Message

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Subject: Memphremagog Landfill Recert

State OKs Landfill Expansion, With PFAS Conditions
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COVENTRY — The ***Vermont*** Department of Environmental Conservation issued a recertification Friday to the landfill in Coventry owned by Casella, allowing expansion and operation until 2028.

The recertification of the state's only operating landfill sets deadlines for the state and the operator, New England Waste Services of ***Vermont*** (NEWS-***VT***) to remove per- and polyfluoralkyl substances (***PFAS***) from waste going to the landfill and leachate coming from it.

PFAS in groundwater from manufacturing processes are "***emerging contaminants***" which have shut down wells and ***drinking water*** systems in parts of the state. Recent testing at one monitoring well near the old unlined Nadeau landfill next to the NEWS-***VT*** landfill shows a higher level of ***PFAS*** than the ***Vermont drinking water***standard.

Elevated levels of ***PFAS*** but within state guidelines were found in leachate from the landfill.

The recertification allows NEWS-***VT*** to expand the landfill into a Phase VI of operation, opening cells in a 50-acre site next to the Northeast Kingdom International Airport on Airport Road in Coventry.

NEWS-***VT*** can accept up to 5,000 tons of waste a day and 250,000 tons a year, with the potential to accept up to 600,000 tons a year with state permission.

NEWS-***VT*** still needs an Act 250 permit. The solid waste certification is one of the essential conditions for NEWS-***VT*** to receive an Act 250 permit amendment.

While awaiting recertification, Casella began to research how to remove ***PFAS*** from the leachate on site before it is sent for treatment at ***wastewater*** treatment plants on international Lake Memphremagog in Newport City and elsewhere. The research is ongoing, NEWS-***VT*** engineer Joe Gay said Friday.

The certification sets deadlines for that research, with reports to ***Vermont*** and Quebec authorities.

The presence of ***PFAS*** became a dominant issue in the permit process. Quebec and ***Vermont*** activists pressed the state over how the leachate is being treated in Newport City.

More than 150,000 Quebec residents get their ***drinking water*** from sources coming from Lake Memphremagog.

The results of the sampling plus public comments prompted solid waste officials to add or amend conditions to the final recertification report.

Among the conditions are requirements for ***PFAS*** monitoring twice a year of wells and under drains around the lined

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landfill.

NEWS-***VT*** also has to review the types of waste accepted at the landfill and "develop a testing plan to evaluate the concentration of ***PFAS*** within sources identified as having a high probability of elevated ***PFAS***concentrations." It also has to develop a schedule for that testing.

NEWS-***VT*** has until Dec. 31 to submit that plan to the secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources.

And by next October, NEWS-***VT*** must finish research to find other ways to treat the leachate. In a response summary that was posted Friday with the recertification, DEC says NEWS-***VT*** "shall complete a conceptual scoping study of a minimum of two on-site and two off-site leachate treatment options and submit a report to the secretary on this work."

NEWS-***VT*** also must send that data to the Quebec government, the Memphremagog Municipal Regional Council in the Eastern Townships of Quebec and the City of Sherbrooke.

Meanwhile, the state detailed its own responsibilities.

By the end of 2019, the DEC "will conduct a more detailed investigation into the concentrations of ***PFAS*** in ***Vermont*** leachate" along with the influent and effluent from ***wastewater*** treatment plants.

The state and NEWS-***VT*** will keep the landfill oversight committee abreast of its work.

By next fall, the DEC also intends to complete research with other states on how to treat wastes that contain ***PFAS*** before it reaches the landfill and the feasibility of applying the best practices in ***Vermont***.

State research will continue on monitoring surface water in ***Vermont*** for the presence of ***PFAS***.

In another new condition, NEWS-***VT*** is required to report odors within 24 hours or by the next business day, a tighter deadline for reporting.

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