

**Monmouth County**  
**Office of the County Administrator**  
VisitMonmouth.com

Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Thomas A. Arnone, Director  
Susan M. Kiley, Deputy Director  
Lillian G. Burry  
Pat Impeveduto  
Nick DiRocco



Hall of Records  
One East Main Street  
Freehold, NJ 07728  
Phone: 732-431-7384  
Fax: 732-409-4820

Teri O'Connor, County Administrator  
Christopher R. Marion, Deputy County Administrator  
Geoffrey S. Perselay, Deputy County Administrator

October 15, 2020

Mr. Thomas Fallon, CPA, RMA  
Acting Borough Administrator  
Borough of Tinton Falls  
556 Tinton Avenue  
Tinton Falls, NJ 07724

Dear Mr. Fallon,

Attached herewith is the Monthly Report for the month of September, 2020, which will supplement the original Monthly Report which was submitted for the months of July and August, 2020.

I have maintained the original report structure so that the advancements and changes may be easily followed. The updates for September are written in **red ink**. My intention is to update the report every month in **red ink** and the previous month will then revert to black ink. I believe that this will make the progress at the MCRC easier to follow on a monthly basis. If you prefer a different layout, please so advise and we can discuss your thoughts.

I trust that you will find this report to be comprehensive and satisfactory. As we continue to communicate regarding the status of the projects and issues at the MCRC, should you require additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

  
Geoffrey S. Perselay  
Deputy County Administrator

# MONMOUTH COUNTY RECLAMATION CENTER MONTHLY REPORT COVERING SEPTEMBER, 2020

## CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

### 1. LEACHATE TREATMENT PLANT MODIFICATION

In November, 2018 the DEP issued an amended permit to the County of Monmouth which restricted the amount of leachate (liquid that is collected from the landfill) that can be processed on a daily basis, due to restrictions put in place on denitrification and the amount of gallons that can be processed, effective December 1, 2018. As a result, the County mothballed the plant in September, 2019 after finding that the denitrification and other restrictions made the continuation of the plant operation fiscally unfeasible. After a redesign to provide for additional supplementation of the plant, the County sought proposals for modifying the plant to achieve the new restrictions on the plant operation.

The County accepted three (3) proposals and selected Stone Hill Contracting as the vendor to provide value engineering services as well as construct the modifications. The contract is in the amount of \$2,884,000. There was a construction kick-off meeting on July 21, 2020 and the project is proceeding as planned. During the weeks of August 24, 2020 and August 31, 2020, over 180 piles were put in place as part of the foundation for the two (2) processing tanks that will be added to the plant. The project is anticipated to be completed by March 1, 2021.

#### **September, 2020**

During the past month, the foundations for the two (2) processing tanks were the focus of the major on-site work. The time consuming section of this work was the placement of reinforcing bars (rebar) on top of the piles that were put in place in August. In addition, the "starter ring" for the two tanks were delayed by about 2 weeks but will be delivered by the second week in October. The placement and installation of the starter rings is essential to the pouring of the concrete foundation for the two tanks which is scheduled for the third week in October. At this point in time, it is estimated that the project is 3 weeks ahead of schedule.

### 2. GSF/MONTAUK GAS PROCESSING PLANT DEMOLITION

The most significant contributor to the odor issues that the MCRC faced was the lack of collection of the landfill methane gas due to a faulty landfill gas collection system. This was solely the responsibility of Montauk/GSF Energy as the company that had the contract since 2006. The County refused to extend the contract with GSF Energy for an additional period of time and, in response, GSF surrendered their contract and left the site on September 27, 2019. As a result, they have an obligation to remove the gas processing plant and associated

systems and material within a year of the site being vacated. The demolition has commenced and will likely continue into late September or October. Hopefully, it will not continue later than that. While the County was concerned about noise, the demolition site is at the furthest point from any residential areas. We have not received any complaints about this project.

### **September, 2020**

The demolition project was completed by September 27, 2020 as was contractually required. All underground and above ground fixtures, systems and buildings have been removed and the site has been cleaned, top soiled and seeded; again as contractually required.

### **3. LANDFILL GAS COLLECTION SYSTEM**

In 2019, the County replaced the most significant portions of the failed gas collection system, which led to a virtual immediate cessation of the landfill odors that had been so prevalent in late 2018 and early 2019. By Memorial Day, 2019, about 98% of all of the odors were gone due to the drilling of 50 wells and connecting them, on a temporary basis to the existing vacuum system. That system was replaced, to a significant degree, by the new landfill gas header system, which was been completed in December 2019.

During the months of June and July, the County had an additional 38 wells drilled which are tied into the new header system. In less than a year, the County has drilled almost 90 wells that are used to provide gas collection; liquid collection, which is now dewatering the landfill; and a vacuum system which replaced the previous system. This has resulted in virtually no odors in the community and the leachate seeps, which had been experienced in the past, are now drying up, adding to the solution which has eliminated the odors. This project cost \$1.6 million.

### **September, 2020**

The Gas Collection System continues to perform as designed. As noted above, the system continues to collect the methane gas and feeds it to Flare D, thereby removing virtually all odors from the site. In addition, the liquid pumps in the wells continue to pump leachate into the five (5) frak tanks that have been placed around the landfill. The tanks are designed to collect the leachate from the landfill and are pumped out, when full, and hauled to the Rahway Valley Sewage Authority. So far over six (6) million gallons of raw leachate have been collected through the gas collection system and removed from the landfill.

### **FLARES D and C**

These two flares were used as backup gas processing facilities when the gas processing plant (which turned methane gas to electricity) was not functioning. Since September, 2019 when GSF abandoned the site, the processing plant has been shut down and all gas that is collected is currently being "flared" through Flare D. There have been times where Flare D has been taken off-line to make repairs and improve its operation.

Flare C is currently under reconstruction as it was left by GSF in a totally non-functional condition. This flare is located near the site of the former gas processing plant and will be refurbished within the next couple of months (waiting for parts to be shipped and received) and will act as a backup to Flare D when it is taken off-line for repairs or maintenance.

**September, 2020**

The reconstruction of Flare C has been finished. It is in the final stages of inspections and certification prior to being tested. It is expected that the Flare will be ready to be tested in late October.

**MAJOR ISSUES FACED DURING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER, 2020**

DEP NOTICES OF VIOLATION (NOVS): NONE

**September, 2020: None**

EMERGENCY RESPONSES/ISSUES THAT REQUIRED COMMUNICATION

FIRES: NONE

**September, 2020: None**

MAJOR LEACHATE LEAKS: NONE

**September, 2020: None**

ODOR COMPLAINTS RECEIVED: 1 (not verified)

**September, 2020: None**

ODORS COMPLAINTS (VERIFIED): NONE

**September, 2020: None**

CONCERNS: Notification to Town of Tinton Falls

**Flare D:** Notification was provided to the Town regarding work on the emergency generator for the Flare which could have resulted in odors escaping (8/18/20)

**Gas Processing Plant Demolition:** Notification to the Town that the plant was being demolished and there was the possibility of noise issues.

**Leachate Treatment Plant Modification:** Notification to the Town that the foundation piling was going to be started and that it could be noisy. We did have two complaints from the noise. However, rather than an anticipated 6 week project, we completed it within 6 days and ended on August 31, 2020.

**September, 2020: None**

**KEY PERSONNEL CHANGES:** None

**September, 2020: None**

**STATUS OF OPERATIONAL CHANGES:**

After the County received Qualification Statements from two (2) firms that were interested in submitting proposals to Operate and Maintain the Monmouth County Reclamation Center the County issued an Request for Proposals (RFP) to both of those companies. The proposals were due July 14th, which was later extended to July 28, 2020. The County received one proposal with the other company dropping out of the competition.

The proposal that was received has been under review and internal discussion for the past several weeks. At this point in time, no decision has been made as to whether there will be an operational change.

**September, 2020:**

The County has met with the firm that has submitted the proposal and requested a further breakout of the financial terms proposed. This will include a further description of the costs anticipated in operating and maintaining the landfill operation. It is expected that the County will receive this information by the beginning of October at which point it will be reviewed and another meeting will be scheduled.

**FORWARD LOOKING EVENTS:** The main events that will occur in future months this year and into 2021 are the following:

1. Continuation of the repairs of Flares C and D in order to maintain redundancy for flaring the methane gas from the landfill until a Gas Processing Plant can be built (target date for all flare work to be complete December 31, 2020);
2. Continuation and completion of the Leachate Treatment Plant Modification (target completion in February 2021).
3. Completion of the demolition of the gas processing plant utilized by GSF/Montauk (Target October 1, 2020)

**September, 2020: Completed**

4. Phase 4 continues to be under review by NJDEP. It is expected that DEP will be finalizing this stage of their review in the coming months and will issue a Technical Notice of Deficiency (TNOD) for any issues that they note need to be reviewed and addressed. Once received, the County will respond as rapidly as possible depending on the significance of the issues raised by DEP.

#### **September, 2020:**

On September 10, 2020, the County received a Technical Notice of Deficiency (TNOD) from the NJ DEP in response to the report that the County filed on August 16, 2019 entitled "Amendments to the Solid Waste Facility Permit Renewal and Phase IV Expansion Major Modification." This report was filed with DEP in response to an earlier TNOD issued by DEP dated May 8, 2018. Essentially, the TNOD declares that the application is technically incomplete and provides the issues for which they are seeking further information. The County has 30 days from the date of the TNOD to provide a response to the issues raised.

The TNOD contained several very technical questions on calculations and questions on some relatively minor inconsistencies in submitted documents. Interestingly and importantly, the TNOD also contained the comments from the Borough of Tinton Falls raising questions regarding some issues with the landfill as well as concerns over the "lack of communication" between the County and the Borough. As discussed with the Borough Officials, it is this concern that is being addressed on an on-going basis, through these monthly reports.

As noted last month, the County has emphasized and embraced communication with the Borough and its citizens. The Freeholder Director sent, to anyone who expressed an interest, weekly updates as to projects and accomplishments taking place at the MCRC for over a year. It was during this period that it was vitally important to keep the public advised as to the steps that were being taken at the MCRC to mitigate and solve the issues that had been identified.

It was only when the pandemic became the priority and demanded that all essential personnel focus on safety and public health, due to the spread of COVID-19, that the weekly updates ceased to be issued. However, the MCRC continued to work on the issues identified and solved those problems over the last several months.

The County is proud of the accomplishments that have been made over the last 18 months and is pleased to resume the updates on a monthly basis in order to continue to keep communication lines open and keep the Borough Officials and their constituents up to date, regarding the events occurring at the MCRC.

**BOND ORDINANCES:** On April 21, 2020 the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders passed a Bond Ordinance providing \$8 million in capital funds for the following authorized projects: various improvements at the Reclamation Center including but not limited to a) rebuilding Flare C; b) leachate seep improvements on the West Slope of Phase 3; (c) installation of wells; (d) improvements to the leachate plant; (e) installation of high density caps; (f) acquisition of equipment; and (g) the replacement of scales and removal of underground storage tanks.

As is evident from the previous description of activities at the MCRC, this Bond Ordinance has provided funding for these major projects.

**OTHER ISSUES:** The County is pleased that it has been able to stop the odors that were emanating from the landfill in late 2018 until May of 2019. The initial cause of the odors was thought to be a combination of factors which included leachate seeps, the slope repair (which opened up almost 11 acres of the landfill in order to reshape the slope), excessive rainfall and uncollected landfill gas. The County drilled 50 wells between March 4, 2019 and May 17, 2019 and connected them to the vacuum system that was in place from the collection system operated by GSF/Montauk Energy. Within days, of the completion of this work, the odors disappeared. The drilling of the wells and connection to the vacuum reinforced the engineering opinion that there were excessive amounts of uncollected gas in the Phase 3 landfill.

After that connection was established, the number of odor complaints dropped significantly to the point that as of January, 2020, the complaints dropped to less than one per week. For the past eight months there have been virtually no complaints regarding odors or anything related to the MCRC.

There are other sources of odors within the borders of the Borough of Tinton Falls. One of those is the Benoit Solid Waste Landfill/Recycling facility, 615 Green Grove Road. That facility has recently received a letter from DEP in response to their application to renew their Class B Recycling Center General Approval. This caused a site visit from DEP and they found that the landfill closure and post closure plan had not been approved in 1989 when submitted. Therefore, the closure and post closure steps taken in compliance with that plan were not effective and resulted in several issues that concern DEP, including excessive emissions of methane gas from leaking well caps. This facility is located in the Wayside section of Tinton Falls, which has been the source of many complaints (Please see attached).

The County has been very effective in the remediation activities that it has taken over the last eighteen (18) months. The MCRC has managed: the installation of an entirely new Landfill Gas Collection System; the improvement in the process and effectiveness of applying daily cover as required; the grading of areas of the landfill designed to shed rainfall rather than allow it to sit and penetrate the landfill and overhauled Flare D to insure that it is operating properly while totally rebuilding Flare C for a backup.

The County is meeting all of the commitments that it made to the public, to DEP and to the Borough of Tinton Falls and the surrounding communities. It is the County's intention to continue to improve the operation of the landfill and return to the status as a good neighbor in Tinton Falls.

**September, 2020: No additional comments**