

Landfill initiatives delayed at Tom Howe site

by Mark McEachern

NEW CREDIT - According to an environmental consultant representing New Credit, the Tom Howe (TH) Landfill site on Regional Road #20 has delayed some of their initiatives to make the facility environmentally sound.

"My only interest is that the region (Haldimand/Norfolk) doesn't plan to put in any of the required drains at landfill site and every communication I've had with them leads me to believe this," said Wilf Ruland at a New Credit council meeting held on Monday night. "New Credit must force the region to comply with the Certificate of Approval agreement signed by the region and New Credit in March of '96."

Ruland, the Citizens Environmental Consultant for New Credit, says that council should look into this matter immediately, but reassured them

that the landfill site is still way ahead of other facilities of its kind in dealing with the environmental concerns caused by a landfill site.

"This is the best landfill site I've seen," he said.

Ruland, along with other environmental consultants serving both the Six Nations and New Credit communities are allowed access to TH site at any time to make sure that this Certificate of Approval agreement is upheld, one that the region of Haldimand/Norfolk and New Credit agreed to in compliance with the standards set out by the Ontario Ministry of Environment regarding the TH facility.

"We are allowed to monitor this facility on a regular basis and we make sure that some of the

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discrepancies regarding the landfill site are dealt with in compliance with the Certificate of Approval agreement," said Clint King, an environmental inspector for New Credit. "For example, four times a year, the facility does what is called a surface water analysis at the landfill site. In one of those reports, there were two parts of the study that were not documented. We just want to know why these studies were not complete."

One of the concerns for many of the residents who live near the TH site is the stench that is present in the air, a concern that King says is dealt with by the facility on a regular basis.

"There are specific deadline dates on some of these issues surrounding the landfill site and there are some variable which have no deadline addressed to them," said King. "We know that some of these initiatives set out for the site have no specific deadlines for completion."

Eric D'Hondt, the

Commissioner of Engineering for Haldimand/Norfolk, said that the TH landfill site has never tried to hide anything in regards to environmental issues affecting the site and continues to keep all concerned parties informed on the day-to-day operations of the facility.

"We have an open gate policy here and we are just as concerned about these environmental issues like anyone else," said D'Hondt.

"We continue to monitor our flare system that was put in place to get rid of the methane gas and the sulphur dioxide which gives off that rotten egg smell," he added. "The odour situation has been extremely persistent as of late and that is because we have had some technical difficulties maintaining this flare system at the facility, which is a computerized system."

According to D'Hondt, the region will continue to complete the initiatives set out in the Certificate of Approval agreement in the new year.

"We are not necessarily going to spend a lot of money if some of these systems we have in place are not going to work," said D'Hondt, referring specifically to the flares being used at the facility. "This is where we have been delayed in certain areas and this is why things have gone a little slower than what we anticipated at first."

The Community Liaison Committee (CLC), a small group whose membership is made up by those communities (Springvale and New Credit) which are most affected by the day-to-day operations of the TH site, continue to meet periodically to discuss environmental issues dealing with facility. Those issues include visual barriers of the site by way of landscaping berms (man-made hills or barriers) tree planting around the facility and improvements to the leachate drain collection system at the site.

The next meeting for the CLC is scheduled for December 7th in Springvale.