



## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.  
Deputy Secretary

January 13, 2009

Ms. Julia Tillery  
Gude Landfill Concerned Citizens  
15461 Indianola Drive  
Derwood, MD 20855

Dear Ms. Tillery:

Thank you for your letter regarding Montgomery County's proposal to relocate a school bus maintenance depot and bus parking lot to the closed Gude Landfill located adjacent to Gude Lane in Derwood, Maryland. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) appreciates your interest in this matter.

The following information addresses the status of the issues you have raised.

**School Bus Depot** - Post-closure reuse of former landfill properties is considered to be reuse of the property, similar to many other "Brownfields" projects where formerly impacted industrial sites are cleaned up and returned to productive and safe use. State regulations require that written authorization be received from MDE prior to commencing construction on closed permitted sanitary landfills. Any construction on Gude Landfill would require written approval from MDE's Solid Waste Program. In order to evaluate the impacts of a bus maintenance depot and parking area on top of the Gude Landfill, the County has been advised to investigate how the proposed facility may be affected by settlement issues resulting from decomposition of the buried waste, effects of the construction on migration of landfill gas especially into enclosed structures or along trenches and utility lines, potential for the facility to increase runoff into the fill area and increase gas or leachate generation, and develop contingency plans for addressing potential nuisance and pollution conditions such as odors, leachate outbreaks, and exposed waste. While, as MDE's e-mail to the County indicates its willingness to consider innovative post-closure uses for landfills, the County will need to demonstrate to MDE, that the proposed construction and use of the closed landfill will not have an adverse environmental effect on the landfill or surrounding areas.

Other land use aspects of the potential impact of this proposed facility to the community are regulated at the local level. County zoning and land-use regulations specify the requirements and approval processes related to land use. We suggest that you contact the County zoning officials for more information in this regard.

**Landfill Gas-to-Energy Project** - As you noted, there is already an active gas collection system in place on the landfill which collects a large percentage of the landfill gas produced by the decomposition of the waste and sends it to two flares for combustion. If the County is proposing to alter the disposition of the gas management system to include a stationary source of air pollutants, the proposal must be reviewed by MDE to determine whether a permit would be needed for the change. Whether a permit is needed would depend on the size of the unit and other factors. If you have additional questions concerning these issues, please contact Mr. Bill Paul in MDE's Air and Radiation Management Administration at 410-537-3276.

**Yard Waste Processing Facility** – Yard waste composting is recognized as a beneficial way to recycle the organic materials such as leaves and grass generated in large quantities from suburban yards. Composting produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions than landfill disposal, and allows for the recycling of the material. Since 1992, Maryland law banned disposal of separately-collected yard waste in landfills, and encourages Counties to make provisions for composting and using the material.

If the proposed yard waste composting area is located on top of an area of the landfill property where waste was disposed, MDE will evaluate the plan to ensure that it does not increase infiltration into the landfill or have other deleterious effects, and require modification of the plan if necessary. Regardless of where the facility is located, MDE will make a determination as to whether the facility requires a discharge permit, and what type, to control discharges to surface and ground water.

With respect to your concerns about monitoring of the site, please note that while not under any specific requirement to do so, Montgomery County does perform monitoring of the groundwater and surface water at the site. In addition, testing for the presence of certain gases including methane in the soil is done along the property boundary in order to detect any migration of landfill gas. The Department has requested that results of this monitoring data be sent to MDE for evaluation. In the interim, you may wish to contact Mr. Peter Karasik, Chief of the Division of Solid Waste Services for the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, at 301-840-2361 for more information.

Please be assured that MDE will carefully review all monitoring data and evaluate the technical aspects of any proposed construction on the Gude Landfill to ensure that the environmental and public health impacts are adequately addressed.

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Thank you again for your letter. If you would like further information, please contact me or Mr. Horacio Tablada, Director of Waste Management Administration at 410-537-3304 or by e-mail at [htablada@mde.state.md.us](mailto:htablada@mde.state.md.us).

Sincerely,



Shari T. Wilson  
Secretary

cc: Bob Hoyt, Department Director, Montgomery County Department of  
Environmental Protection  
Horacio Tablada, Director, Waste Management Administration  
Jay Sakai, Director, Water Management Administration  
George Aburn, Director, Air and Radiation Management Administration