Mathy Stanislaus/DC/USEPA/US
01/18/2013 07:38 PM

To Karl Brooks
cc Cecilia Tapia
bcc
Subject Re: Teamsters Nation (blog) ~ Hundreds to EPA: Stop Republic's nuclear fires in Missouri

Thanks - seems to me nothing not unexpected as these things go. Let me know how I/OSWER can of assistance.

Karl Brooks	Hi Mathy, I will be talking with the director o...	01/18/2013 05:55 PM EST

From: Karl Brooks
To: Mathy Stanislaus
Cc: Cecilia Tapia
Date: 01/18/2013 05:55 PM EST
Subject: Fw: Teamsters Nation (blog) ~ Hundreds to EPA: Stop Republic's nuclear fires in Missouri

Hi Mathy,

I will be talking with the director of the Missouri Dept of Natural Resources, which has RCRA jurisdiction over the part of the landfill that is burning below ground, about the state's need to take a more proactive approach toward residents' odor concerns.

The commentary at last night's public meeting was about what we'd expected from the most involved community activists.

Region 7 continues to assess the data being developed by the PRPs. The subsurface fire on another part of the landfill is encouraging us to consider some alternatives once we have a better sense for MDNR's short-term plans.

Our combined Superfund/OPA/EJ team did a superb job conducting a useful, important public availability session. There was a press misstatement by KMOX Radio, which Region 7 OPA is working to correct today. Aside from that, the local STL media was generally balanced.

cheers,

Karl Brooks
Regional Administrator
EPA Region 7
913.551.7006

----- Forwarded by Karl Brooks/R7/USEPA/US on 01/18/2013 04:51 PM -----

From: David Bryan/R7/USEPA/US
To: R7 Senior Staff
Date: 01/18/2013 04:45 PM
Subject: Teamsters Nation (blog) ~ Hundreds to EPA: Stop Republic's nuclear fires in Missouri

Teamsters Nation (blog) - Friday, January 18, 2013

Hundreds to EPA: Stop Republic's nuclear fires in Missouri

Last night in Bridgeton, Mo. A big Teamster turnout.

Teamsters and Bridgeton, Mo., residents demanded last night that Republic Services safely remove its radioactive waste from an underground fire in a landfill it operates. More than 300 people spoke out against the against the dangerous situation at an EPA hearing in Bridgeton.

Republic Services' majority shareholder is Bill Gates, who claims, though his foundation, that he wants to improve global health.

KMOX News reports,

Residents and environmentalists claim the Environmental Protection Agency is taking a cap-it-and-cross-your-fingers approach to radioactive waste at Bridgeton's West Lake Landfill.

And even worse, while the agency squabbled Thursday night with the public over whether covering the waste is enough or not, that waste has been allowed to sit wide-open for years and years.

Janelle Wright says there are consequences:

"I have been witness to a lot of friends in caskets recently. Around our 20 year class reunion people started getting cancer at an alarming rate and dying. Horrible cancers, one in a million cancers."

In fact, she says she's compiled a list of 700 cases of rare cancers in the area around the landfill.

And this is rich: EPA officials said they'd tested the groundwater under the landfill and found no signs of seepage. The crowd shouted back, "We're in a drought!"

According to a statement, the hearing was attended by more than 300 people from the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Missouri Jobs with Justice, and the Teamsters Union.

The statement explains:

The site, located in the Missouri River floodplain, is home to radioactive wastes dumped there in 1973 following secret uranium processing in downtown St. Louis. In late October 2012, residents around the landfill began complaining of foul odors and burning eyes—and the Pattonville Fire Department expressed alarm at rising underground temperatures and the danger that the developing underground landfill fire could migrate toward the buried nuclear waste sites...

“We have members who live near and around the landfill. We also have members who work on the site, and we believe that the nonunion workers who work under Republic’s thumb deserve protection as well. The fire on its own is a big problem. What if the landfill fire were to reach the radioactive waste?” said Marv Kropp, President of Teamsters Joint Council 13.

“Landfill fires can burn on for years and expand—just look at what happened to Republic’s landfill in Centerville, Ohio—a fire that raged for years until state officials and the EPA finally stepped up and forced real action on the part of the company,” Kropp added.
Perhaps Mr. Gates could put in a call to the EPA. Maybe they'd listen to him.

The full statement -

Community, Environmentalists, Teamsters Tell EPA: Stop Nuclear Fires at Republic Landfill in Missouri

January 18, 2013

(St. Louis, MO) – Last night, more than 300 people from the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Missouri Jobs with Justice, and the Teamsters Union attended a public meeting held by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). There, community leaders spoke out against the increasingly dangerous and volatile situation at West Lake Landfill Superfund Site in Bridgeton, Mo. The landfill is operated by Republic Services [NYSE: RSG], the nation’s second-largest trash company.

The site, located in the Missouri River floodplain, is home to radioactive wastes dumped there in 1973 following secret uranium processing in downtown St. Louis. In late October 2012, residents around the landfill began complaining of foul odors and burning eyes—and the Pattonville Fire Department expressed alarm at rising underground temperatures and the danger that the developing underground landfill fire could migrate toward the buried nuclear waste sites.

At last night’s meeting, attendees demanded that the radioactive wastes be immediately isolated from the underground fire and then properly and completely removed from the floodplain.

“The site is becoming more radioactive over time,” said Dr. Bob Criss, professor of Geo-Chemistry at Washington University and a Missouri River expert. “A floodplain in an urban area is one of the most absurd places to store radioactive wastes that I can think of.”

The West Lake Landfill Superfund Site is the only radioactive site in the St. Louis area under the jurisdiction of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Army Corps of Engineers has removed more than 1 million cubic yards of radioactive wastes from four sites in greater St. Louis. However, the EPA has yet to remove a single cubic yard of radioactive wastes from the West Lake Landfill site.

“According to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, it was illegal to dump the radioactive wastes in the Missouri River floodplain in 1973. It should be illegal for the EPA to knowingly leave them there,” said Ed Smith, Safe Energy Director at the Missouri Coalition for the Environment. “It’s technically feasible to remove the radioactive wastes and it should be done as soon as possible.”

While the EPA has refused to take action to remove the radioactive wastes for decades, the recent fire at the landfill has caught the attention of local officials and the greater St. Louis community.

“We have members who live near and around the landfill. We also have members who work on the site, and we believe that the nonunion workers who work under Republic’s thumb deserve protection as well. The fire on its own is a big problem. What if the landfill fire were to reach the radioactive waste?” said Marv Kropp, President of Teamsters Joint Council 13.

“Landfill fires can burn on for years and expand—just look at what happened to Republic’s landfill in Centerville, Ohio—a fire that raged for years until state officials and the EPA finally stepped up and forced real action on the part of the company,” Kropp added.

“Our community can no longer tolerate delays—we’re sitting on a ticking toxic time bomb,” said Lara Granich, Director of Missouri Jobs with Justice “Now is the time that the EPA and Republic Services must act.”

The Missouri Coalition for the Environment is Missouri’s independent, citizens’ environmental organization for clean water, clean air, clean energy, and a healthy environment. Founded in 1969, the coalition works to protect and restore the environment through education, public engagement, and legal action.

Missouri Jobs with Justice is a coalition of community, labor, student and religious groups committed to fighting together for economic justice in Missouri. Jobs with Justice's goals are to organize community support for workers treated unjustly and/or illegally in the workplace and to address the root causes of poverty while working for an economic base that benefits the entire community – an economic base that benefits more than just corporations.

Founded in 1903, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters represents 1.4 million hardworking men and women throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. Visit www.teamster.org for more information. Follow us on Twitter @Teamsters and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/teamsters.

Contacts:

Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Ed Smith, (314) 705-4975

esmith@moenviron.org

Missouri Jobs with Justice
Lara Granich, (314) 644-0466
lara@mojwj.org

Teamsters Union
Galen Munroe, (202) 624-6904
gmunroe@teamster.org