

05/07/2025

Matthew Dolan, Solid Waste Manager  
Newton County Board of Commissioners  
205 Lower River Road  
Covington, Georgia 30016

**SUBJECT: Site Suitability Notice**  
**Newton County – Lower River Road MSWL**  
**Proposed MSWL Vertical Expansion**  
**Permit No.: 107-015D(MSWL)**  
**GEOS Submission ID: 722679**

Dear Mr. Dolan:

The Solid Waste Management Program of the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has completed its review of the following documents:

- May 28, 2024 (revised September 30, 2024), *Limited Site Suitability Assessment Report, Newton County – Lower River Road MSWL*, prepared by Harbin Engineering, P.C (Harbin).
- April 1, 2025 response letter from Harbin.

Based on the data submitted in addition to your application, EPD has determined that the applicable siting standards can be met in accordance with *Georgia Comprehensive Rules and Regulations Subject 391-3-4, Solid Waste Management* (Rules) rule 391-3-4-.05(1), provided the attached Site Limitations are met. This determination is based on information provided to date for EPD review and is subject to revision prior to permit issuance should errors be found in the submitted information or new information be provided relevant to this determination. This letter denotes only the demonstration of the ability to comply with siting standards for the proposed site and does not constitute approval to begin construction or operation of the disposal site. This letter does not constitute a permit for the proposed solid waste landfill.

Before a permit may be issued for the proposed solid waste disposal site, a Design and Operational Plan (D&O Plan), prepared in accordance with Rule 391-3-4-.07, must be submitted for consideration by EPD.

Additionally, the appropriate governing authority must hold a public hearing regarding the proposed landfill no less than two weeks prior to the issuance of any permit. At least 30 days prior to the public hearing, notices of the public hearing must be posted at the proposed site and advertised in the legal organ of the county or counties in which the proposed solid waste disposal facility will be located. A transcript of the public hearing proceedings and a reaffirmation of zoning consistency must be submitted to EPD prior to a final decision regarding the issuance of a permit for the proposed solid waste disposal facility.

After our review and evaluation of the D&O Plan, and the other required submittals, a Solid Waste Handling Permit will either be issued or denied. This Site Suitability Notice shall terminate upon a final decision to issue or deny the requested permit. Failure to submit to EPD an approvable D&O Plan within one year from the date of this Notice may result in permit denial or termination of the permit application.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Cown, Director  
Environmental Protection Division

Attachment

cc: Keith Stevens, Beverly Tipton, William Cook – GA EPD  
EPD Northeast District (Athens)  
David Henry, Curtis Reynolds – Harbin Engineering

**Site Limitations**  
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1. The area considered for acceptability includes only that within the line identified as “Property Line” for the MSW landfill on Harbin Engineering’s (Harbin), *Existing Conditions*, Figure 3, dated 5-28-2024.
2. Waste shall not be placed outside of the area defined by the lines identified as “phase limits” and “extent of previously approved waste limits beyond the currently proposed waste limits” on Harbin’s *Existing Conditions*, Figure 3, dated 5-28-2024.
3. Where waste excavation had occurred or waste was previously placed, an underdrain system shall be constructed between the liner system and the water table to ensure that the seasonal high-water table does not rise to within five feet of the bottom of the liner system. The underdrain system shall be designed by a Georgia registered professional engineer and demonstrate that the underdrain system is designed to prevent groundwater from reaching to within five feet of the bottom of the liner at any point between the drain lines. The outfall(s) of underdrain systems must be incorporated into the surface water monitoring plan for the site.

As an alternative to constructing an underdrain beneath the liner system, groundwater elevation data may be obtained from below the proposed waste footprint, where waste excavation had occurred or waste was previously placed, to demonstrate groundwater levels consistent with the seasonal high potentiometric surface shown on Harbin’s Figure 12 *Composite Seasonal High Groundwater Elevations*, revised 9-30-2024. The groundwater data shall be measured from a minimum of three piezometers per construction phase or stage.

4. A liner and leachate collection system must be placed beneath all areas proposed for waste disposal. The bottom of the liner system shall be constructed a minimum of 5 feet above the seasonal high groundwater elevations shown on Harbin’s Figure 12 *Composite Seasonal High Groundwater Elevations*, revised 9-30-2024.

Any perched groundwater zones encountered during excavation of the site shall be drained entirely, if possible, otherwise an underdrain system shall be required to maintain vertical separation from the bottom of the liner system. The outfall of the underdrain system shall be sampled as part of the facility’s groundwater and surface water monitoring plan.

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5. Prior to phase construction in areas where waste excavation had occurred or waste was previously placed, a supplemental report shall be submitted to EPD upon completion of waste excavation activities in accordance with the approved Waste Excavation Plan. The supplemental report shall include, at minimum, the results of soil confirmation sampling beneath the excavation and any groundwater data obtained from within the proposed waste footprint including data obtained from piezometers as specified in site limitation 3, as applicable. EPD reserves the right to rescind site acceptability should information be obtained to indicate that the area is not suitable for the placement of waste.
6. Existing groundwater contamination shall be addressed in accordance with the EPD-approved Corrective Action Plan (CAP) which was prepared by a qualified professional geologist or engineer registered to practice in the State of Georgia. The CAP shall be incorporated into the Newton County Lower River Road Landfill D&O Plan by reference.
7. If during excavation of the site, any springs or seeps are discovered, EPD shall be notified immediately, and protective designs must be incorporated into the facility's design and operational plans, such that the spring or seep can be incorporated into the facility's groundwater monitoring system.
8. If non-rippable rock (bedrock) is encountered at an elevation above the approved base of the waste unit, or if non-rippable rock is removed during excavation, at least five (5) feet of clean, compacted, rubble-free fill, shall be placed above the non-rippable rock. Alternatively, an engineered layer (soil or a combination of soils and geosynthetics) shall be placed and compacted between the non-rippable rock and the base of the waste unit. The engineered layer shall include:
  - a. One (1) foot of soil with a hydraulic conductivity equal or lower than  $1 \times 10^{-5}$  cm/sec constructed over one (1) foot of structural fill, or
  - b. If a geosynthetic is used, the geosynthetic will have a hydraulic conductivity equivalent to or less than one (1) foot of  $1 \times 10^{-5}$  cm/sec soil and will be placed on a minimum of two (2) feet of structural fill.

Installation of an alternative engineered layer over rock shall be documented and certified by a Professional Engineer or Professional Geologist registered in the State of Georgia and shall be included in the CQA report for the cell being constructed.

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9. Structural fill shall be required in some portions of the expansion area to achieve the required base grade elevations. Structural fill shall meet the requirements of the EPD approved Construction Quality Assurance Plan within the EPD approved Design & Operational Plan.
10. A minimum 200-foot undisturbed buffer shall be maintained between the waste disposal boundary and the permitted property boundary. The buffer may be disturbed within the waste excavation areas but must be re-established and stabilized with permanent vegetation once excavation is complete.
11. A minimum 500-foot buffer shall be maintained between the waste disposal boundary and any adjacent residences and/or water supply wells in existence at the time of Site Limitations issuance.
12. A minimum 25-foot undisturbed buffer shall be maintained between the waste disposal area and any on-site springs, intermittent or perennial streams, or surface water bodies except as permitted for impacts by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or EPD.
13. A minimum 50-foot undisturbed buffer shall be maintained between the waste disposal boundaries and all wetlands, except as permitted for impacts by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and allowed by EPD. A statement certifying that the landfill has been designed so that implementation of the Design and Operational Plan will not impact wetlands delineated on September 16, 2024 and shown in the Design and Operational Plan shall be submitted. This statement shall be signed and stamped by the professional engineer responsible for the Design and Operational Plan for the subject site. Wetland areas shall be delineated on the Design and Operational Plan.
14. All erosion control measures shall conform to the *Erosion and Sediment Control Act*, Georgia *Comprehensive Rules and Regulations Subject 391-3-4 Solid Waste Management* (Rules) and be protective of all perennial and intermittent streams and tributaries. Runoff from the entire facility must be routed at all times, either directly or via properly designed conveyance systems, to permanent sediment control impoundments.
15. The facility shall not restrict the flow of the 100-year flood, reduce the temporary water storage capacity of the floodplain, or result in a washout of solid waste or material to pose a hazard to human health and the environment.

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16. All soil borings, monitoring wells and piezometers that have been completed/installed at this site, shall be plugged, and abandoned, except for those locations that will be used as monitoring wells for the proposed landfill. Abandonments shall be performed in accordance with the Water Well Standards Act. Additionally, all soil borings, monitoring wells, and piezometers located within the proposed waste footprint shall be abandoned by overdrilling and filling with a non-shrinking cement/bentonite grout mixture via tremie pipe from the bottom to within 10 feet of the base of the landfill. The remaining borehole shall be filled with hydrated bentonite. The abandonment of all borings/piezometers/monitoring wells shall be supervised by a professional geologist (PG), or professional engineer (PE) registered to practice in the State of Georgia. A report documenting the abandonment shall be submitted to EPD prior to cell construction. This documentation shall be signed and stamped by the responsible professional geologist or engineer registered to practice in the State of Georgia.
  
17. Groundwater, surface water, and methane monitoring systems shall be installed at the site. The groundwater monitoring system shall include some monitoring wells completed in the bedrock. Foliation and joint orientation and lineament analysis shall be considered in determining bedrock monitoring well locations. Sampling parameters, sampling schedules, monitoring well construction, and spacing shall adhere to the guidelines established in the 1991 EPD document, *Georgia Manual for Groundwater Monitoring*, the September 2021 EPD document, *Monitoring of Surface Water and Underdrain Systems at Solid Waste Facilities*, the September 2015 EPD document, *Methane Monitoring at Solid Waste Disposal Facilities*, and current USEPA Region IV guidance. The system design and monitoring requirements shall be detailed in groundwater, surface water, and methane monitoring plans that are prepared in accordance with *Georgia Comprehensive Rules and Regulations Subject 391-3-4 Solid Waste Management* (Rules), the guidance documents mentioned above and are approvable by EPD.