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Company: Landfill won't spray waste

By Virginia Annable vannable@newstopicnews.com Aug 21, 2017

Although the state has issued a permit to allow it, liquid waste is not going to be sprayed into the air over Caldwell County's landfill, according to the landfill's operator, but the method was tested there a few years ago.

Republic Services released a statement saying it will not use the technique, which sprays liquid waste collected from the bottom of the landfill into the air to evaporate the water, and has no plans to use it later.

The statement said a preliminary test showed the technique was not a workable alternative to the current systems it uses to treat the liquid waste.

Republic tested the technique three or four years ago at Foothills Environmental Landfill off Cheraw Road, said Laura Leonard, the public information officer for the waste management division of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

Russ Knocke, vice president of communications and public affairs for Republic Services, said that the testing, which the company and the DEQ did together, lasted a few weeks, but the technique didn't appeal to the company.

"There was nothing about it that was appealing," he said. "It wasn't viable."

The DEQ recently issued Republic Services three 90-day permits to spray the liquid waste at its three landfills in North Carolina, leaving contaminants in the liquid to fall back into the landfill. The two other Republic Services landfills are in Person and Bertie counties.

Some neighbors of Foothills landfill were concerned when they learned about the permits from the New-Topic last week. One of them, Mary Hollar, was glad to hear Monday's news.

“I’m totally excited,” she said. “I can’t wait to tell the rest of my family.”

Knocke said the company is willing to test new concepts. This one did not work for Republic Services, but it might for someone else, he said.

A bill to require the state to allow spraying of landfill waste at lined landfills passed through the General Assembly earlier this year, after Republic Services presented on the benefits of the method, but Gov. Roy Cooper vetoed it. The legislature may still vote to override the veto.

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