



February 6, 2007

Contacts:

Dennis Schain, DEP, (860) 424-3110

Sarah Barr, Hartford, (860) 522-4888, ext. 6217

Paul Nonnenmacher, CRRA, (860) 757-7771

## **Plans Announced to Close Hartford Landfill by End of 2008 City, DEP and CRRA in Accord on Approach**

*CRRA to fund diesel reduction and increased recycling in city*

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the city of Hartford and the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA) today announced major steps forward on plans to close the Hartford landfill in a manner that protects natural resources and the public health, benefits city residents and allows CRRA to meet its responsibilities for efficient processing of solid waste.

The progress on plans to close the Hartford landfill includes:

- **City/CRRA Host Community Agreement**
  - Signing of a landmark agreement between the city and CRRA that commits CRRA to significant retrofitting of diesel equipment to improve air quality in the city; provides for CRRA funding of programs to increase recycling in Hartford; and creates a citizen's advisory group to participate in decisions on future uses of the site. The agreement also calls for additional benefits for the city if state assistance is provided to cover a portion of the costs of closing and long-term monitoring of the landfill.
- **City/CRRA Settlement Agreement**
  - In a tandem agreement, CRRA and the city agreed to partner to seek state assistance for the closure and long-term maintenance and monitoring of the landfill. The state will be asked to provide \$15 million toward these costs, while CRRA is committed to providing \$20 million.
- **DEP Permit Modification**
  - Tentative approval by DEP of a modification of CRRA's permit for the landfill that includes provisions calling for an end to waste disposal at that facility by

Dec. 31, 2008; installation of the latest technology synthetic cap as the final cover; and development of plans for post-closure use of the site.

Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez said, “We’re happy that the agreement closes the landfill early while at the same time CRRA lives up to its obligation to close, monitor, and maintain the landfill site for the next 30 years. I’m also pleased that the agreement requires CRRA to commit additional funds to increase recycling efforts in Hartford and to reduce diesel emissions at the landfill and its other work sites.”

DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy said, “The actions we are announcing today resolve many long-standing issues and start us down a positive path toward the closing of the Hartford landfill. The lynchpin to this progress is the far-sighted and comprehensive agreement between the city and CRRA. Under this agreement, CRRA will fund strong steps to reduce diesel emissions and increase recycling in the city. These are important and appropriate benefits for residents of the city that has provided a home for a landfill facility that serves people across the state.”

CRRA President Thomas D. Kirk said, “Closing the Hartford landfill is a step in our plans to reduce the number of waste disposal facilities in the city of Hartford. After we open our new state-of-the-art recycling center and close the landfill, CRRA will have gone from five to two facilities here. The questions of how to close the landfill and who would pay for post-closure maintenance had been open for a number of years, and we were delighted that we and the city could work together to find a way to resolve these questions to everyone’s satisfaction.”

Dr. Mark Mitchell, President of the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice, said, “This is a turning point for environmental justice in Connecticut. DEP, under the leadership of Commissioner McCarthy, is to be commended for taking this precedent setting action to require negotiated community benefits that will reduce pollution and increase environmental benefits in low-income communities and communities of color that bear the onus of environmental hazards for the state and enjoy fewer benefits.”

“We are especially thrilled with the agreement to reduce diesel emissions from garbage trucks and CRRA equipment, as well as the demonstration project to increase recycling in large apartment buildings, where it is especially difficult to overcome the structural barriers to recycling,” Dr. Mitchell said. “We are pleased to have worked with DEP, the City of Hartford, CRRA, Hartford 2000 and other community groups to reach this historic agreement.”

- more -

## **Background Information on Hartford Landfill Actions**

### **Host Community Agreement**

The Host Community Agreement signed by the city and CRRA commits CRRA to:

- Spend up to \$150,000 to retrofit approximately 17 pieces of diesel powered off-road equipment with devices that substantially reduce diesel emissions
  - This equipment includes loaders, bulldozers and specialized trucks used at the landfill, the Mid-Connecticut Project Trash-to-Energy Facility and recycling processing centers. The retrofits will reduce pollution at these work sites. This step will also reduce the presence of particulate matter in areas adjacent to or downwind from these sites.
- Reimburse the city of Hartford for the cost of retrofitting diesel-powered trucks used to pick up trash or recyclables in city neighborhoods
  - Up to 27 trucks will be retrofitted within 24 months with equipment to reduce diesel emissions
  - If some trucks can not be provided with retrofits, CRRA will provide the city with up to \$200,000 to retrofit other equipment or take other steps to reduce air emissions
- Increase by \$50,000 per year CRRA's contributions to a city recycling account.
  - CRRA will now contribute \$150,000 each year to this account through 2013
  - CRRA will provide assistance to the city for using the Recycling account's current balance of \$425,000 to promote and increase recycling efforts in the city.
  - Some of the funds and future funds may be used to establish recycling centers around the city
- Cooperate with an Advisory Committee on the Landfill to finalize post-closure plans for that site
  - CRRA and the city will work with a citizen's committee to consider uses that could include: handicapped accessible for hiking and biking; a skate boarding park; basketball courts; fenced-in dog park; bird observation station; and a nature/research center.

The agreement also requires CRRA to provide additional benefits to the city if the state provides \$15 million to assist with the closure and post-closure care and monitoring of the landfill.

If this state assistance is approved, CRRA will:

- Provide the city with an additional \$50,000 for recycling education programs
- Fund a \$250,000 pilot program to encourage recycling at multi-family dwellings

- Provide an addition \$1 million to the city for programs connected with the reuse of the landfill or for additional recycling efforts

### **DEP Permit Action**

The DEP has completed the first key step in approving modifications to the operating permit for the Hartford Landfill. Key provisions of the proposed modifications include:

- Requiring installation of a state-of-the-art synthetic membrane as the final cover
  - This membrane – along with numerous engineering controls – will “cap” the landfill area in a way that prevents rain and snow from penetrating the surface. This will ensure that pollution from the landfill does not leach out and contaminate groundwater and nearby bodies of water.
- A final grading plan that increases the grade on a portion of the eastern slope of the 80-acre main landform from a 4:1 slope to a 3:1 slope
  - This revision is consistent with state regulations and engineering requirements for closing of the landfill. The increased slope does not increase the height or base area of the landfill. It allows for additional disposal capacity of approximately 335,000 cubic yards, which helps to meet the solid waste disposal needs of communities served by CRRA.
- A specific date of Dec. 31, 2008 for the final delivery of waste to the landfill
- Development of conceptual site plans and options for the post-closure use of the closed facility

### **Details on Permit Modification Process**

DEP will accept public comment on its proposed landfill permit modifications for a 30-day. All public comments will be considered in creating the final permit modifications, which must be approved by the Commissioner of DEP.

Copies of the proposed permit modification are available from CRRA or can be viewed at DEP headquarters, 79 Elm St., Hartford. Comments can be directed to Robert Isner, Director, Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division, Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance, DEP, 79 Elm St., Hartford, 06106.

### **Background on Landfill**

The Hartford Landfill is located on 100 acres north of the city near Interstate I-91 on Leibert Road. The landfill was opened by the city in 1940 and CRRA leased the landfill from the city in 1982. Since 1988 CRRA has used 80 acres of this site to dispose of materials that cannot be processed in CRRA’s Mid-Connecticut Project Trash-to-Energy Facility. CRRA also disposes of ash residue generated at that plant on the adjacent 16

acres. These facilities serve 70 cities and towns. To learn more about the Hartford landfill, visit [http://www.crra.org/pages/facts\\_hartford\\_landfill.htm](http://www.crra.org/pages/facts_hartford_landfill.htm) .

### **Background on CRRA**

The Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority is a quasi-public agency whose mission is to work for – and in – the best interests of the municipalities of the state of Connecticut. CRRA’s new board of directors and new management team develop and implement environmentally sound solutions and best practices for solid waste disposal and recycling management on behalf of municipalities.

CRRA’s four solid waste projects serve 118 Connecticut cities and towns. CRRA also runs environmental and recycling educational programs through its Visitors Center and Trash Museum in Hartford and Children’s Garbage Museum in Stratford.

For more information about CRRA and its activities, visit <http://www.crra.org>