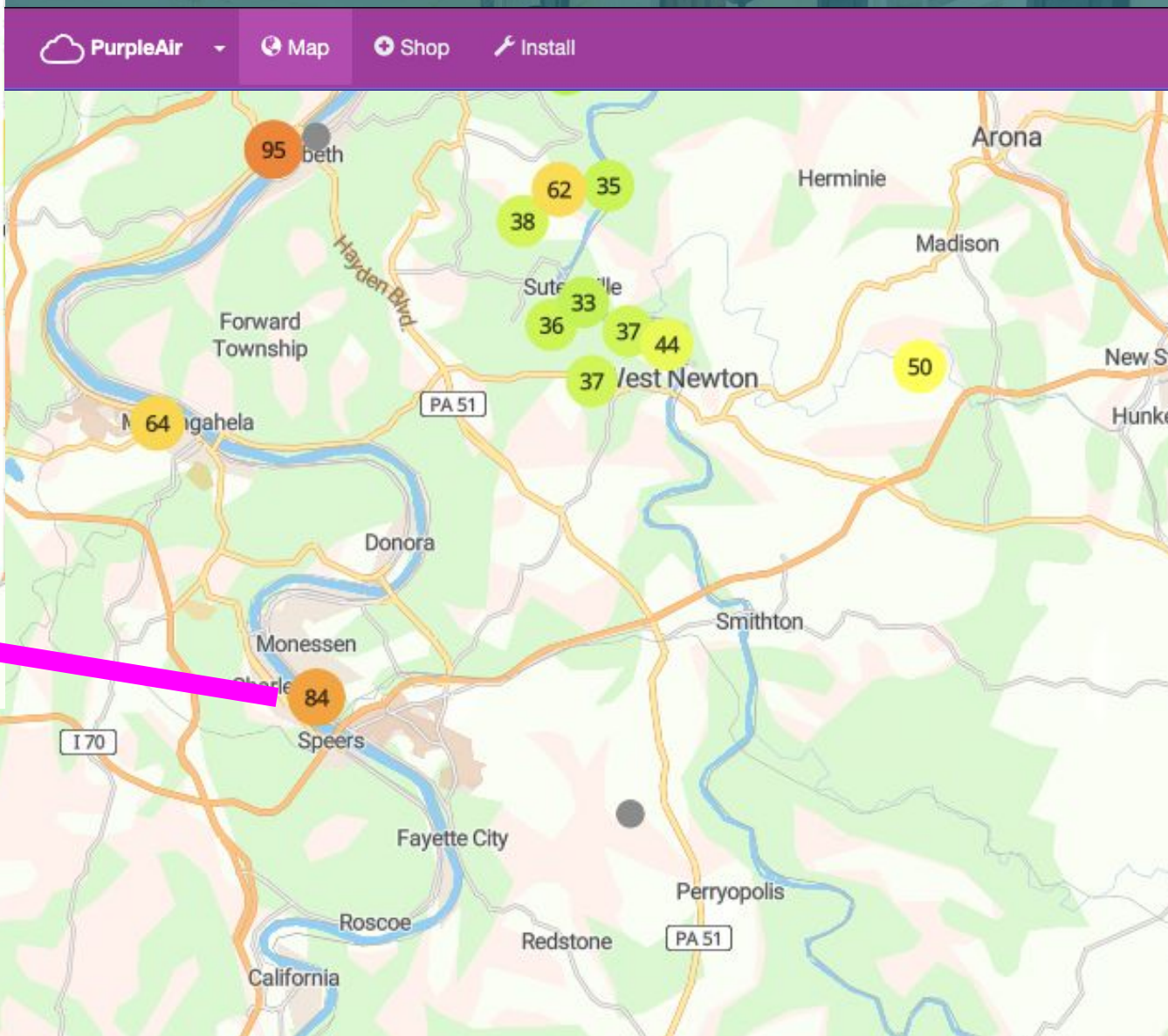
51-100: Air quality is acceptable; however, if they are exposed for 24 hours there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.

Now	10 Min	30 Min	1 hr	6 hr	1 Day	Week
77	84	98	98	63	43	52

**Sensor: PPT monessen 01**

A B ✓100% PA-II 6.01

Get This Widget



# Tools for Residents

- Observation/Complaint Tool  
<https://www.protectpt.org/waste>



- Home Resource Guide Workshops  
<https://www.protectpt.org/hrg-workshops>





# What the PA DEP is Doing

**DEP mission** *“to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment.”*

# Permits


## Landfill Permit 100277

- Minor Modification - Trucking of Leachate
- Major Modification - Leachate Evaporation
- Two Consent Order Agreements between PA DEP and WSL in 2020
- PA DEP approved WSL's Proposed Operational Improvement Plan and Corrective Action Plan in November 2020 and December 2020, respectively.

## Title V Operating Permit PA-65-00767

# Violations March 3, 2021

- Failure to comply with the plans and specifications in the permit, the terms and conditions of the permit, the environmental protection acts, this title or orders issued by the Department.
- Approved daily cover is not placed on exposed waste at the end of working day, at the end of each 24 hour period, whichever is less.
- Vehicles are not directed by attendant or clearly marked signs to the unloading area.
- Surface drainage failed to be passed through a sedimentation pond or series of ponds before leaving the site.
- Access road fails to prevent erosion to the maximum extent possible or contributes to sediment to streams or runoff outside the site.
- [https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eFACTSWeb/searchResults\\_singleFacility.aspx?FacilityID=243245](https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eFACTSWeb/searchResults_singleFacility.aspx?FacilityID=243245)



# Questions/Comments from Residents

# Resident Concerns...

1. Air quality and smell - Fenceline monitoring request to be done by PA DEP
2. Request to limit the materials accepted at the landfill
3. Request that testing of the materials currently at the landfill
4. Residents don't have faith in the landfill's reporting to the PA DEP or local officials. PA DEP should check to ensure the information that WSL gives DEP is correct.
5. Residents would like PA DEP to not allow the permitting of a leachate evaporation system.
6. If WSL can not comply with regulations, residents request that PA DEP enforce more stringent penalties.
7. PA DEP should take a public health approach when permitting and ensure that the information provided by the landfill is accurate and realistic.

# Contact Us

## WEBSITE

protectpt.org

## OFFICE ADDRESS

3344 Route 130, Suite D  
Harrison City, PA 15636

## MAILING ADDRESS

PO BOX 137  
Harrison City, PA 15636-0137

## PHONE

(724) 392-7023

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

## OUR STAFF



**Gillian Graber**  
Executive Director &  
Co-Founder  
Protect PT

[gillian@protectpt.org](mailto:gillian@protectpt.org)



**Kathleen Brosseau**  
Environmental Scientist  
Protect PT

[kathleen@protectpt.org](mailto:kathleen@protectpt.org)



**Patrick Campbell**  
Project & Outreach Coordinator  
Protect PT

[patrick@protectpt.org](mailto:patrick@protectpt.org)



**Mary Obringer**  
Outreach Assistant  
Protect PT

[mary@protectpt.org](mailto:mary@protectpt.org)

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:



**Beth Weinberger, MPH, PhD**  
Director of Research and Policy  
Environmental Health Project

[bweinberger@environmentalhealthproject.org](mailto:bweinberger@environmentalhealthproject.org)



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