

Garbage Dump - Brown County's Next Environmental Nightmare?

Written by Steve Deslauriers, Green Bay

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http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/green_bay_citydeck_fox_river-s5.jpg



Brown County's proposed Town of Holland landfill site will dump over 8 Million cubic yards of waste at the head of the East River impacting communities and the environment downstream in De Pere, Allouez, and Green Bay.

GREEN BAY - Where is Brown County planning to dump industrial, commercial, and household waste? Unbelievably, the site they have chosen is at the head and bank of the East River. At least three counties will deposit over 8 MILLION cubic yards of waste at this dump over the planned 15 years of operation. This waste will include up to 800,000 cubic yards of ash, foundry byproducts, and petroleum-contaminated soil. This is not just a concern of the Town of Holland where the County proposes locating the dump. The East River flows through the east side of De Pere, Allouez, and Green Bay, where it converges with the Fox River. This dump will affect all the communities through which the East River flows. If residents do not act, and Brown County gets its way, this dumping could begin as early as 2020.



Anyone who has attempted development of any kind along a river, lake, wetland, or creek surely has experienced the stringent scrutiny and restrictions imposed by the DNR. Even greater precautionary restrictions would be expected for the siting of a dump, yet the DNR has green-lighted the County's plan. Why should we all be concerned? Because NO landfill is without leaching and environmental contamination. EPA regulations and the Brown County Plan allow for leakage to the environment making the County's choice for a dump site completely irresponsible. The County proposes that the clay soil and composite liner will take care of these issues, protecting our water resources. Wrong!

The EPA says "...even the best liner and leachate collection systems will ultimately fail due to natural deterioration..." and the "EPA has concluded that the more reasonable assumption, based on what is known about the pressures placed on liners over time, is that any liner will begin to leak eventually.... Eventually liners will either degrade, tear, or crack and will allow liquids to migrate out of the unit." Interestingly, The County's 'Plan of Operation' acknowledges the abundance of these 'pressures', as this site is a "saturation soil environment" (i.e. very wet). So, knowing this, why would the County choose a site immediately adjacent to an

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environmentally sensitive area? Perhaps when this land was purchased for this purpose decades ago the concerns about such issues were less, the regulations more lax, and impacts less well known. As decades have passed since this plan was hatched, Brown County has had ample time to research and realize that this site is not suited for a garbage dump. Why we would even consider such an endeavor at the head of the East River is beyond logic. We know better now. At a time when local communities are celebrating and improving the public areas along the environmentally rich East and Fox Rivers, Brown County's decision to locate and operate a dump so close to the head of the East River spits in the face of residents' hard work to improve these resources.

It is my hope that this is the beginning of engagement by local environmental groups, as well as towns, villages, and cities that will be impacted, to stop this irresponsibly sited proposed garbage dump. Just because Brown County already owns this property does not make it acceptable for a dump. Brown County's insistence that this is a safe landfill site rivals the claim of the Titanic's builders that their ship was unsinkable.