

# Smythesdale Landfill update – Nov 25, 2011

## Current situation

- The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has approved the use of a temporary cell at the Smythesdale landfill.
- The current cell in use at the landfill (cell E) has reached capacity and delays with the construction of the next cell (cell F) mean it won't be ready for use until February 2012.
- Waste stored in the temporary cell will be moved to cell F upon its completion, expected in February.
- All arrangements for the temporary storage of this waste will be undertaken and controlled in accordance with Council's Environmental Management Plan and the requirements of an EPA notice.
- Waste in the temporary storage cell will be covered with soil daily and litter and dust control measures will be in place.
- The design of cell F was commissioned in early 2010 and a tender awarded in early 2011. Changes to the independent audit requirements and the EPA's revised Landfill Best Practice for Environmental Management resulted in the project construction being delayed until August 2011.
- Construction of cell F recommenced in early October and the cell is now being built in two stages, including the construction of a new leachate pond.
- It is anticipated that stage one of cell F will be ready for waste storage by early February 2012, with the new leachate pond completed by the end of February 2012 and the remainder of cell F ready for storage by the end of April 2012.

## Odour concerns

- The existing leachate pond is quite small and has limited capacity to cater for fluctuations in leachate volumes i.e. increased volumes associated with wet seasonal conditions or breakdowns in plant (transfer pumps).
- The new larger leachate pond currently under construction will replace the existing leachate pond and provide a significant increase in leachate holding and aeration capacity.
- Over the last 12 months, higher than average rainfall on the uncapped landfill cells resulted in the generation of significant volumes of leachate within the cells. While on their own these volumes could have been accommodated by the existing leachate pond, there were two other factors that allowed the leachate to build up in the cells producing gas.
  - The temporary re-routing of power to the aeration system in the leachate pond (required for the construction of the new cell) meant the misting system was decommissioned for approximately a week.

- The leachate extraction pump in one of the cells failed and the level of leachate rose within the cell until the fault was identified and a new pump installed. This resulted in the leachate becoming anaerobic. When the pump was brought back on line, the leachate from the landfill cell was transferred to the pond and, by virtue of it being anaerobic, odour emissions occurred.
- To address the odour emissions, the City of Ballarat transferred 1.3 megalitres of effluent off-site (to Melbourne) for the purpose of reducing the leachate pond volumes to levels where the misting system could operate effectively and where pond levels would be within operating licence limits
- Council has purchased a stock of tested clay in preparation of providing an initial clay cap over uncapped cells to prevent further water entry. Once the current cells are closed, the capping will commence.

### **Further information**

All enquiries regarding the Smythesdale Landfill can be directed to Council's Operations Depot on 5320 7450.