

# Clean up the Freeway Landfill and Dump

Extend availability of the 2017 appropriation through FY2021



## What's the issue?

The 150-acre Freeway Sanitary Landfill in Burnsville accepted municipal waste from 1969 to 1990. The 28-acre Freeway Dump is located just across I-35W and slightly south of the landfill. The dump received waste from 1966 through 1971 and was added to the overall Freeway cleanup project by the 2017 Legislature. Both the landfill and dump sit atop groundwater that serves as a drinking water source for Burnsville and Savage residents.

The landfill and the dump are in an area that was originally a wetland. At some point, groundwater will reach and saturate the buried garbage. This has not yet become a problem because the Kraemer Quarry, located

south of the landfill, pumps water out of the quarry. Some is treated and used for drinking water by Burnsville and Savage residents. The quarry's pumping has kept groundwater levels beneath the landfill and dump artificially low.

However, when the quarry stops operating and this pumping ends, groundwater will rise and become contaminated with chemicals and other substances in the Freeway Landfill and Dump. At some point, the contaminated groundwater will begin flowing toward and into the Minnesota River. Some of it will also flow into the lake that will form when Kraemer Quarry stops pumping and the quarry fills with water.

In addition, the city of Burnsville's municipal well field lies about a half mile south of the old dump. When pumping at the Kraemer Quarry ends, there is a concern that this well field will also become contaminated with chemicals from the dump.

Cleaning up the site will involve digging out the approximately 5 million cubic yards of garbage at the Freeway Landfill, one portion at a time, lining the exposed area, and then replacing garbage on the newly lined area. To clean up the dump's approximately 1 million cubic yards of waste, it will be moved to the landfill site to consolidate all the waste within one liner system. The landfill will also be covered. Lining the landfill will protect rising groundwater and river floodwaters from the waste. Covering the landfill will address methane and other gases generated by the decomposing garbage.

## Proposal

The 2017 Legislature appropriated \$3 million in Closed Landfill Investment Funds to begin cleanup investigations and planning. Those funds were available through FY2019. The MPCA has spent part of the funds, but is requesting an extension through FY2021 to continue its cleanup efforts. The current estimate for the Freeway Landfill and Dump cleanup is more than \$100 million. A proposal for the next phase of design and cleanup activities will be brought to the Legislature in subsequent bonding cycles.

## Why is it important?

Burnsville and Savage residents currently get their drinking water from groundwater in this area. The landfill and dump are next to the Minnesota River just prior to its confluence with the Mississippi River. Because groundwater naturally flows from these sites toward the river, if left unchanged, the site poses a future risk to public health and the environment in both surrounding and downstream communities.

## For more information

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