

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is Chiquita Canyon, LLC (Chiquita) not taking the reaction and its impacts on the community, or the community's complaints, seriously?

A: Chiquita takes very seriously its role in the safe operation of the Chiquita Canyon Landfill (Landfill) and in open, real-time communication with the local community and Chiquita's regulators. Chiquita and its many consultants and experts have been working around the clock over the past several months to implement a multitude of mitigation measures to address and stop the landfill reaction and any related impacts. Most recently, Chiquita has implemented an incident command system to better restructure its response to the reaction and ensure continued cooperation with Chiquita's regulators. Chiquita provides regular updates on the implementation of its mitigation measures and other updates concerning the landfill to both its regulators and to the public. Chiquita continues to work cooperatively with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and all of its regulators to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

Chiquita care about the community and takes seriously the community's complaints. Most recently, Chiquita has established a new Community Relief Program to assist with offsetting costs associated with odor mitigation. Through this program, residents of Val Verde, Live Oak, Hasley Hills, Hillcrest Parkway, Hasley Canyon, and Stevenson Ranch are able to request funding that can be used for expenses associated with odor mitigation, including temporary relocation, home hardening, and increased utility bills. Applicants may also request an air filtration device or replacement air filters. Funding will be available on a monthly basis. If you are interested in applying for this program, visit <https://www.chiquitalandfillcommunityrelief.com/> to apply. Please note that submission of the application form and receipt of compensation does not constitute a release of any legal claims you may have against the Landfill or any related entities and does not constitute a waiver of any additional damages to which you may be entitled.

Q: There have been many complaints from the community of eye irritation, respiratory symptoms, and skin issues. Why has Chiquita continued to say there are no health impacts facing the local community?

A: Chiquita fully recognizes that neighboring communities are suffering odor-related impacts as a result of the reaction. Recognizing these impacts, Chiquita has committed and is currently working to provide assistance to those affected by odors from the Landfill. The current data and evaluation by experts, including an independent health risk evaluation conducted at the direction of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, show that there are no anticipated long-term health impacts from these odors. However, the study by the Department of Public Health states, and Chiquita recognizes, that odors may cause short-term health impacts or may otherwise affect quality of life. A broader analysis on the potential health impacts from ongoing and long-term exposure to hydrogen sulfide and other hazardous air pollutants is being prepared and will be included in a report due to the South Coast AQMD on August 1, 2024.

Q: Why does the landfill continue to ignore the local community's pleas for assistance regarding the odor?

A: Chiquita has and continues to address the community's requests for assistance. Chiquita previously released \$3.5 million in funding to Los Angeles County to be used to fund environmental, educational, and quality of life programs, or to fund regional public facilities that serve the Val Verde, Castaic, and other unincorporated areas of the County surrounding the Landfill. Los Angeles County used \$2.5 million of those funds to establish the County's Utility Relief Grant Program. This new program is run by Chiquita and has a wider scope than the County's program, offering payments for more neighborhoods and for additional expenses.

Chiquita has also distributed over one thousand air filtration devices to the community and continues to make the devices as well as replacement air filters available to the community. For more information on each of these programs, please visit the following webpage:

<https://chiquitacanyon.com/reports/odor-mitigation/>.

Q: Evidence of the landfill reaction dates back to May 2022, resulting in thousands of odor complaints in 2023 and 2024 thus far, as well as multiple regulatory actions in 2023 and 2024. Why has Chiquita done nothing about this?

A: In cooperation with its many regulators, Chiquita has implemented a multitude of mitigation measures to better understand and address and stop the landfill reaction. Chiquita started implementing many of these mitigation measures voluntarily when the reaction first began and is now implementing these measures, as well as many more, as required by and in coordination with its regulators. More information on these mitigation measures and status updates on the implementation of these measures is available at the following webpage: <https://chiquitacanyon.com/reports/odor-mitigation/>. Chiquita continues to work cooperatively with the EPA and all of its regulators to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

Q: Why isn't Chiquita being transparent about current issues at the Landfill?

A: Chiquita takes very seriously its role in the safe operation of the Landfill and in open, real-time communication with the local community and Chiquita's regulators. Chiquita consistently participates in and answers questions during three public community meetings that occur each month. Chiquita also updates its website on at least a weekly basis with information about current issues at the Landfill and the multitude of mitigation measures and activities that Chiquita is conducting and data that Chiquita is collecting. Please see the following webpage for more information:

<https://chiquitacanyon.com/reports/odor-mitigation/>.

Q: Is there a fire at the Landfill?

A: No, there is no fire at the Landfill. The Landfill is experiencing an elevated temperature landfill (ETLF) event, or a "reaction" – a chemical reaction occurring deep within an old portion of the Landfill, which has resulted in elevated temperatures and increased generation of landfill gas and leachate (liquids produced by a landfill). Things such as increased leachate production would not occur with a fire—the amount of leachate produced by the Landfill has increased tenfold since the ETLF event.

Q: Is Chiquita discharging hazardous waste into the environment? Is the landfill leachate presenting a serious and dangerous situation at the Landfill?

A: Chiquita has significantly increased the frequency of its leachate sampling in order to determine when leachate exceeds regulatory levels and has retained a third-party consultant to assist in the proper characterization, management, treatment, and disposal of potentially hazardous leachate. Only leachate tanks that have been confirmed non-hazardous and approved by the off-site non-hazardous treatment and disposal facilities are shipped offsite to those facilities. All other leachate is handled as if it were hazardous waste and shipped to permitted hazardous waste treatment and disposal facilities.

Chiquita has also begun treating its leachate. If post-treatment confirmatory sampling shows that the leachate is below regulatory levels, Chiquita sends the non-hazardous leachate to its non-hazardous treatment and disposal facilities once approval by those facilities has been received. If post-treatment confirmatory sampling shows that the leachate is still above regulatory levels, Chiquita handles the leachate as if it were hazardous and only ships it to permitted treatment and disposal facilities.

Chiquita is also testing its onsite sedimentation basin on a regular basis, at least semiannually and prior to discharge, to determine whether stormwater mixed with leachate made it to the basin during or after a rain event. Any discharges to waterways outside of the Landfill are through the sedimentation basin. Chiquita is waiting test results from a recent rain event, but has not yet received any indication that leachate seepage that reached the stormwater channel made it to the sedimentation basin.

Chiquita is also working cooperatively with its County, state, and federal regulators, many of which are regularly coming onsite to assess the management of this leachate, and is making sure that any risks related to the management and handling of potentially hazardous leachate do not come to fruition.

Q: There are reports that the odor is going to continue for as long as the ETLF event is happening, and ETLF events can last for years. Is this true?

A: As Chiquita has discussed at several of the community meetings it hosts and attends, the ETLF conditions may continue for years, but once Chiquita is able to fully implement some of the mitigation measures that are currently in progress, it believes that it will be able to mitigate or eliminate odor impacts in the shorter term. This has been the experience at several other of the 10 to 15 landfills across the country that have experienced ETLF events in the majority of their waste mass.

Q: Are these ETLF events or landfill reactions common?

A: No. There are hundreds of municipal solid waste landfills in North America, but there are only approximately 10 to 15 landfills with the majority of their waste mass that can be characterized as experiencing an ETLF event or landfill reaction. There are also only another 40 or so other landfills that have had a relatively limited portion of their waste mass exhibit ETLF conditions.

Q: The 8-K report Chiquita filed in February 2024 indicates that not only will the smoldering part of the landfill be closed, but the landfill in its entirety will be closed in the near future. Is this true?

A: No. The ETLF event is occurring in a closed portion of the Landfill. The Landfill has no plans to close its remaining operations in the near future.

Q: Why won't you just close the Landfill?

A: Reducing the amount of waste accepted by the Landfill as part of its normal operations or closing the Landfill in its entirety would neither slow the subsurface reaction nor mitigate its impacts. Chiquita's working face operations are located over 600 yards away from the closed portion of the Landfill where the reaction is occurring and in no way relate to or interfere with the ongoing work in the reaction area. Further, the Landfill is the second largest landfill in the County and plays a vital role in the County's waste management system. As of 2020, Chiquita provided approximately 38% of all remaining disposal capacity in the County, and it is Chiquita's understanding that there are very few other facilities that could handle the amount of waste that Chiquita's currently accepts.

Useful Links

[Pilar Schiavo | Chiquita Canyon: An Update on State's Response](#)

The Signal // April 2, 2024

[Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce - Becki Robb | All Hands Needed on Chiquita](#)

The Signal // April 9, 2024

[Castaic school district, landfill working on air quality mitigation](#)

The Signal // April 12, 2024