Lambton Facility FAQs

Is My Health Compromised From What I Can Smell?

Exposure to excessive levels of almost any given chemical can potentially be hazardous to health. However, measured downwind levels for a variety of individual volatile organic compounds, which may be emitted from Clean Harbors operations, are typically well below accepted regulatory concentration limits.

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) uses analysis of “point of impingement” (POI) air quality to determine the impact of the Lambton incinerator. The MOE POI standards have been developed through application of scientific risk assessment techniques.

The risk assessment, used by the MOE to develop the standards, accepts a one-in-a-million chance as the “acceptable risk”. Therefore, POI standards and guidelines are set for each contaminant at that level and industry must operate below those standards to be in compliance. These limits are usually based on health effects and incorporate significant margins of safety.

Independent air quality monitoring studies conducted annually indicate the Lambton incinerator operates well within the POI guidelines. In most cases, our emissions are only a fraction of the allowable limit. The Ministry observes and provides comments on the methodology used in this stack emissions testing program.

Nuisance odours, which often comprise a mixture of substances, do not typically relate to health hazards since many odours can be perceived at constituent concentrations well below any known effects, sometimes below current constituent measurement capabilities and often encompass highly variable constituent odour thresholds,

Naphthalene is one of the more odorous substances received for disposal at the Lambton landfill. This substance has been repeatedly measured under 'worst-case' conditions downwind of the landfill. The measured levels have been well below standards set to protect human health. Specific waste handling procedures are in place to minimize odours from loads known to contain naphthalene.

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