



For Immediate Release

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MADIGAN ANNOUNCES PROPOSED AGREEMENT WITH OWNERS, FORMER OPERATOR AND CUSTOMERS OF CLOSED LANDFILL NEAR BELVIDERE

Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced a hearing was held in federal court in Rockford on a proposed agreement to clean up the closed MIG/Dewane Landfill located just east of Belvidere.

The landfill, closed since 1988, was placed on the National Priority List (Superfund) in 1990 after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) determined that landfill waste and leachate were allegedly contributing to groundwater contamination, soil contamination and possible surface water contamination that could endanger humans coming into contact with it. In 1989, an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) inspection revealed that exposed waste and numerous leachate seeps allegedly extended beyond the landfill towards the Kishwaukee River, located just north of the landfill.

According to federal and state environmental officials, sampling at MIG/Dewane indicated that the contamination in the soil, groundwater, sediments, leachate and landfill gas included volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-VOCs, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs) and metal compounds. In addition, a plume of contaminated groundwater was found moving toward the Kishwaukee.

“Today’s court action is another important step in the process to ensure that the long-overdue, safe closure of this leaking and hazardous landfill will be completed,” Madigan said.

According to federal and state environmental officials, during its operation, the permitted MIG/Dewane landfill received an assortment of municipal, commercial and household wastes. Approximately 1,500 people live within one mile of the landfill.

The proposed settlement would require one of the former site operators, BFI Waste Systems of North America, Inc., five current owners and 88 companies and municipalities that disposed of refuse at the facility, to reimburse the State of Illinois for past costs, future costs in overseeing implementation of the cleanup and an estimated \$17 million to construct the chosen remedy at the 50-acre site.

On December 27, 2005, Madigan, on behalf of the IEPA, filed a complaint and settlement documents in U.S. District Court in Rockford. Today, the consent decree was lodged and will be placed on file for a 30-day public comment period prior to final court approval.

Madigan said under the proposed agreement, the IEPA will oversee the implementation of the selected cleanup which addresses the major threats posed by the site. The remedial actions include the installation of a soil and synthetic liner over the landfill to prevent further infiltration of surface water, construction and operation of a landfill gas management system and a leachate collection and removal system.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Gerald Karr is handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Protection Division.

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