

Shpack cleanup in Norton gets \$5M in stimulus funds

By Katherine McInerney

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The Shpack Landfill will get \$5 million from the federal government, as stimulus money is sent for cleanup of the 9-acre site in Norton and Attleboro.

“The cleanup of the Shpack has been shovel-ready for some time,” Laurie Burt, commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, said in a statement released Thursday, May 14. “While there remains a lot of work still to be done at this site by the other parties, the news of federal assistance is a critical and welcome stimulus to the cleanup of this site, which has been on the Superfund National Priorities List since 1986.”

Town Manager James Purcell said the money will “assure the continued mitigation efforts,” from the federal Army Corps of Engineers, which is excavating soil from the site.

Cleanup of the landfill began in September 2005, but was suspended from June 2006 to June 2007.

Purcell said the project was stalled because the Army Corps of Engineers ran out of money.

The landfill was a dumping site for industrial and domestic waste from 1946 to 1965, the state DEP release states. The Army Corps of Engineers is cleaning up radiological waste on the site and will later remove non-radiological contaminants.

The cleanup is expected to last three more years, according the DEP, which oversees the cleanup in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The project also includes excavation and off-site disposal of contaminated material and other restoration work.

Two acres of the Shpack Landfill are in Norton and seven acres are in Attleboro.

Authorities believe the radioactive waste in the landfill came from the local jewelry industry and from Metals and Controls Inc., which has since become Texas Instruments Inc.

In January, 14 parties including the town of Norton, the city of Attleboro, Texas Instruments and various companies, signed an agreement to share the remaining \$29 million cost to finish cleaning up the landfill.

The \$5 million is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and Governor Deval Patrick's economic Recovery Plan.

Katherine McInerney can be reached at kmcinern@cnc.com or 508-967-3508.