



Summary of Events / Update

Willowbrook Sterigenics Environmental Issue

(as of September 14, 2018)

- On August 22, 2018, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) released the 2014 National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA). This is a tool the agency uses to provide information on potential health risks from breathing air toxics, also known as hazardous air pollutants. It includes estimates of exposure and risk for 180 air toxics that the EPA regulates under the Clean Air Act. The 2014 NATA map indicates a higher level of risks from long-term exposure for populations within seven (7) specific census tracts located around the Willowbrook Sterigenics facility.
- The elevated cancer risks are largely driven by an EPA risk value derived from a USEPA Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) assessment. The IRIS assessment dated December 16, 2016 found that ethylene oxide (EtO), a gas emitted by Sterigenics, is carcinogenic to humans (upgraded from a “probable carcinogen”).
- Upon further studying this finding, the USEPA decided to perform some ambient air sampling around a known source of EtO emissions. The Willowbrook Sterigenics facility was chosen. The sampling was completed May 16-18, 2018 and the identified levels of EtO in the atmosphere were determined. These test results were shared by the EPA with Sterigenics in June 2018.
- Sterigenics obtained a permit from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and installed additional emissions controls on its Willowbrook facilities in July 2018. The new emissions controls are reported to reduce EtO emissions by 90%.
- On August 22, 2018, the USEPA contacted the Village of Willowbrook to advise that a report prepared by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) would be released that day pertaining to the increased risk of airborne toxics emitted by Sterigenics. The ATSDR report contained three (3) recommendations: That Sterigenics take immediate action to reduce EtO emissions (which had already been done by the time the report was released), that long-term air monitoring be initiated to measure ambient air levels of EtO, and that the IDPH investigate whether there are elevated cancers in the population around the Sterigenics facility that are consistent with those associated with chronic EtO exposures.

- On August 24, 2018, the Willowbrook Mayor posted a letter on the Village website alerting the community of the receipt of the federal agency report and advising that levels of EtO gas could pose a public health hazard. The report was also provided. The letter advised that the Village was working diligently with local, county, state, and U.S. elected officials to gather information from federal and state agencies on the matter.
- On August 29, 2018, with the help of elected officials, a Public Forum meeting was held to enable the community to hear information and ask questions pertaining to their concerns. Representatives from the USEPA, IEPA, ATSDR, and Sterigenics were in attendance as a panel. Over 400 concerned individuals attended the meeting.
- Frustrated with the lack of information provided and direct answers to important questions from the community, the Village of Willowbrook announced the formation of their own independent Task Force to further study the ATSDR report, seek additional testing, including long-term monitoring, and make that information available to the public.
- On September 10, 2018, the Willowbrook Village Board engaged the professional services of:
 - **Environmental Law Firm Schiff Hardin, LLP** – Lead attorney Renee Cipriano is former director of the IEPA, and associate attorney Frank Lyons is former administrator of the USEPA
 - **Lucy Frasier Toxicology Consulting, LLC** – Ms. Frasier is a board-certified toxicologist with over 28 years of experience
 - **GHD Services, Inc.** – Mr. Dyron Hamlin is a chemical engineer and certified industrial hygienist
- On September 11, 2018, the Willowbrook Mayor, elected officials, and staff met with representatives from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to discuss the initiation of their cancer incidence study. Although these types of studies typically take 8 to 10 months to complete, the IDPH will prioritize this project and commit to a 6-month completion timeframe.
- The Village Attorney is completing an analysis of all Village codes, including zoning codes, to determine whether the operation of the Sterigenics facility is in compliance with all local requirements, and if appropriate action can be taken as a result of identified and confirmed non-compliance.

UPDATE:

- Before additional ambient air sampling can be performed, the newly installed emissions controls on the Sterigenics facilities must be tested. This stack test is scheduled to occur the week of September 17, 2018.
- Once the stack testing results are available, the Village will request that the USEPA conduct additional ambient air sampling as soon as possible to determine current EtO levels in the area since the additional emissions controls were put in place. The Village Task Force is analyzing the USEPA's approach to monitoring. Based on their recommendations, we will ask that the USEPA also expand the testing radius and locations of monitoring to include areas of concern such as schools, daycare centers, and other locations.
- Once the ambient air sampling results are available, and reviewed by the Task Force, the Village will then insist that the USEPA forward those results to the ATSDR to request that their original report be updated to include current health risks as a result of the new tested levels.