



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF  
ENFORCEMENT AND  
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

**TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL**  
**RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Chris Casteix  
River Birch LLC  
2000 S Kenner Ave  
Avondale, LA 70094  
ccasteix@riverbirchllc.com

Re: Clean Air Act Information Request for River Birch and Jefferson Parish Landfills

Dear Chris Casteix:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hereby requires River Birch LLC (River Birch) to provide certain information to determine the Clean Air Act (CAA or the Act) compliance status of its operation of the River Birch Landfill and the Jefferson Parish Landfill (the Landfills) in Avondale, Louisiana.

Pursuant to section 114(a) of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. § 7414(a), the Administrator of the EPA is authorized to require any person who owns or operates an emissions source to establish and maintain records, make reports, install and use monitors, sample emissions (in accordance with the procedures and methods that the Administrator shall prescribe), and provide such other information as he may reasonably require for the purpose of, among other things, determining whether any person is in violation of the CAA. This authority has been delegated to the undersigned official. You are hereby required, pursuant to section 114(a) of the CAA, to provide responses to Requests 1 – 9 (Information Request), **within 30 calendar days** from receipt of this Information Request. Instructions and definitions are provided in Enclosure 1 and the information requested is specified in Enclosure 2.

You are required to attach a properly executed Statement of Certification (see Enclosure 3) with your response to this Information Request. The statement must be signed and dated. You are under an obligation to preserve all Documents requested in this letter until you receive further instructions from the EPA.

Failure to provide the required information is a violation of the Act and may result in one or more of the following actions: 1) issuance of an administrative penalty order pursuant to section 113(d) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7413(d); 2) issuance of an order requiring compliance with this Information Request pursuant to section 113(a) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7413(a); 3)

initiation of a civil action pursuant to section 113(b) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7413(b); and/or 4) initiation of any other action authorized under the Act. In addition, knowingly providing false information in response to this Information Request may be actionable under section 113(c) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7413(c), and 18 U.S.C. §§ 1001 and 1341. The information you provide may be used by the EPA in administrative, civil, and criminal proceedings.

Under section 114(c) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7414(c), and pursuant to regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 2, including 40 C.F.R. § 2.301, you may assert a confidential business (CBI) claim on any information you provide to the EPA that involves trade secrets and is regarded as CBI by you. Any asserted CBI claim must conform to the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 2.203(b). Note that emission data cannot be claimed as confidential under section 114(c). For detailed instructions, please see Enclosure 4. Information that you claim as CBI will be handled in a manner that is consistent with EPA's CBI regulations under 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B. If a CBI claim does not accompany the information submitted to EPA, then EPA may make the information available to the public without further notice to you.

This information collection is exempt from the Paperwork Reduction Act under 44 U.S.C. § 3518(c)(1)(B).

Please submit the requested information electronically to Daniel Heins, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, at [heins.daniel@epa.gov](mailto:heins.daniel@epa.gov). Please note that the EPA server will not allow attachments over 20 MB and will not accept documents saved in a .zip file. Alternatively, River Birch may want to provide documents in response to this information request through a secure file sharing site. Please let us know your preference for electronic document submittal.

If you have any questions regarding this information request, please contact Daniel Heins by email. Alternatively, legal counsel for River Birch may contact Allison Wright at [wright.allison@epa.gov](mailto:wright.allison@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

*3/28/2024 Sabrina Argentiari on behalf of*

Gregory Fried, Chief  
Stationary Source Enforcement Branch  
Air Enforcement Division

Enclosures: 1) Instructions and Definitions  
2) Information Request  
3) Statement of Certification  
4) Confidential Business Information Assertion

## ENCLOSURE 1

### A. Instructions

1. This Information Request is a continuing request. You are required to submit all such material **within 30 calendar days** of discovery in the event you learn that you possess responsive information not yet produced, or if you gain possession, custody, or control of responsive information after initially responding to this Information Request.
2. Where you have previously submitted information to EPA that is also the subject of these requests, re-submit the information in accordance with these Instructions. Identify the information that was previously provided, the date on which it was provided, how the information was provided (*e.g.*, electronically, fax, mail), and the person or office at EPA to whom it was provided.
3. Provide a separate narrative response to each request and subpart set forth in the Information Request. Provide copies of all Documents supporting your responses to this Information Request, such as performance test reports, inspection records, memorandums, facility records, permits, etc. If you have no responsive information or Documents pertaining to a particular request, submit an affirmative statement and explanation.
4. Precede each answer with the number of the request to which it corresponds and at the end of each answer identify the Person(s) (including name, title, and a description of job duties) who provided information that was used or considered in responding to that request, as well as each Person (including name, title, and a description of job duties) who was consulted in the preparation of that response.
5. Indicate on each Document produced in response to this Information Request, or in some other reasonable manner, the number of the request to which it corresponds. If a Document is responsive to more than one request, this must be so indicated and only one copy of the Document needs to be provided.
6. When a response is provided in the form of a number, specify the units of measure of the number in a precise manner and the basis for the number provided (*e.g.*, estimated, measured or engineering judgment).
7. Where Documents or information necessary for a response are neither in Your possession nor available to You, indicate in Your response why such Documents or information are not available or in Your possession and identify any source that either possesses or is likely to possess such Documents or information.
8. Narrative Documents should be provided in searchable electronic Portable Document Format (PDF) or in Word.
9. Documents scanned from paper should be produced in legible copies.

10. For electronically stored information, including but not limited to computer files or disks, produced in response to this Information Request:
  - a. Provide detailed instructions sufficient to enable the federal government to access and retrieve the data contained in each such file or disk.
  - b. If you maintain responsive information in a commercially available software format for spreadsheets, presentations, photographs, etc. (e.g., Microsoft Excel), then:
    - i. Files should be delivered in their unlocked native format.
    - ii. Native files should be collected using a method that preserves all of the files' metadata, folder location, and generates a hash value for verification that an exact copy of the file was collected.
    - iii. Files should be organized on the media in folders by component and custodian.
  - c. If you maintain responsive information in an enterprise database or archiving system, the system must be made available to the government for inspection including any manuals, field lists, data dictionaries, indices, etc. for the government to use to formulate methods for identifying and extracting responsive information into a usable form. Information identified as responsive within the system must be extracted in a forensically sound manner and provided with documentation of the procedures used to identify and extract the responsive information from the system.
  - d. Do not de-duplicate the production without prior notice to and consultation with EPA.
  - e. Ensure that all submissions of electronic data are free of computer viruses and that all passwords protecting files or media are removed or provided with the media.

**B. Definitions**

All terms used in this Information Request, whether capitalized or lower case, will have their ordinary meaning unless such terms are defined in the Clean Air Act, in which case the definitions in the CAA and the regulations shall prevail.

*River Birch LLC* means You and includes any predecessors, successors, parent corporation, subsidiaries, assignees, joint ventures, whether wholly or partially owned, or other business affiliations.

*Document* and the plural form thereof means all written, recorded or graphic matters, however produced or reproduced, of every kind and description, pertaining in any way to the subject

matter of this action. The term Document shall include, but is not limited to: any receipts; invoices; shipping records; purchase orders; purchase records; books; pamphlets; periodicals; memoranda (including those of telephone or oral conversations); contracts; correspondence; agreements; applications; financial records; security instruments; disbursements; checks; bank statements; time records; accounting or financial records; notes; diaries; logs; facsimiles (faxes); telegrams or cables prepared, drafted, received or sent; electronic mail (emails), whether drafted, received, or sent; tapes; transcripts; recordings; minutes and notes of meetings; directives; work papers; charts; drawings; prints; flow sheets; photographs; infrared camera recordings; film; computer printouts; x-ray photographs; advertisements; catalogs; data; sampling reports, plans, protocols, reports, analyses; or any handwritten, recorded, transcribed punched, taped, filmed, or graphic matter, however produced or reproduced, in Your possession, custody, or control or to which You have or have had access.

*Facilities* means all operations located at each of the River Birch and Jefferson Parish Landfills, located at 2000 S Kenner Ave and 5800 US-90, Avondale, Louisiana, 70094, respectively, and associated adjacent or nearby operations owned or operated by River Birch LLC. This does not include the Highway 90 C&D Landfill.

*Owner or Operator* means any Person who owns, leases, operates, controls, or supervises the Facilities.

*Gas Collection and Control System or GCCS* means an active or passive system of wells or similar collection components to move gas at the landfills per the requirements at 40 C.F.R. 63.1959(b)(2)(ii) and parallel provisions under the other Landfill Air Regulations.

*Gas Plant and Control Systems* refers to the renewable natural gas plant (which the facility refers to as the high BTU plant) and all flaring operations, as well as any other control devices and treatment systems used to fulfill the control requirements of 40 CFR 63.1959(b)(2)(iii) and parallel provisions under the other Landfill Air Regulations.

*Landfill Air Regulations* refers to 40 C.F.R. Part 60, Subpart WWW; 40 C.F.R. Part 60, Subpart XXX; 40 C.F.R. Part 62, Subpart OOO; 40 C.F.R. Part 62, Subpart GGG; 40 C.F.R. Part 63, Subpart AAAA; and State Plans for the Control of Emissions from Existing Municipal Solid Waste Landfills incorporated under 40 C.F.R. Part 62 pursuant to 40 C.F.R. Part 60, Subpart Cf or Cc.

*Person* or its plural or any synonym thereof, is intended to and shall embrace and include any individual, partnership, corporation, company, association, government agency (whether federal, state, local or any agency of the government of a foreign country), or any other entity, and includes River Birch LLC.

*Surface Emission Monitoring* means monitoring surface concentrations of methane at collection areas of a landfill per 40 C.F.R. § 63.1960(c)&(d) and parallel provisions under the Landfill Air Regulations.

*You* and/or *Your* means River Birch and all its agents, servants, employees, representatives, investigators, accountants, auditors, attorneys, experts, consultants, contractors, and others who are in possession, custody, or control (actual or constructive) of relevant information that is otherwise available to You, or may have obtained information for or on Your behalf.

**Information Request**

You are hereby required, in accordance with Section 114(a) of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. § 7414(a), to provide the following information for each of the Facilities:

1. Provide all agreements between River Birch LLC and Jefferson Parish (or other previous operators of the Jefferson Parish Landfill) pertaining to responsibilities for:
  - a. Operation of the gas collection system on the Jefferson Parish Landfill;
  - b. Gas routing and operation of controls for gas collected from the Jefferson Parish Landfill;
  - c. Clean Air Act reporting and compliance requirements at the Jefferson Parish Landfill; and
  - d. Waste and other operations at the Jefferson Parish Landfill.
  
2. Identify on what dates, from January 2019 to the present, the Jefferson Parish and the River Birch Landfills each became or were subject to or opted-in to 40 C.F.R. Part 60, Subpart WWW; 40 C.F.R. Part 60, Subpart XXX; 40 C.F.R. Part 62, Subpart OOO; and 40 C.F.R. Part 63, Subpart AAAA, in part or in whole. Provide documentation to support the identification of the opt-in and/or subject to dates.
  
3. Regarding the equipment associated with the gas control systems, including the Gas Plant and Control System and flare components, in place from May 15, 2019 to the present for each of the Jefferson Parish and River Birch Landfills:
  - a. For each individual gas control device, including, but not limited to, flares and controls for Gas Plant vents, provide:
    - i. A list of each gas control device;
    - ii. The dates of service for each control device listed in Item 3.a.i, above, and identification of the streams of gas controlled by each device;
    - iii. Excel-compatible tables of monitoring parameters related to each control device listed in Item 3.a.i, above, including but not limited to, as applicable, temperature, flow, and/or flame presence data recorded at least every 15-minutes;
    - iv. All performance tests, including but not limited to those performed to demonstrate compliance with 40 CFR 63.1959(b)(2)(iii), for each control device listed in Item 3.a.i, above, conducted May 2019 to date, or the most recent test if none have been conducted from May 2019 to the present;
    - v. Temperature and flow rate setpoints for normal and emergency operations of the control(s);
    - vi. Manufacturer specifications for control device operation, including maximum flow capacity; and

- vii. Records of all inspection and maintenance activities for each control device listed in Item 3.a.i, above, from May 2019 to the present.
- b. Provide an Excel-compatible table of the total volume of collected gas on at least 15-minute intervals from each of the Facilities from May 2019 to the present.
- c. In Excel-compatible electronic spreadsheet format provide the below information related to all shutdowns, malfunctions, and outages affecting each Facilities' gas collection, control devices (e.g., flares), and/or the Gas Plant required by 40 CFR 63.1983(c), and additionally provide all documents that describe:
  - i. Terms used to describe downtime, including clarifications of the specific maintenance or malfunction which occurred;
  - ii. Actions taken to prevent and minimize the downtime and prevent future recurrence of the downtime; and
  - iii. Whether gas was able to be routed to an alternative control with the same capacity or if gas collection had to be reduced.
- d. For components of the control devices and the Gas Plant, provide all records of fugitive emissions monitoring (including but not limited to audio/visual/olfactory checks, FLIR (Forward Looking InfraRed) cameras, TVAs (Toxic Vapor Analyzer), methane sniffers, and ultrasonic leak detectors), from May 2019 to the present, including:
  - i. Leak monitoring data;
  - ii. Corrective actions, and
  - iii. Re-monitoring data.
- e. Provide a flow diagram for the Gas Plant and Control Systems, identifying all vents, pressure relief valves, and other devices designed to release gas, for each configuration in place from May 2019 to the present.
- f. For each pressure relief valve and device designed to release gas in service from May 2019 to the present, provide:
  - i. Pressure setpoints;
  - ii. Description of monitoring practices;
  - iii. Any associated monitoring recordkeeping in addition to those provided in Item 3.d, above; and
  - iv. Any documentation related to events, such as those described in 40 CFR 63.1958(e)(1)(i), in which gas was released from January 2019 to the present, including duration, maximum possible quantity of gas released, and cause of the release.
- g. Provide a summary of each instance in which untreated landfill gas, partially treated landfill gas, waste gas, or sales gas has been vented to the atmosphere at each of the Facilities without undergoing treatment pursuant to 40 CFR 63.1959(b)(2)(iii)(A) or (B) from May 2019 to the present, including:
  - i. Date, time, and duration of the release;
  - ii. An estimate of the mass of methane and of NMOC released;
  - iii. Location of the release (including from pressure relief valves and similar devices);

- iv. Cause of the release; and
    - v. Any work practice changes made to prevent future releases.
4. For each of the Facilities, provide:
  - a. All semi-annual compliance reports pursuant to the Landfill Air Regulations from January 2018 to the present;
  - b. All GCCS design plans and revised design plans active from January 2019 to the present, with associated approvals as applicable; and
  - c. All air permit(s) and permit application(s) active from January 2019 to the present;
5. In Excel-compatible electronic spreadsheet format provide the below information related to monthly cover integrity monitoring for each of the Facilities for May 2019 to the present. Also provide all related documents.
  - a. Each instance when the cover was unable to perform as designed;
  - b. Corrective actions, including but not limited to, repairs and when any alternative cover was used; and
  - c. Correction dates.
6. For each of the Facilities, provide from May 2019 to the present:
  - a. Copies of any enforcement documents, including but not limited to notices of violation, consent orders, consent order terminations, issued to River Birch and/or Jefferson Parish regarding Clean Air Act compliance at each of the Facilities, including the Gas Plant, by the State of Louisiana;
  - b. Copies of any citizen suits and resulting agreements related to Clean Air Act compliance at either of the Facilities, including the Gas Plant; and
  - c. Copies of all enforcement documents for each Facility from 2018 to the present.
7. For each Jefferson Parish and River Birch Landfills, provide a record of all gas migration monitoring records, including but not limited to information on emissions exceedances under Landfill Air Regulations and associated corrective actions taken from May 2019 to the present. Provide a map of the location of each migration probe associated with each such exceedance.
8. For each Jefferson Parish and River Birch Landfills, provide:
  - a. In Excel-compatible electronic spreadsheet format:
    - i. All wellhead readings (including methane, pressure, temperature, flow, oxygen and/or balance gas) from May 2019 to the present;
    - ii. All recorded wellhead adjustments (tuning) from May 2019 to the present;
    - iii. Any corrective actions for wellhead exceedances from May 2019 to the present; and
    - iv. Dates each well was installed or permanently decommissioned from May 2019 to the present. Identify wells installed prior to May 2019, but no need to provide specific installation dates; and

- b. Copies of approvals of any alternative corrections or timelines for wellhead exceedances from May 2019 to the present.
9. For each River Birch and Jefferson Parish Landfills, provide all records of SEM measurements from January 2018 to the present, including but not limited to the most recent SEM reports to the extent completed, whether or not the report is included in a final semi-annual report. These records must include:
- a. In Excel-compatible electronic spreadsheet format:
    - i. All recorded data;
    - ii. Latitude and longitude coordinates of each monitored point;
    - iii. Follow-up monitoring for each methane exceedance above 500 part per million; and
    - iv. Descriptions of corrective actions performed to reduce methane concentrations for each exceedance identified in Item 9.a.iii, above.
  - b. Maps of the monitoring route traveled, including the GPS (Global Positioning System) track of the path taken;
  - c. A list of areas not monitored in each quarterly SEM (e.g. where spacing greater than 30 meters occurs) and the explanation for each exclusion;
  - d. Approvals of any alternatives to expansion of the GCCS or alternative compliance timelines per 40 CFR 63.1960(c)(4)(v);
  - e. Records or reports of additional emissions monitoring activity contracted by the site, including but not limited to drone, satellite, and tower-based monitoring (January 2018 to the present); and
  - f. Any guidance or training materials provided for the SEM technicians, including all contractors used from January 2018 to the present.

**ENCLOSURE 3**

**Statement of Certification**

I certify that I am fully authorized by River Birch LLC to provide the above information on its behalf to EPA. I certify under penalty of law that I have personally examined and am familiar with the information submitted in this document and all attachments. Based on my inquiry of those individuals immediately responsible for obtaining the information, I believe that the information is true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine or imprisonment for knowing violations pursuant to section 113(c)(2) of the Clean Air Act, and 18 U.S.C. §§ 1001 and 1341.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## ENCLOSURE 4

### **Confidential Business Information (CBI) Assertion**

You may assert a business confidentiality or CBI claim covering all or part of the information you provide in response to this Information Request for any business information you believe may be entitled to confidential treatment under section 114(c) of the Clean Air Act (the Act), 42 U.S.C. § 7414(c); Exemption 4 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4); and 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B. Under section 114(c) of the Act, you are entitled to confidential treatment of information that would divulge methods or processes entitled to protection as trade secrets. Exemption 4 under FOIA protects trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person [that is] privileged or confidential[.] 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4). Under 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B, business confidentiality means the concept of trade secrecy and other related legal concepts which give (or may give) a business the right to preserve the confidentiality of business information and to limit its use or disclosure by others in order that the business may obtain or retain business advantages it derives from its rights in the information. 40 C.F.R. § 2.201(e).

Information covered by a CBI claim will be disclosed by the EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth in section 114(c) of the Act, Exemption 4 under FOIA, and 40 C.F.R. §§ 2.201-2.311. **If a CBI claim does not accompany the information submitted to EPA, then EPA may make the information available to the public without further notice to you.** See 40 C.F.R. § 2.203(c).

To assert a CBI claim, you must place on (or attach to) all information you desire to assert as CBI either a cover sheet, stamped or typed legend, or other suitable form of notice employing language such as trade secret, proprietary, or company confidential at the time you submit your response to this information request. Allegedly confidential portions of otherwise non-confidential information should be clearly identified and may be submitted separately to facilitate identification and handling by the EPA. Please be specific by page (including Bates Stamp, if applicable), paragraph, and sentence when identifying the information subject to your claim. Where your claim does not include all information on a page, please place brackets around, or otherwise designate, the text that you claim to be CBI. Please note that if a page, document, group or class of documents claimed by you to be CBI contains information which EPA determines is not CBI, your CBI claim regarding that page, document, group, or class of documents may be denied. All confidentiality claims are subject to EPA verification. If EPA reviews your CBI claim(s), EPA may send notice to your business and ask you to submit additional information to substantiate the CBI claim(s). See 40 C.F.R. § 2.204(e).

In making its final confidentiality determination, EPA will consider the relevant substantive criteria in its CBI regulations, 40 C.F.R. § 2.208(a)-(d), as well as the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Food Marketing Institute v. Argus Leader Media* (*Argus*), 139 S. Ct. 2356 (2019), which evaluated the definition of confidential as used in Exemption 4 under FOIA. In the

*Argus* decision, the Court held that at least where [1] commercial or financial information is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner and [2] provided to the government under an assurance of privacy, the information is ‘confidential’ within the meaning of Exemption 4. *Argus*, 139 S. Ct. at 2366. The definition of trade secret under FOIA is limited to a secret, commercially valuable plan, formula, process, or device that is used for the making, preparing, compounding, or processing of trade commodities and that can be said to be the end product of either innovation or substantial effort. *Pub. Citizen Health Research Grp. v. FDA*, 704 F.2d 1280, 1288 (D.C. Cir. 1983). This definition requires that there be a direct relationship between the information at issue and the production process. *Id.*

For each item or class of information that you claim as CBI, please answer the following questions, giving as much detail as possible. EPA will use your responses to these questions to determine whether the information has been shown to be entitled to confidential treatment:

1. What specific portions of the information are alleged to be entitled to confidential treatment? Specify by page, paragraph, and sentence when identifying the information subject to your claim.
2. For what period of time do you request that the information be maintained as confidential, *e.g.*, until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specified event or permanently? If the occurrence of a specific event will eliminate the need for confidentiality, specify that event. Additionally, explain why the information should be protected for the time period specified.
3. What measures have you taken to protect the information claimed as confidential from undesired disclosure? Have you disclosed the information to anyone other than a governmental body or someone who is bound by an agreement not to disclose the information further? If so, why should the information still be considered confidential?
4. Is the information contained in any publicly available material such as the Internet, publicly available databases, promotional publications, annual reports, or articles? Is there any means by which a member of the public could obtain access to the information? Is the information of a kind that you would customarily not release to the public?
5. Has any governmental body made a determination as to the confidentiality of the information? If so, please attach a copy of the determination.
6. Is there any other explanation you deem relevant to the EPA’s determination of your business confidentiality claim that is not covered in the preceding questions? If so, you may provide such additional explanation.

By submitting this information, you are consenting to a limited release of any confidential business information to EPA interns and contractors pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 2.209(f). EPA’s interns and contractors are required to sign confidentiality agreements as a requirement of their participation in EPA related matters.

Emission data, as defined at 40 C.F.R. § 2.301(a)(2)(i), is expressly not entitled to confidential treatment under 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 7414(c); 40 C.F.R. § 2.301(e). Emission data is defined as:

(A) Information necessary to determine the identity, amount, frequency, concentration, or other characteristics (to the extent related to air quality) of any emission which has been emitted by the source (or of any pollutant resulting from any emission by the source), or any combination of the foregoing;

(B) Information necessary to determine the identity, amount, frequency, concentration, or other characteristics (to the extent related to air quality) of the emissions which, under an applicable standard or limitation, the source was authorized to emit (including, to the extent necessary for such purposes, a description of the manner or rate of operation of the source); and

(C) A general description of the location and/or nature of the source to the extent necessary to identify the source and to distinguish it from other sources (including, to the extent necessary for such purposes, a description of the device, installation, or operation constituting the source).

40 C.F.R. § 2.301(a)(2)(i).