

12-04-98

## FACT SHEET

### PROPOSED FEDERAL PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS

#### TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a Federal plan for existing municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills. The Federal plan is a set of requirements that implement the 1996 MSW landfills emission guidelines which were revised in 1998.
- ! This Federal plan would cover all existing MSW landfills not covered by an approved and effective State or Tribal plan. Existing MSW landfills are those that have begun construction, modification, or reconstruction before May 30, 1991. Existing MSW landfills also include those that have accepted waste since November 8, 1987 or have capacity available for future waste deposition. (MSW landfills that began construction, modification or reconstruction on or after May 30, 1991 are subject to the new source performance standards and not this Federal plan.)
- ! The Federal plan would fill the gap until State or Tribal plans are approved and effective and ensures controls for the covered landfills are in place to achieve required emissions reductions. The Federal plan is rescinded and no longer applies when a State plan is approved.
- ! To make the transition as smooth as possible between the Federal plan and subsequently approved State plans, EPA will incorporate compliance schedules already negotiated with MSW landfill owners and operators into the final Federal plan. These schedules should be submitted to EPA during the 60-day comment period of this proposal.

#### **WHAT ARE THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS?**

- ! This proposed Federal plan would ensure that emission limits and other requirements are in place for MSW landfills located in States or Indian country that do have an approved and effective State or Tribal plan. The Federal plan ensures that the MSW landfill rules are implemented and enforced until State or Tribal plans are approved, thus ensuring the environmental benefits envisioned by the 1996 rules.
- ! Implementation of the 1996 landfill rule through the Federal, State and Tribal plans will reduce national emissions from landfills by over fifty percent. Landfills emit nonmethane organic compounds (NMOC) that include hazardous air pollutants (HAPs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and odorous compounds. Exposure to HAPs can lead to cancer, respiratory irritation, and damage to the nervous system. VOC emissions

contribute to ozone formation which can result in adverse affects on human health and vegetation.

- ! While the goal of the Federal plan is to reduce emissions of NMOC, the controls that will be installed will also reduce national methane emissions from landfills by forty percent. Methane emissions contribute to global climate change and can also result in fires or explosions when they accumulate in structures on or off the landfill site. Landfills are the largest man-made source of methane emissions in the country.

### **WHICH MSW LANDFILLS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE PROPOSED RULE?**

- ! If you are an owner or operator of a MSW landfill, you would be subject to this proposed rule if you meet all of the following criteria:

- You are not included in an approved and effective State or Tribal plan. As of the date of this Fact Sheet, the following States have approved and effective State plans: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming.
- Your landfill underwent construction, modification, or reconstruction before May 30, 1991.
- Your landfill accepted waste since November 8, 1987 *or* has capacity available for future waste deposition.

- ! If you are an owner or operator of a MSW landfill and you meet the above criteria and therefore would be subject to the proposed regulation,

- You would be required to report your landfill's design capacity within 90 days of the effective date of the finalized landfill Federal plan,
- If your MSW landfill has a design capacity of 2.5 million Mg and 2.5 million m<sup>3</sup> or larger, then you would also need to submit an NMOC emission rate report within 90 days of the effective date of the finalized Federal plan.
- If your MSW landfill has emissions of NMOC of 50 Mg/yr or more, then you would be required to install a gas collection and control system.

### **BACKGROUND**

- ! The MSW landfills regulations were finalized in 1996 and amended in 1998 under the Clean Air Act. These regulations will bring significant reductions of methane and NMOC, including volatile organic compounds and hazardous air pollutants.

- ! States with existing MSW landfills subject to the MSW landfill regulations were required to submit to EPA plans to implement and enforce the landfills regulations within nine months after EPA finalized the landfills rules (i.e. by December 12, 1996).
- ! For a State with an existing MSW landfill that did not submit an approvable plan to EPA within nine months of the final regulations (i.e. by December 12, 1996), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop, implement, and enforce a Federal plan.
- ! By proposing this MSW landfill Federal plan, EPA is proposing to fulfill its obligation under the Clean Air Act to establish reporting and collection and control requirements for MSW landfills in States and Tribes that do not have approved plans.
- ! The proposed Federal plan contains the same requirements as a State or Tribal plan, including emission limits, source and emission inventories, testing, monitoring, record keeping and reporting requirements, as well as generic or site-specific compliance schedules.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

- ! Interested parties can download the proposed MSW landfills Federal plan from EPA's web site on the Internet under Office of Air and Radiation Recent Actions at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/ramain.html>. Also, the State plan implementation assistance document for MSW landfills can be downloaded at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/tled.html>. For further information about the proposed MSW landfills Federal plan, contact Ms. Mary Ann Warner of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-1192.
- ! For more information on other air pollution programs and issues, the Office of Air and Radiation homepage can be accessed at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/oar>.

LNDFFPFS.WPD