

**WEATHER ALERT** 9 warnings in effect for 7 counties in the area

Ad

## GEORGIA

# What's that smell? Unpleasant odor wafts through Brunswick

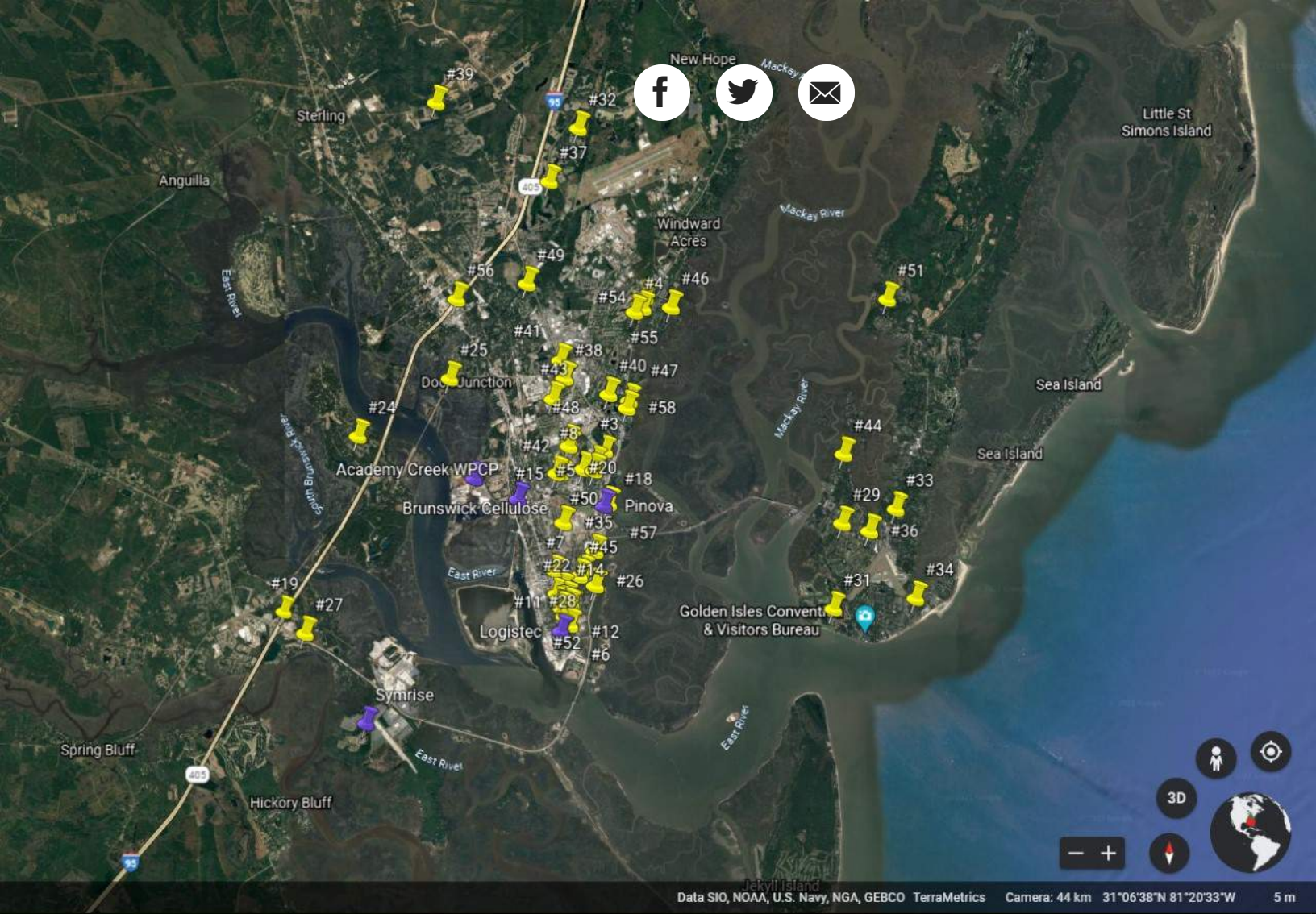
The mystery behind the source of the foul-smelling odor puzzles residents and advocates

**Brittany Muller**, Reporter

Published: **February 10, 2021, 5:25 pm**

Updated: **February 10, 2021, 6:50 pm**

Tags: **Brunswick, Glynn County, Environmental Protection Division, EPA, Environmental Protection Agency**



Rachael Thompson, executive director for the Glynn Environmental Coalition, said the smell is ten times worse than usual, raising environmental, public health and mental health concerns.

While the Environmental Protection Division has yet to identify the source of the odor, Thompson said it is important that regulators get to the bottom of the issue once and for all.

“Well, part of the way the law is structured is, if you don’t know who inherently is responsible for the air impairment, then there’s no enforcement action,” Thompson told News4jax.





## **Title V permits**

Based on some complaints, Thompson said, there has been speculation about the smell coming from an industrial plant nearby. She said mentioned there are several companies with large-scale operations in the area.

She said these companies hold permits issued by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Air Act.

[According to the EPA](#), these permits are required for facilities that are considered major sources of actual or potential emissions that either meet or exceed the regulatory threshold for air pollutants.

---

**Ad**

---

“There are several larger industries in town that have what we call a Title V Air Discharge Permit and those are the facilities that are large in nature and they have your smokestacks or known sources of air pollutants coming into the air,” she said.

Thompson said companies with facilities like this include Georgia-Pacific, Pinova and Symrise, but she said her organization does not want to point the finger at any of those companies unless they have factual evidence proving they’re involved.

“We are gathering information, we are arming ourselves with knowledge and we have been working with the Environmental Protection Division, and they actually shared maps of their complaints,” Thompson said.

A spokesperson for Georgia-Pacific released a statement in response to questions from News4Jax. In part, it said the company’s Brunswick facility is closely regulated and that the company continues to work with the state.

---

“The air emissions we report are regulated and permitted under EPA and state programs that are designed to protect people and the environment,” the spokesperson said, adding that Georgia-Pacific “responded to EPD’s request for an on-site inspection and review of air emissions data and facilitated the request in January.”

## **Group calls for action**

According to Thompson, there are no state laws against unpleasant odors, adding that the only laws in place are there to regulate odor-causing chemicals. But she said the issue needs to be addressed because a persistent, unpleasant smell can have a wide range of impacts on quality of life.

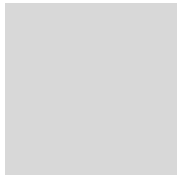
“From an environmental standpoint, what comes up must come down. So whatever is in the air eventually is going to land in our waterways and could have mild impacts on our marshes’ ecosystems,” she said. “From the public health standpoint, some of the complaints that our office has received were people complaining of not being able to breathe, irritation of the skin, irritation of the throat. We have residents call 911 because they needed oxygen to be able to breathe comfortably in their homes.”

She said there’s even a psychological impact of living in a place where you’re constantly subjected to foul odors, from the mystery of not knowing where it’s coming from to the anxiety of wondering how it could be affecting your health.

At this point, the source of the odor is unclear. But whatever it is, Thompson said it needs to be identified and dealt with.

“If there is some sort of noncompliance, then we certainly would seek and enforcement action from the Department of Natural Resources,” she said. “If what they are doing is legally allowed now, then maybe the action what our citizens need to take is to actually advocate for either the local or state laws to change.”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



### [Brittany Muller](#)

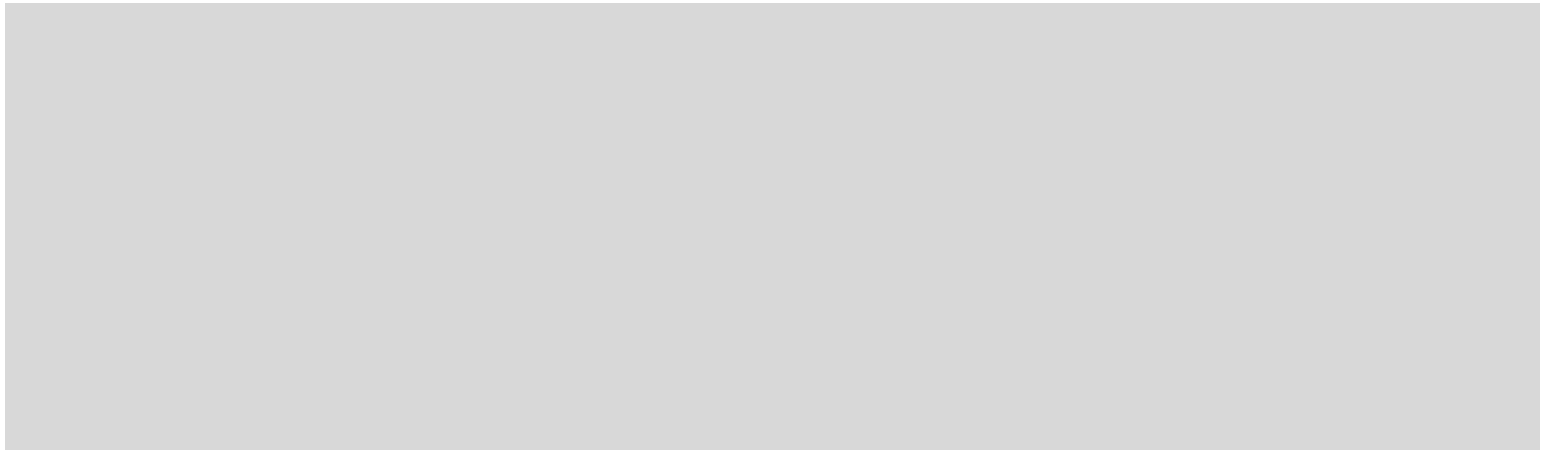
Multi-media journalist with a special interest in Georgia issues.

[✉ email](#) [f facebook](#) [t twitter](#)

## FOLLOW US



## GET RESULTS WITH OMNE



[TV Listings](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Email Newsletters](#)

[RSS Feeds](#)

[Contests and Rules](#)

[Closed Captioning](#)

[Careers at WJXT / WCWJ](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

[Public File](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Do Not Sell My Info](#)

If you need help with WJXT's or WCWJ's FCC public inspection file, call (904) 393-9801.



