

Hawkins Point waste dump work begins

By Michael K. Burns

Construction began this week on the Hawkins Point hazardous waste disposal facility, but it may not be in full operation until at least the end of January, a month after the only other such facility in Maryland is supposed to close under court order.

The delay, which could be even longer in the event of harsh weather, "should not be a major problem" for Maryland waste generators, according to John Griffin, the governor's environmental advisor.

Producers of hazardous refuse, who have been notified of the delay, were able to store it or ship it out of state during a three-month shutdown of the Solley road facility in Anne Arundel county in a legal dispute last summer, he noted.

The state Board of Public Works yesterday authorized another \$1.8 million for the project, which is expected to cost almost \$17 million and to hold about 10 years of Maryland's hazardous waste. Costs of the landfill, operated by the Maryland Environmental Service, are expected to be recovered from user fees.

The budget includes \$1.8 million for cleaning up the old landfill operated on the Maryland Port Administration site, plus \$900,000 for removing a large deposit of paint sludge uncovered during engineering work on the 50-acre site. The state hopes to find the dumper of that sludge and recover cleanup costs, Mr. Griffin added.

The first cell for general hazardous waste should last about 1½ years. The first cell for Allied Chemical's chromium ore waste should be completed by the end of this month, Mr. Griffin said, and is planned to hold about 2½ years of that waste.

Construction of subsequent cells could be held up because new regulations for federal permits are being readied by the Environmental Protection Agency and the break-in process may take longer than the capacity lifetime of the first cell, Mr. Griffin said.

A state task force on hazardous waste is being formed by the governor's office, Mr. Griffin said. Among its tasks will be administering a fund to aid communities affected by hazardous waste facilities and promoting research in the field. Both will be financed by a proposed tax on hazardous waste generators in the state.