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Long-Term Management of Municipal Solid Waste Landfills: Solid Waste Association of North America Issues New Technical Policy

Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

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The Solid Waste Association of North America ("SWANA") issued a technical policy titled:

Technical Policy 9.4. – The Long-Term Management of Municipal Solid Waste Landfills ("Policy")

The *Policy* provides that at the end of a landfill's regulatory post-closure care period owners/operators should:

- plan for the need to inspect and maintain the landfill's final cover systems, and
- implement other environmental control systems to ensure ongoing protection of human health and the environment.

Closure is a process during which a landfill (or a portion thereof) is no longer receiving waste and is preparing for post-closure maintenance according to an approved plan/construction schedule. Once a site is closed, it ceases accepting waste. The closure will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable statutes and regulations.

Closure and post-closure plans are intended to ensure that landfill closure and post-closure maintenance conform to state performance standards and minimum substantive requirements. They may constitute a prerequisite to a facility's obtaining an operating permit.

SWANA notes that federal Subtitle D landfill regulations have been in place since 1991. It also states that "few regulatory agencies have established guidance or funding requirements for long-term management of landfills after the completion of post-closure care periods."

The new SWANA *Policy* also provides that there should be a process to end long-term management obligations when site-specific monitoring data shows organic or functional stability with the final cover system in place. It recommends requirements be determined for each site on a case-by-case basis by a group consisting of:

- regulatory agency,
- landfill owner/operator, and/or
- host community.

A copy of the *Policy* can be downloaded here.