

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AIR QUALITY DIVISION
ACTIVITY REPORT: Self Initiated Inspection**

U5414291729954

FACILITY: HARTLINE CONSTRUCTION		SRN / ID: U54142917
LOCATION: 11965 183rd Avenue, BIG RAPIDS		DISTRICT: Grand Rapids
CITY: BIG RAPIDS		COUNTY: MECOSTA
CONTACT: Tim Hartline, Owner		ACTIVITY DATE: 06/26/2015
STAFF: Denise Plafcan	COMPLIANCE STATUS: Compliance	SOURCE CLASS:
SUBJECT:		
RESOLVED COMPLAINTS: C-15-00983, C-15-00984, C-15-00985, C-15-00986		

Following several recent e-mail complaints, three divisions within the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) conducted a multi-media inspection of the Hartline property. Denise Plafcan (DP), Air Quality Division (AQD), Matt Gamble, Remediation and Redevelopment Division, and Dean Hazle (DH), Office of Waste Management and Radiological Protection Division, accompanied by Jan Erlandson, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Enforcement Division.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Complaints against the Hartline property were first received on May 2, 2014. DP conducted a drive-by investigation of the property on May 7, 2015. At that time, the complaint was about sawdust blowing out of a Quonset hut across the street into the complainant's yard and into the river. DP explained to the complainant the issues involved with a private residence and confirmed with the township that this was a private residence (see previous complaint reports). DP also explained that AQD staff could respond to an open burning complaint of waste material from an industrial or commercial source. However, if it was household waste from a one or two family dwelling then it was under the authority of the local fire regulations. DP contacted the owners of the property and explained the regulations that the equipment should have a control device and to minimize any fugitive emissions. Based the complainant's e-mail dated October 5, 2014, the Hartlines admitted, in court on June 6, 2014, that they were operating a business on the property. No direct complaints or correspondence were received from May 13, 2014, until October 5, 2014. There was an additional complaint submitted to Thomas Wingate, DNR Law Enforcement Div., on July 22, 2014. Complainant's e-mail dated November 17, 2014 states, "no, since oct 3rd no activity, at 11965 183rd ave anyway". Since this is no longer a manufacturing operation, AQD would not be conducting any additional investigations and considered the complaint resolved. On December 24, 2014 the complainant submitted a video of the Hartlines operating with the door open, however, the video does not contain a date stamp. In this complaint, the focus is on waste and water issues and, therefore the complaint was forwarded to those DEQ divisions. On May 13, 2015 an e-mail received from the complainant focused on improper waste disposal, cleaning up the property and since it was put up for sale if any new owners would be responsible for cleaning the property. Several additional e-mails were received between June 14, 2015 and the inspection on June 26, 2014. These e-mails dealt with issues that are not under AQD jurisdiction.

INSPECTION

Staff arrived on site at 930 hours and met with Tim Hartline the property owner. The inspection began in the area of the Quonset hut and proceeded to the interior of the structure. There was a large piece of equipment in the middle of the floor (planer), a wood burning heater, pile of logs for the heater, a table saw, a pile of sawdust under the table saw and no control equipment or baghouse. The wood burning heater was vented to the outside with a stack (see attached pictures). DP conducted a thorough visual inspection and there wasn't any evidence of sawdust on the exterior of the building, the area surrounding the exterior of the building, the vegetation or even in the small ridges along the roadway.

The inspection included a small well-house outside of the Quonset hut, then the exterior of a trailer next door and then proceeded back into the wooded area of the property. While walking through the property, staff noted several piles of miscellaneous items, a few pictures are attached. Some accumulated rusted items, scrap tires (less than 20), and miscellaneous wooden items.

There was some heavy equipment on the property that Mr. Hartline said was for removing some trees and stumps. Some of the stumps were in a large burn pit on the back of the property. Burning of brush, logs or stumps at a residence is not a violation of AQD regulations. By the burn pit there were two burn barrels with a grate covering the top (see attached photo). A third barrel nearby contained scrap metal salvaged from the burn barrel. Mr. Hartline did ask about disposal of the ash on his own property. DH will follow-up on ash disposal questions.

Mr. Hartline's brother lives next door and it is difficult to determine the property boundaries. So staff inspected portions of this property as well. There were several out buildings: sheds, deer blind, small cabin, outhouse and a large barn on this property. The barn contained a work shop with wood working equipment, a sawdust collection system that simply blows the sawdust through the duct work out the wall and into a pile in the back of the barn. During the inspection it did not appear that this building was currently being used for manufacturing and the sawdust pile was large and appeared to have been there for a while.

Before leaving the neighborhood, DEQ staff DP, DH and Jan Erlandson visited the complainant's residence (Chad and Carol Custer) to share what was found during the inspection. The complainants were upset that DEQ staff were not able to confirm any current on-going regulatory issues during the investigation. The complainants discussed several historical issues from previous years and previous government agencies which were unresolved and not relevant to the current inspection or situation.

According to Mr. and Mrs. Custer the sawdust that is blowing on their property and into the river was still an ongoing issue and impacting the children at the residence, however, no sawdust was visible on the complainant's property or that of the Hartlines. Mr. and Mrs. Custer suspected they had cleaned up any sawdust and any evidence, since they knew we were coming for an inspection. The Custers also stated the backhoe was used to bury evidence of improper waste disposal. While there, Mr. Custer went to the neighbor's residence to show DEQ staff samples of the type of material that the Hartlines were collecting from neighbors and burning. The neighbor's residence belongs to Mr. Custer's mother and she claimed until about 3 years ago the Hartlines had burned all of their trash for them. At the time of this investigation, Mr. Custer's mother did have a fire going in a burn barrel used to burn household trash. The barrel was ~50 ft. from Mr. Custer's residence and it appeared that this was the usual method of disposal of household trash. There was a second barrel filled with charred metal. Mr. Custer's mother said her husband is the one that burns the trash. The barrels appeared to be in compliance with AQD regulations.

Of the numerous complaints the Custers have filed, those dealing with AQD regulations could not be verified. The complainants said that they have sent pictures and the video, however, due to the quality and the lack of dates these items do not demonstrate current non-compliance with air quality rules and regulations. Jan requested better pictures of the situation when it is happening but the complainant was reluctant to take any more pictures from a better vantage point, closer to the Quonset hut, since he claimed he had been attacked by the property owner's dog.

It appears that the Hartline residence is no longer operating as a manufacturing facility. They do some wood working at the Quonset hut and on Mr. Hartline's brother's property but there wasn't any evidence of fugitive sawdust emissions during this inspection or the previous investigation. Based on the physical inspection, the properties at 11955, 11965 and 11935 183rd Avenue, Big Rapids, Michigan appear to be in compliance with AQD rules and regulations and the associated complaint is considered resolved.

NAME



DATE

6-26-15

SUPERVISOR

