

Gude Landfill Concerned Citizens

15461 Indianola Drive
Derwood, MD 20855

January 10, 2009

Secretary Shari Wilson
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Dear Madame Secretary:

I read your letter dated December 10, 2008 which you sent to Robert Day concerning the Gude Landfill and your department's position on protecting neighborhoods adjacent to landfills. Thank you for that response – it was timely, complete, and very reassuring to all of us who read your letter.

The Gude Landfill Concerned Citizens group was formed out of concern for Montgomery County's plans to relocate a school bus depot on top of the old Gude Landfill. The group consists of 3 homeowner associations with about 500 families.

In your 10 December letter, you said that you were going to review the County's landfill data. We also asked for it and we received water sampling data for the period 2001-2007. We reviewed it and found 583 instances where the Maximum Contamination Limit (MCL) was exceeded in ground water and surface water sample events. Of particular concern were the concentrations in the shallow ground water wells along the outer perimeter of the landfill closest to the Derwood residential community. Some of these samples exceeded the MCL by an order of magnitude. This County data provides undeniable evidence that the toxic leachate is mobile and is moving beyond the footprint of the landfill. This migration will impact the Rock Creek Watershed, the Potomac River and eventually the Chesapeake Bay.

We believe Montgomery County is in violation of its Storm Water Discharge Permit and of exceeding the safe limits set by the Environmental Protection Agency. We are requesting your assistance to require the County to implement (1) a groundwater contamination delineation survey and (2) the necessary mitigation measures to halt the contamination migration.

Montgomery County is planning to construct a bus depot on the Gude Landfill and, according to preliminary engineering studies, this will involve driving piles on ten foot centers through the waste to the bedrock. This action would increase the channels for the leachate to travel to the groundwater aquifer and accelerate the leachate migration.

We believe the County must be told that Gude Landfill reuse will not be allowed until a remediation program curtails the leachate migration. We are requesting your assistance to require the County to comply.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss our evidence and concerns for the county's future plans for the landfill.

Thank you for being the guardian of our environment.

Keith Ligon
Chairman,
Gude Landfill Concerned Citizens

Copy to:

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