

Local News

Experts say rotten egg stench near Baltimore's Inner Harbor is normal

By

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If you've been near Baltimore's Inner Harbor this week, you're again left with a simple question: What is that smell?

"Walking around, you obviously smell it. Windows down, you smell it too," said Lauryn Allen of Fells Point.

What's causing that smell?

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) said the smell is due to an annual turnover event caused by the weather.

The drastic change from daytime to nighttime temperatures caused surface water to cool and sink to the bottom of the harbor, causing bacteria from the floor to rise.

"We keep getting these swings, and eventually, when the temperature starts to mellow out a little bit, and that diurnal change between night and day is not as drastic, it'll figure itself out," said Charmain Dahlenburg, Director of Conservation at the National Aquarium.

These bacteria don't require a lot of oxygen. At the surface, non-oxygenic photosynthesis takes place, and a sulfur-like byproduct creates not only the smell but a green hue, according to Dahlenburg.