

Lubrizol General Manager Talks About Odors



Greg McCullough

General Manager
The Lubrizol Corporation

Having our windows open, barbecuing or watching kids playing in the yard. Those are all things we enjoy. Unwanted odors from gasoline, natural gas, asphalt, sewer and vehicle exhaust are all odors that we're familiar with, but are still unpleasant. At Lubrizol we want to be a good neighbor and good environmental stewards to those that live around us. As responsible corporate citizens, we take odors seriously. We don't think of odors as "business as usual". While we realize that we can't eliminate all odors from our processes, much like odors we expect at dentist offices or public swimming pools, we strive to continuously improve our processes to reduce the occurrence of odors leaving our facility.

Sometimes I smell natural gas, is that Lubrizol?

One commonly reported odor from our facility is that of natural gas. The characteristic odor of natural gas is imparted by the intentional addition of a chemical by natural gas suppliers, called a mercaptan. This addition provides a valuable safety feature by making gas leaks easier to detect. Mercaptan odors are detectable at extremely low levels and are non-toxic at the quantities involved. The unpleasant smell can linger until the vapors fully dissipate. Lubrizol uses mercaptan containing materials in the manufacture of lubricating and industrial fluids. If you smell natural gas at your home, you should always call 911 to report it.

We investigate every odor

To affirm our commitment to reducing odors, our odor investigation protocol includes treating reported odors as an emergency status. An odor is treated with as much attention as we might allot to a more significant event.

Odor Investigation Protocol:

1. Security notifies our shift fire chief¹ to begin investigation.

2. An odor report notification goes out on hand-held radios and Lubrizol's plant-wide e-mail.
3. Each area conducts a thorough review until a source is found and documented.
4. In the case of an off-site odor report, plant employees will conduct an outside odor patrol and drive to the location the odor was detected. If requested, a follow-up phone call is placed to the caller (if outside the plant).
5. The odor is logged in our database, and if necessary, an action item is assigned to a "primary process owner"² for follow-up.

¹ The shift fire chief is responsible for emergency response on their shift, and in the event of an emergency has responsibility as "incident commander" to develop the incident action plan.

² A primary process owner is the person designated as responsible for all aspects of operation of the unit affected.

What to do if you smell an odor

- If the odor is that of natural gas, call 911 to report it.
- If the odor you smell is another type, that you suspect might be coming from Lubrizol because the wind is in the right direction, call 440-357-7064 and report it to security personnel (they are on duty 24/7).
- They will follow our odor investigation protocol and personnel will be dispatched to determine the source.
- If you'd like a follow-up phone call, you may leave your name and phone number (optional).

Lubrizol General Manager Talks About Odors (Continued)

We put our money where our mouth is:

Over the last ten years (2008 – 2018) over \$17M in infrastructure changes have been made to prevent odors, upgrade our systems and remain in compliance with regulations. The following are a few of the projects that were completed:

- \$4.7M upgrade to our two onsite fume incinerators (see fact sheet called Fume Incinerators – Controlling Odors)
- \$3.0M project to vent the vapors from a process unit to the onsite fume incinerators instead of a flare
- \$2.8M project to install an enclosed system to manage an odorous waste stream

How committed is Lubrizol?

Protecting our employees, communities in which we operate, the environment and customers is fundamental to our business. All employees at the Lubrizol Painesville Township facility take their responsibility to be a good neighbor and corporate citizen very seriously. We pride ourselves in maintaining ethical behaviors and transparency in all aspects of our operations. We value open discussion with our community neighbors.

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Security personnel are on duty 24/7.

