

EPA Update on Odour in the Carrigtwohill Area relating to Merck Millipore P0571-04

09/04/20

As part of the EPA's investigation into odour complaints linked to Merck Millipore Limited, Licence Register No. P0571-04, the following actions have been taken to date.

- On foot of odour complaints received before Christmas, regular contact between Merck Millipore Limited and the EPA was maintained in relation to planned works on the odour abatement unit in the site's waste water treatment plant. The odour abatement unit was not working as efficiently as it should, and required cleaning to improve its effectiveness.
- An unannounced site visit took place on 23rd January 2020, during which the potential for odour nuisance from the waste water treatment plant and the planned cleaning of the odour abatement unit was discussed.
- An odour impact assessment in the Carrigtwohill area was carried out by EPA on the morning prior the site visit on the 23rd January 2020. A faint, intermittent chemical odour was recorded off-site and downwind of the Merck Millipore installation.
- Initial cleaning of the odour abatement unit was carried out by Merck Millipore Limited in February 2020. It was determined at this stage that deeper cleaning would be required.
- A further odour impact assessment was carried out by the EPA in the Carrigtwohill area on the 10th March 2020. No odours were detected downwind of the site boundary during that assessment.
- While additional cleaning was being carried out on the odour abatement unit (between 23rd to 27th March 2020), the number of odour complaints from the Carrigtwohill area increased. Regular contact was maintained between EPA and Merck Millipore Limited during this time to ensure the works were progressing as quickly as possible.
- The odour abatement unit, which relies on microorganisms to treat the odour from the waste water treatment plant, has struggled to stabilise since the cleaning has taken place, prolonging the occurrence of odour in the area. Further microorganisms were added to the unit on the 3rd April 2020 to help stabilise conditions in the unit.
- A compliance meeting was held between the EPA and Merck Millipore Limited on the 7th April 2020 to discuss the immediate actions that were being taken to alleviate the odour impact in the Carrigtwohill area, as well as the short to medium term options available.
- The EPA carried out an odour impact assessment in the Carrigtwohill area on the 8th April 2020. A "damp mouldy cloth" type odour was detected downwind of the site boundary. A site visit was carried out by the EPA on the same date to observe the immediate preventative actions that had been taken by the licensee and to establish progress in alleviating the odour impact in the area.

- Microbial conditions within the odour abatement unit appear to be stabilising which will help to alleviate odour in the short term. Merck Millipore Limited have engaged an odour specialist who is advising on the short, medium and long term actions to be taken to prevent odour nuisance occurring in the future.

The EPA has opened a Compliance Investigation regarding this odour issue, and Merck Millipore Limited are required to take the following actions in response:

1. Provide regular updates on the corrective and preventative actions being taken.
2. Take odour samples from various odour sources on site, characterise the odour and model the off-site impact of the odour.
3. Characterise the effluent streams coming into the waste water treatment plant to determine which streams are contributing to the odour generated.
4. Establish a public communications programme.
5. Carry out odour patrols in the Carrigtwohill area in accordance the [EPA's Guidance Note AG5](#)

The EPA will continue to closely monitor the operation of the Merck Millipore to ensure that it operates in full compliance with its licence within the shortest timeframe possible.

Making Environmental Complaints

Environmental complaints can be made **directly to the Merck Millipore Limited site on 021 4883666**.

Alternatively, the Environmental Complaints section of the EPA website can be used to make complaints of an environmental nature using this Form:

[Online Complaint Form](#)

All complaints reported this way are captured by our internal enforcement system and are immediately viewable by enforcement inspectors. By using this method, you are guaranteed that your complaint will be received and acted upon quickly by the relevant enforcement team.