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Feds plan to drop Shpack landfill on Attleboro-Norton line from Superfund list

By Jim Hand jhand@thesunchronicle.com Jul 20, 2017



This aerial shot taken in November 2012 shows the capped Attleboro Landfill in the center with the Shpack landfill Superfund site on the bottom left.

SUN CHRONICLE FILE PHOTO

NORTON — The federal government says all clean-up of radioactive waste at the private Shpack landfill is complete and it wants to remove it from the Superfund environmental remediation program.

Emily Bender of the Boston office of the federal Environmental Protection Agency said the work is done.

"The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed that the Shpack landfill be deleted from the National Priorities (Superfund) List. Deletion of sites from the NPL may occur once all response actions are complete and all cleanup goals have been achieved," she said in an email.



Bender said residents can comment on the plan to end the federal involvement until Aug. 7 and a final decision will be made by Sept. 5.

Heather Graf, a community activist from Norton who has been involved in the issue since about 1999, said she is satisfied the site is clean.

She credited the Army Corps of Engineers with getting the job completely done.

"They said they would dig until they hit clean, and they did, about 12 feet," she said.

The dump on the Attleboro-Norton line had been contaminated for decades.

The government began a clean-up program in 2005 and removed radioactive materials that had been dumped there.

Monitors had been set up to track whether the contamination was moving through ground water.

Bender said both the EPA and state environmental agencies agree the work is done

and the site should be removed from the Superfund list.

Attleboro City Council President Frank Cook said his involvement with the dump goes back more than 20 years when he was chairman of the planning board's landfill subcommittee.



He said getting the site off the Superfund list is good news for the city because it had been cited as a responsible party, making it potentially vulnerable to lawsuits.

The EPA states on its website that 34,000 cubic-yards of soil and 1,000 cubic-yards of sediment were removed from the site and the nearby wetlands was restored.

It says the radioactive contamination first came to the government's attention in 1978 when a resident raised the issue with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The agency determined that radium 226, uranium 238 and uranium 235 had been dumped there.

An investigation determined that M&C Nuclear Inc., which later merged with Texas Instruments, disposed of waste at the dump.

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