

Quarantine Road landfill pond cleared to open again; Facility was closed last year after charges of contamination: [FINAL Edition]

Robert Guy Matthews . Robert Guy Matthews.

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ABSTRACT (ABSTRACT)

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According to Mr. Balog, the city originally budgeted \$62,385 for routine maintenance and repairs to the landfill pond, near Hawkins Point on the southern edge of the city. But since August, when Mr. Strong was ordered to fill the pond, city officials have spent an additional \$41,900 to fix holes, cracks and other defects.

For 30 days, inspectors are allowing only incremental filling of the pond, up to a total of 26 feet, which is a few feet shy of capacity, because the city has to fix a leaking outfall pipe that leads into the landfill. "At the end of the 30-day period, the liquid will be pumped out and we will inspect it again," Mr. [Edward M. Dexter] said.

FULL TEXT

Seven months behind schedule, 67 percent over budget and still not in perfect condition, state inspectors yesterday allowed the Quarantine Road Sanitary Landfill pond was cleared yesterday by state inspectors to return to operation on a conditional basis.

The pond has been the center of controversy since a public works department chief, alleging that using the pond would contaminate ground water, defied orders last summer and closed it.

Kenneth J. Strong, then head of the Bureau of Solid Waste, sparked a state inquiry after charging that shoddy repair work done during scheduled maintenance to the pond could endanger the environment.

George G. Balog, director of the city's Department of Public Works, countercharged that Mr. Strong was responsible for damaging the one who caused damage to the pond by not filling it when he should have. Mr. Balog said that repair work done by contractor L. F. Mahoney should never have been in question.

The dispute capped what had been a stormy relationship between the two men, and Mr. Strong was eventually ousted Nov. 10.

"I'm not upset about Ken Strong," said Mr. Balog yesterday. "I'm upset that the citizens had to pay \$40,000 more" than was necessary. they had to.

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near Hawkins Point on the southern edge of the city. But since August, when Mr. Strong was ordered to fill the pond, city officials have spent an additional \$41,900 to fix holes, cracks and other defects.

Mr. Balog said the additional repairs were the result of leaving the pond's exposure to harsh winter weather. Mr. Strong, who would not agree to be interviewed for this story, has charged that most of the defects existed since the summer.

Since then, public works officials have scrambled to repair holes and cracks to the pond -- using the same contractor, L. F.

Mahoney, to do the work.

State inspectors from the Maryland Department of the Environment have allowed city officials to fill only the pond floor with the landfill's contaminated liquid run-off, or leachate.

Edward M. Dexter, chief of the Field Operations and Compliance Division of the state environment department, said inspectors now are checking to determine whether the leachate will leak. He also said that state inspectors will conduct daily inspections.

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For months, state environment inspectors refused to allow the city to put the pond back in operation. Inspectors found that rainwater and leachate had penetrated through the first clay liner built to protect ground water.

Pub Date: 3/06/96

DETAILS

People: Strong, Kenneth J; Balog, George G; Mahoney, L F

Publication title: The Sun; Baltimore, Md.

Pages: 2B

Number of pages: 0

Publication year: 1996

Publication date: Mar 06, 1996

Section: METRO

Publisher: Tribune Publishing Company, LLC

Place of publication:	Baltimore, Md.
Country of publication:	United States
Publication subject:	General Interest Periodicals--United States
ISSN:	19308965
Source type:	Newspaper
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	NEWSPAPER
ProQuest document ID:	406912962
Document URL:	https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/quarantine-road-landfill-pond-cleared-open-again/docview/406912962/se-2?accountid=10750
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Last updated:	2017-11-10
Database:	U.S. Newsstream Collection

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