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Torrey residents get landfill answers

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Posted: Thursday, March 12, 2009 12:00 am

By AMANDA FOLTS / afolts@fltimes.com | 0 comments

TORREY — AES Greenidge representatives spoke to the Town Board Tuesday night about its landfill operations in Dresden and addressed town residents concerns about how high it is.

The company runs a coal-fired power plant and landfill on Route 14, and when Jim Hastings addressed environmental aspects, he said there had been some concern about the height of the landfill at their Lockwood site. He noted that they're using 30 of the nearly 45 acres they're permitted to, as they dispose of fly and bottom ash, wastewater sludge and mill rejects, he said.

AES uses a sediment basin to collect water run-off and a lab monitors the water, which is eventually released through a ditch into the Keuka Outlet, which is also monitored up and down stream, about six times each year.

Tim Chambers, AES operator/manager, said other monitoring includes:

n The landfill operator, City Hill Construction, has someone on-site whenever ash is taken there.

n Someone from Creative Resources, a certified lab, comes once a week to manage discharge in the sediment pond.

n Daigler Engineering, an independent firm, visits the site upon request, usually once each quarter to inspect the landfill to ensure it meets state regulations.

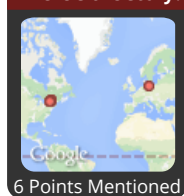
n Chambers inspects the site at least twice a week.

n The state Department of Environmental Conservation does an annual inspection and collects quarterly and annual reports from AES.

Jim Daigler, landfill engineer from Daigler Engineering, said the initial ash disposal site was built in 1979 on about 14 acres. As for the landfill's height, Daigler used a topographic map to show that the part of the landfill that was at 702 feet above sea level in 2003 still was last year.

Town resident Leona Jensen asked how high it could get and Daigler said it depends, but the DEC permit gives them to 756.2 feet. He said their efforts to optimize the ground they have manifests itself in height. He noted that they reduced the state's originally permitted height

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off the piles. Chambers noted that they put soil over areas not being used, so vegetation grows. All the neighbors

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have his number, so he said they can alert him if they see ash and dust blowing.

Town resident Dave Granzin said he found documents from around 1988 that describe the stages of the landfill and say the operations would be complete by 2011.

Hastings said that was definitely not going to happen; they have many years left there and aren't anywhere near meeting the 1,800 tons of ash they're permitted to put there each day.

Chambers added that AES's is one of cleanest coal fire plants in the nation.

Granzin also asked about the orange trucks he's seen coming from Binghamton. Hastings explained they're part of a temporary agreement with the AES Westover facility to bring the same ash AES in Dresden uses, and it will last only a few more months while they obtain permits from Pennsylvania.

Chambers said AES spends more than \$800,000 a year on the landfill and its ultimate goal is to not have any ash going there. He noted they are also looking for other uses for the ash — some was used in the Destiny project in Syracuse.

Hastings said they are looking into biomass opportunities to create power from clean, unadulterated wood and to use less fossil fuels.

They also have natural gas opportunities and a permit that allows them to burn it.

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