Interest in the reuse of former landfill sites for other purposes is increasing across the nation. The Solid Waste Management Program (SWMP) has received a number of inquiries about this possibility in Missouri. Although the department generally agrees with the concept of appropriate reuse of such areas, there are a number of issues that must be considered and addressed to obtain approval pursuant to 10 CSR 80-2.030(3). This fact sheet is intended to provide general information to anyone wishing to pursue approval for reuse of landfill property.

**Considerations**

Although former landfills are large tracts of land that could be redeveloped, there are significant issues that need to be addressed before committing to such a project.

Given the explosion risks due to methane gas generated within the fill and the differential settlement common at disposal sites, construction of residential housing over the fill at former landfills will not be approved. Anyone considering the construction of non-residential permanent structures on a landfill must be aware of, and design appropriately for, these issues.

Differential settlement within the waste mass can present a considerable challenge for redevelopment. Any reuse involving construction over the fill must account for this problem in their proposal. Also, there are substantial risks borne by any developer seeking to construct any enclosed structures adjacent to disposal areas.

Investigations by the department have shown methane gas migrating at levels well above those considered explosive at distances up to one-half mile away from older, unlined landfills across the state; under certain conditions the distances could be significantly greater. Any proposals to construct enclosed structures on landfill property must show that effective measures will be taken to prevent gas migration from putting the structures and any inhabitants at risk from explosions and fires. This risk cannot be overstated. Enclosed structures of any type on or adjacent to landfills are strongly discouraged for the same reasons.

**Obtaining Agency Approval**

The department has regulatory authority only over activities within the permitted boundary of solid waste disposal areas. In order to obtain approval to redevelop a landfill, it will be necessary for the owner of the landfill to request approval from the department. In many cases, this will mean a modification to the site’s approved postclosure plan.

For those sites that do not have an approved postclosure plan, the department can issue an approval letter for the activity. Although each project will likely have site specific issues that will need to be addressed, the following items are overall concepts that must be addressed in order to obtain agency approval:
1. The applicant must show that the proposed activity will not result in negative impacts to the landfill or the infrastructure needed to maintain it, with particular emphasis placed on maintaining or improving the quality of the landfill's cover.

2. The proposed activity will not interfere with postclosure maintenance of the landfill.

3. For structures located on or adjacent to the fill area, that all necessary steps to prevent methane gas infiltration have been taken.

4. Proof of compliance with local planning and zoning for the proposed activity, if any.

**Activities Already Approved**

With appropriate conditions and proper design, the following types of activities have already received approval from the SWMP:

1. Golf Course
2. Yard Waste Composting Areas
3. Parking Lot
4. Materials Storage Area
5. Shooting Range
6. Radio Controlled Model Airfield
7. Cell Phone Tower

If you wish to pursue redevelopment of a landfill, we strongly encourage you to contact the SWMP as soon as possible to discuss your plans. This will give us an opportunity to work with you on issues specific to your concept and location. We hope that our involvement will save you significant time and money on your project.

**For more information call or write:**

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