Comments/Directions: Wendall Reed of EPA called Steven Vozzo of FRO to inform DAQ of an odor complaint EPA received from Ms. Beverly Collins Hall of Lumber Bridge. Mr. Reed suggested we call Ms. Hall to obtain more information. This call to EPA was received several months ago, with no specific date noted other than Mr. Reed noting that it was received "sometime this spring".

From FRO, take Gillespie Street south to US Hwy 301. Follow Hwy 301 approximately 9.5 miles south, then turn right on NC 71. Follow NC 71 approximately 8.8 miles, through Parkton and Lumber Bridge. The facility is on the right side of the road.

Summary of investigation:

On Tuesday 11/22/16 Steven Vozzo of DAQ FRO received a phone call from Mr. Wendell Reed of EPA Region 4 (404-562-9215) regarding an odor complaint received by EPA from Ms. Beverly Collins Hall of Lumber Bridge, NC. Ms. Hall had complained about excessive odors from the chicken processing plant owned by Mountaire Farms in Lumber Bridge. Ms. Hall lives adjacent to the facility. Mr. Reed indicated that the complaint was received "sometime in the spring this year", but did not indicate a specific date of the complaint. Mr. Reed suggested we contact Ms. Hall at 910-843-9911 to discuss the odors from the facility.
I (Greg Reeves) and Steven Vezzo of DAQ FRO contacted Ms. Hall by phone on 11/22/16 to discuss the odor issue. Ms. Hall is associated with the American Indian Mothers group in the Lumber Bridge area. She has lived in the Shannon area for a number of years, and noted that the odors from the plant which prompted her complaint were very strong. She noted that there are low intensity odors frequently emitted from the plant, but that the odors were much stronger on the day she lodged the complaint with EPA. She stated that she had spoken to several people at the Mountaire facility in the past, including Mr. Robert Jackson, Wastewater Manager. She stated that the plant personnel had not been helpful in reducing the odors, and many times just simply seemed to ignore her complaints.

Ms. Hall indicated that the plant had been spraying wastewater onto the spray fields even when it was raining, which she understood was contrary to the water quality rules. She stated that she had taken pictures of the spraying during a rain event.

I requested that Ms. Hall send me the pictures of the spraying during rain events and that I would forward these pictures to the DAQ water quality personnel for possible follow-up with the facility. I gave Ms. Hall the telephone number for Mr. Jackson (910-359-5275) and encouraged her to call the facility immediately in the event there were strong odors. I explained to her that calling while the odors were occurring was more effective in getting the plant to address the issue than calling DAQ after the fact. However, I also encouraged Ms. Hall to call DAQ about the odors so that DAQ could also follow up with the plant personnel.

Ms. Hall stated that she would call Mr. Jackson to discuss the issues and would forward the pictures of the spraying during the rain event to me at FRO. I sent Ms. Hall an email to her email address of beverlycollinshall@gmail.com so that she could respond and include the pictures.

As this complaint involved an event that was several months in the past, no follow-up with the facility was done at this time.

Investigation completed 11/22/16.

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Beverly,

Thanks for speaking with Steven Vozzo and me today regarding the odor issues at the chicken processing plant in Lumber Bridge. If you can forward me the pictures of the field spraying occurring on rainy days, I will forward those to the land quality and water quality representatives here in our office so they can address that issue.

As for the days when odor is excessive, please call me at the number below to let me know. I will address this with the plant representatives to attempt to alleviate this odor and address any operational issues the plant may be experiencing that cause these odors. If it is after hours or on weekends, please leave me a voice mail message and I will call back to you on the next business day.

I encourage you to call the plant directly when the odors are occurring. I have found in the past that the plant tends to respond better -- and faster -- to the issues when they are occurring. Telling the plant that they had an issue yesterday or in the past has much less impact with the operating folks than pointing out that it is occurring right now. The telephone number I have on file for Robert Jackson, the Waste Water Treatment Manager at the plant, is 910-359-5275.

Although we are somewhat constrained by our State odor rules on what we can require the facility to do, I will work with them to improve the quality of the air in the areas surrounding the plant and the spray fields.

Any information you can supply me about dates and times of odor issues, or pictures of spraying while it is raining, would be most helpful in order for me to coordinate improvements from the plant.

Feel free to call me at your convenience to discuss this further.

Greg Reeves
Permits Coordinator
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North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality

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