

## PROJECT NAME

# Closed Landfill Program - Program Redesign

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE BASELINE

Land Use Plans for closed landfills were not being developed and useful information about landfill risks (groundwater contamination, methane gas migration) was not being provided to local government units (LGUs) as required by statute.

## THE IDENTIFIED PROBLEM

Land Use Plans were not being developed and useful information about landfill risks was not being provided to LGUs because:

- » The Closed Landfill Program (CLP) had been designed initially to focus on constructing remedies at landfills to address risks with the State's solid waste rules as a guide; and
- » CLP management and staff were uncertain about how to develop Land Use Plans and provide useful information to LGUs.
- » Land-use planning, and how it integrates with site cleanups, was foreign to the Remediation Division.

## VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

Internal and External Standardization Project Research 2006: Feedback on land use planning

- » A survey of CLP staff, CLP management, and the Attorney General's Office determined that they did not understand the Land Use Plan/LGU information part of the statute and were uncertain of the process to complete this work, including staff roles and responsibilities.
- » The CLP held forums with 12 LGUs throughout the State and discovered that the LGUs wanted maps showing the location of the groundwater and methane gas impacts, with narratives explaining these risks at each landfill. The CLP also learned that, if the CLP data was reliable, the LGUs would likely adopt land use controls to help protect the public from these risks.

## RESULTS

- » The standardization project – focusing on land use planning – resulted in the understanding that land use planning at and around closed landfills helps manage the risk to the health and safety of those living near or occupying land at and around the landfills.
- » It became understood that “Managing the risk” is the mission of the CLP since all of the Program's work is about managing the risk at the landfills; and that land use planning is one tool, in addition to constructing remedies, to manage this risk.
- » This new understanding resulted in the standardization project becoming a Redesign of the CLP so that the CLP could take a more holistic approach to managing risk at the landfills long term.
- » The “Risk Management Cycle” was created as the foundation of the Program: 1) understanding the risks (monitoring); 2) determining a risk score for each landfill to help prioritize the CLP's work; 3) determining the best remedy or response to address the risks (including land use planning); 4) measure the effectiveness of the responses taken.
- » A process was created for developing Land Use Plans and providing LGUs the information on landfill risks, including the development of maps showing groundwater and methane gas areas of concern at each landfill.
- » To date, Land Use Plans, as well as risk information, have been presented to LGUs for 90 landfills. In addition, these critical partnerships have been started to assist LGUs in adopting necessary land use controls to protect the public from these risks.
- » “If you can't take the risk away from the people, take the people away from the risk”. Incorporating land use planning as a tool to help manage the risk has resulted in the need for less remedial construction, thereby resulting in a financial savings to the CLP and the State.

