
FW: Rep. Carpenter re: Nikiski soil remediation facility

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Subject: Rep. Carpenter re: Nikiski soil remediation facility

Good afternoon -

DEC program staff and Legislative Liaison Laura Achee met with Representative Ben Carpenter this morning to discuss a new soil thermal remediation facility in his district. While the location for the facility is not zoned as a residential area, there are residences within a mile of the site, so there have been constituent concerns. Rep. Carpenter's house is one of the nearby residences. There is a great deal of local concern that this facility will cause hazardous contamination to the air and ground water, in part due to past drinking water contamination in the area.

Jim Plosay and Jason Olds from the Air Quality Division and Stephanie Buss and Lisa Krebs-Barsis from the Contaminated Sites program provided information on the permitting/plan approval process and the safeguards that will be put in place to protect public health and the environment. The draft air emissions permit is out for public comment, and the approval of the operations plan is still in process. Staff discussed the expected plant operations and emissions, as well as future compliance oversight and inspections. They put the operations in context of similar plants and emissions from other facilities in the district.

Staff explained that the facility is prohibited from remediating hazardous waste or PFAS contaminated soil. Contaminated materials are tested for hazardous substances prior to DEC's approval for remediation at the facility, and SPAR project managers will not grant approval to transport to the facility any hazardous waste or prohibited contaminants. An engineered containment will prevent secondary contamination from contaminated waste and runoff from the operation. A baseline soil investigation of the property will occur before operations begin and another assessment of the property will occur when the facility closes.

Rep. Carpenter shared community concerns that STT could remediate hazardous materials outside of DEC's knowledge, and asked how DEC would know. Staff explained that we can't completely prevent illicit activity, but that the operators have a history with DEC of legal operations, and that if DEC discovered illegal activities we would be able to take action, including shutting down the facility.

Lisa Krebs-Barsis noted Rep. Carpenter's discussions with STT regarding a physical barrier for the materials being remediated, and she will note that in the approved plan documents. Staff confirmed for the Representative that self-reporting, scheduled inspections, and the ability to conduct unscheduled inspections are all in the permit documents or will be included as a condition of approval.

Lisa Krebs-Barsis noted the advantage this facility provides to the community, allowing for lower cost and more immediate remediation of local contaminated soil. The latter helps contain and prevent additional contamination following discovery.

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