



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To : Mr. Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Date : November 8, 1983

From : Joan Lastovica
City Engineer **JL.**

Reference

Subject: Reported Burning of Methane Gas
at The City Dump

Attached is correspondence received from Haley & Aldrich, Inc, detailing the results of temperature testing at methane and groundwater wells at the city dump.

The test results serve two purposes:

1. They indicate that no underground fires are burning at the dump.
2. They provide baseline data to compare with future temperature testing should underground fires again be suspected.

cc: Everett R. Kennedy, Acting Commissioner of Public Works
Tom Scott, Chief of Fire Department
Anthony Paolillo, Chief of Police
John Cusack, Superintendent Water Department

HALEY & ALDRICH, INC.



238 Main Street
P.O. Box 60
Cambridge, MA 02142
Tel. 617/492-6460

Consulting
Geotechnical Engineers
and Geologists

Harl P. Aldrich, Jr.
Thomas K. Liu
Edmund G. Johnson
Martin C. Murphy
David E. Thompson
Edward B. Kinner

Peter L. LeCount
Douglas G. Gifford
Joseph J. Rixner
Richard P. Stulgis
John R. Dugan, Jr.
Wesley E. Simpson

31 October 1983
File No. 396702

Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.
One Center Plaza
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Attention: Mr. John Kissida

Subject: Cambridge City Dump
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

This letter presents the results of recent investigations into the possible presence of underground fires at the subject site. This investigation was undertaken in accordance with a request from Ms. Joan Lastovica, City Engineer.

On 26 September 1983, the undersigned and representatives of Camp Dresser & McKee met at the site with Ms. Lastovica to discuss the possible source of ignition of combustible gasses present at the site. It had been reported that combustible gas at a monitoring well (PW3) had been burning. At the time of the visit, the well was found to contain potentially combustible levels of combustible gas and the protection casing was hot to the touch. The well was found without a protective casing cap. Examination of the well, after the casing had cooled, indicated that gas escaping from the well was not warm.

To determine the possible presence of underground fires at the site, Haley & Aldrich suggested that measurements of groundwater temperature be made at available well locations. If the refuse was burning beneath the site, the heat generated would be expected to warm the upper groundwater. On 7 October 1983, a representative of Haley & Aldrich visited the site and obtained groundwater temperature data as indicated in Table I.



Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.

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31 October 1983

Temperatures measured are higher than might be expected at a non-refuse site (10°C) . However, they are well below levels that would be indicative of underground fires.

We believe the ignition of the combustible gas at the monitoring well location is a result of vandals. The protective casing cap recommended at our meeting of 26 September 1983 and in place during our site visit on 7 October 1983, should control future ignition of the gas.

If you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely yours,
HALEY & ALDRICH, INC.

W.E. Stimpson
Wesley E. Stimpson
Vice President

WES:lcb:0050s

Enclosure: Table I

cc: Ms. Joan Lastovica



TABLE I
CAMBRIDGE CITY DUMP
WELL TEMPERATURE RESULTS

WELL	TEMP (°C)	COMMENTS
PW1	13.1	
PW2	16.9	
PW3	17.7	Nearly dry; 1" of water
W3	16.5	
W4	15.9	Nearly dry; 2-3" of water
W7	14.8	
W16	18.0	



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

November 14, 1983

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed please find copy of correspondence submitted by
Joan Lastovica, City Engineer, relative to reported burning of methane
gas at the City dump.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

Agenda Item Number Three

Re: enclosing a communication from the
City Engineer regarding the burning of meth-
ane gas at the City Dump.

In City Council,

November 14, 1983

11/14/83

-Placed

on

File