

Landfill cell set to close year end

BY JOSEPH HO

MVP Staff

One of the Mountain View Regional Waste Management Commission's landfill cells is expected to be full by the end of this year.

In the commission's audited financial statements for 2014, the remaining capacity of its Class III landfill is at 9,300 cubic metres, or nine per cent.

Class III landfills possess waste that does not create leachate — water that runs through garbage and picks up contaminants, explained commission chief administrative officer Pat Sliworsky.

The other type of landfill the commission operates at its Didsbury site is a Class II, which includes solid waste from municipalities — household garbage and some commercial refuse,

Sliworsky said.

This kind of waste does produce leachate, which must be monitored and kept out of the groundwater system. It is collected and mostly sent to lagoons.

Once the Class III landfill is full, commission board chair Mary Anne Overwater says the plan is to close it and open another cell.

However, even once the site has been buried with clay, compacted, covered with subsoil, covered with topsoil and then seeded with grass, the work's really only begun.

"It's a long process when you have a landfill. Once you close it, once you put the last cover on it, doesn't mean that you're done. You have a long haul. And the municipalities that are involved, pay for it," Overwater said.

The long haul Overwater refers to would be known as "closure" and "post-

closure" and Alberta Environment's landfill standards include a list of requirements operators must adhere to.

Starting with closure, Alberta Environment states the operator must submit a "Detailed Final Landfill Closure Plan," which includes designs for final cover, erosion control and restoration of surface water drainage.

Plans must also be submitted for any changes to groundwater and landfill gas monitoring, leachate collection, landfill gas collection and the decommissioning or removal of any buildings.

Then there's the "Post-Closure Plan," which must specify how to maintain the final cover and systems for surface water drainage, leachate collection, landfill gas control and groundwater monitoring.

Post-closure lasts "a minimum period of 25 years following the final landfill closure." It doesn't end until standards for groundwater, gas and leachate standards are acceptable.

"(Until) there's no longer any leachate coming out of it, there's no longer any movement happening (and) there's no longer any sinkholes happening. These are all things that you do during your post-closure report on a yearly basis," Sliworsky said.

He added that closure and post-closure costs are for the whole area of the landfill approved by the ministry to carry waste. They are based on a formula calculated by an engineer, Sliworsky continued.

According to the commission's financial statements, "the estimated total liability is \$2,449,032."