

Bill Lippincott
Don't Waste ME
LD 2115

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

My name is Bill Lippincott: I'm a member of Don't Waste ME.

I live in Hampden, location of the still leaking Pine Tree Landfill (PTL). Despite closure in 2010 and 15+ years of remediation, groundwater contamination is still increasing in some sectors of the landfill. In a recent test of PTL leachate, results for PFAS were from 1,800 ng/L to 2,700 ng/L. The state drinking water standard is 20 ng/L.

I'm writing in support of LD 2115. "An Act to Protect Private Wells from Hazardous Substances"

In the last legislative session, Don't Waste ME supported a bill, LD 1604. An Act to Protect Groundwater and Surface Waters from Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances from Landfill Leachate. The bill would have required landfill owners to pay for the testing of residential wells adjacent or within a mile of a landfill for PFAS.

The bill passed out of the ENR with strong support. However, that bill was altered later in the legislative session, unknown to most legislators and members of the public and passed on one of the last days of the legislature without discussion or debate.

The word or was changed to and

to render it useful in Hampden to only a very few residents whose land was directly adjacent to the Pine Tree Landfill (PTL). Of 48 residents who had dug or drilled wells in proximity to the landfill in Hampden who applied for testing, only two that were actually directly adjacent to the landfill qualified. We know that contaminated leachate does not stop at the boundaries of landfills and we know that contamination at PTL, despite closure of the landfill in 2010 and after over 15 years of remediation, has continued to increase in some sectors of the landfill.

While some neighborhoods in Hampden in proximity to the landfill have town water, the residents on Emerson Mill Road and Paper Mill Road, right next to the landfill, do not. They rely on dug or drilled wells. We owe it to them, and to residents who live near the Juniper Ridge Landfill, and the Crossroads Landfill in Norridgewock, to find out if the water they've been drinking for all these years has been contaminated by PFAS.

I realize there is a cost involved in testing for PFAS, and DEP and the state have concerns about that cost. For landfills, and I believe for other solid waste facilities, there is a remedy. For at least those facilities, language could be inserted that would state, as it did in LD 1604, that the cost of testing for PFAS within a 1 mile vicinity of a landfill or solid waste facility shall be borne by the owner or operator.*

When Casella Waste Systems received a license to expand the Pine Tree Landfill and to develop Juniper Ridge, it assumed liability should contamination spread beyond the boundaries of those landfills. (I assume, but do not know if the same liability applies to the Crossroads Landfill and its owner, Waste Management). So if after testing, it is determined that some private wells have high levels of PFAS contamination, it should be fairly easy to establish chemical markers specific to landfill leachate, which would establish that the owner/operator* of that landfill was liable to pay for remediation, the installation and maintenance of filter treatment systems, etc.

in the case of the Juniper Ridge Landfill, JRL, the state is the owner; Casella Waste Systems is the operator. When Casella received a permit to expand JRL, Casella assumed liability should contamination spread beyond the landfill. Casella is the owner of PTL; Waste Management is the owner of the Crossroads Landfill.

I urge members of the committee to vote ought to pass for LD 2115

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