



State of New Jersey

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CERTIFICATION OF THE DECEMBER 5, 2013 AMENDMENT TO THE UNION COUNTY DISTRICT SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONER:

A. Introduction

The New Jersey Solid Waste Management Act (N.J.S.A. 13:1E-1 et seq.) established a comprehensive system for the management of solid waste in New Jersey. The Act designated all twenty-one (21) of the state's counties, and the Hackensack Meadowlands District, as Solid Waste Management Districts, and mandated that the Boards of Chosen Freeholders and the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission (now known as the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission or NJMC) develop comprehensive plans for waste management in their respective districts. On August 13, 1980, the Department of Environmental Protection (Department or DEP) approved the Union County District Solid Waste Management Plan (County Plan).

The Act further provides that a district may review its district plan at any time and, if found inadequate, a new district plan must be adopted. The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders (County Freeholders) completed such a review and on December 5, 2013 adopted an amendment to its approved County Plan.

The December 5, 2013 amendment proposes County Plan inclusion of:

- The Solid Waste Disposal Agreement by and between the Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA) and the NJMC for the disposal of non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (excluding automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County;

- The NJMC Keegan Landfill, located in the Town of Kearny, as the facility to which all non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (excluding automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County are directed for disposal; and,
- The direction of all non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (excluding automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County to the NJMC Keegan Landfill for disposal pursuant to regulatory solid waste flow control.

The amendment was considered administratively complete for review by the Department on January 7, 2014 and copies were distributed to various administrative review agencies for review and comment, as required by law. The Department has reviewed this amendment and has determined that the amendment adopted by the County Freeholders on December 5, 2013 is approved as provided in N.J.S.A. 13:1E-24.

B. Findings and Conclusions with Respect to the Union County District Solid Waste Management Plan Amendment

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1E-24a(1), I have studied and reviewed the December 5, 2013 amendment to the County Plan according to the objectives, criteria, and standards developed in the Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan and I find and conclude that the amendment is consistent with the Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan. In this regard, the County Freeholders are notified of the elements of the December 5, 2013 amendment which are included below.

Elements of the December 5, 2013 Amendment

Element: Prior Direction of Non-Recycled, Solid Waste Types 13, 13C, 23, & 27 Generated Within Union County to the TLA-Newark, LLC Transfer Station/Material Recovery Facility (TS/MRF) for Disposal

On September 25, 2006, the UCUA issued bid specifications calling for receipt of bids on October 20, 2006 for the provision of disposal services for solid waste types 13, 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County. The request for bids was advertised locally in The Home News & Tribune, throughout New Jersey utilizing The Star Ledger, regionally in The Philadelphia Enquirer, and nationally in Waste News. Therefore, this procurement process was open to all bidders, regardless of geographical location. The UCUA received six bids. The County determined that Delaware and Hudson Railway Company, Inc. (DHRC) d/b/a Canadian Pacific Railway was the lowest complying and responsible bidder and on February 15, 2007 adopted an amendment to the County Plan to include in the County Plan, amongst other things, the direction of all non-recycled solid waste types 13, 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County to the CP Transload Facility in the City of Newark, Essex County, for a period of 5 years.

On May 25, 2007, New Jersey Superior Court Judge Honorable Marianne Espinosa ruled in *Waste Management of New Jersey v. Union County Utilities Authority*, Docket No. UNN-L-4449-06, that the UCUA was permanently enjoined from implementing the subject contract with DHRC. Among the reasons for the Court's decision was the Court's finding that the subject facility was not a rail facility subject to preemption under the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act, 49 U.S.C. 10101 *et seq.*, and therefore, the facility failed to meet the bid specifications because it lacked the requisite permits and approvals. DHRC appealed this final order.

The February 15, 2007 amendment to the County Plan was, as a result, certified as remanded, without prejudice, back to the County pending the outcome of the litigation.

On appeal, the Appellate Division vacated the court's permanent injunction that barred the UCUA from awarding the waste disposal contract to DHRC. *Waste Mgmt. of New Jersey, Inc. v. Union County Utils. Auth.*, 399 N.J. Super. 508 (App. Div. 2008). The Court's action was based on its determination that the record did not support a preliminary injunction. *Id.* at 519, 521. In so finding, the Court did not address the issue of "whether or to what extent federal preemption precludes state regulation of DHRC's activities." *Id.* at 528. The Court remanded for consideration of whether to impose an interlocutory injunction, finding that "plaintiff failed to demonstrate a reasonable probability of success but that the circumstances as presently understood do not necessarily militate against the entry of an interlocutory injunction." *Id.* at 538-39. The Court did not foreclose the trial court from deferring to DEP under the principles of primary jurisdiction, and specifically noted that the trial court might determine that an injunction is not required because DEP would ultimately review DHRC's need for a permit and any final agency action would be subject to review.

On remand, after a conference call with the parties and by Order dated April 30, 2008, Superior Court Judge William Wertheimer stayed the proceedings pending DEP's statutory review of the County Plan amendment. DEP was accorded the full statutory period from the time of UCUA's resubmission of the County Plan amendment. DEP was further ordered to advise all parties upon completion of the agency's review and on September 18, 2008 certified the resubmitted County Plan amendment as approved.

On June 19, 2012, the Vice President of TLA-Newark, LLC, Marlene P. Wheaton, faxed a letter to the Department stating that the Company "ceased receiving solid waste at the facility effective Friday, June 15, 2012... [d]ue to the lack of critical resources necessary for the safe and efficient handling, management and disposal of solid waste commodities." The letter went on to state that the Company is unable to predict or ascertain whether they will be reopening the subject facility any time in the future.

As a result of the closure of the TLA-Newark, LLC TS/MRF and the corresponding loss of regulatory flow control over the non-recycled, solid waste types 13, 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County, the UCUA on June 21, 2012 entered in to a shared services agreement with the NJMC for disposal services for the above noted non-recycled solid waste types for a maximum term of twelve months. The tipping fee over the term of the Agreement was to be \$52 per ton of solid waste. Through this agreement, the NJMC was to also “collect on behalf of, and remit to, the UCUA the amount of \$29.12 as and for its administrative rate component” which includes costs associated with the UCUA’s current solid waste debt.

Element: The Solid Waste Disposal Agreement By and Between the UCUA and NJMC For Non-Recycled, Solid Waste Types 13 (excluding automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, & 27 Generated Within Union County

The subject Solid Waste Disposal Agreement by and between the UCUA and NJMC was executed on September 19, 2013 and provides for a maximum term of three years of disposal services for non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (excluding automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County. The tipping fee over the term of the Agreement will be \$55 per ton of solid waste from its commencement date to and including December 31, 2013; \$57 per ton of solid waste from January 1, 2014 through and including December 31, 2014; \$59 per ton of solid waste from January 1, 2015 through and including December 31, 2015; and \$60 per ton from January 1, 2016 through and including the Agreement’s expiration date of June 30, 2016. Pursuant to the Agreement, the NJMC will also “charge and collect from haulers [of the subject solid wastes] a rate component fee of \$29.12 per ton... for payment of the [UCUA’s] administrative and debt charges.”

Element: Management of Scrap Automobiles, Trucks, Trailers, Large Vehicle Parts, Drums, and Appliances Generated Within Union County

As these materials are not included in the subject Agreement, they may be disposed of at any solid waste facility permitted to receive them; however, the County should strongly encourage the recycling of these materials to solid waste generators within the County.

Element: Facility History and Operations

On May 27, 1992, the Commissioners of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission adopted an amendment to their District Solid Waste Management Plan (NJMC District Plan) to include a proposed landfill for non-processible solid waste to be located at the former Keegan Landfill on Block 205, Lots 18, 19, 24, 27, and 28-33 in the Town of Kearny, Hudson County. This amendment to the District Plan was certified as approved by the Department on December 2, 1992.

On November 28, 2006, the Commissioners of the NJMC adopted an amendment to the NJMC District Plan which proposed reaffirmation of NJMC District Plan inclusion of, amongst other things, the Keegan Landfill, located on Block 205, Lots 18, 19.02, 24, and 27-33 off of Bergen Avenue in the Town of Kearny to accept up to 3,000 tons per day of solid waste types 13, 13C, 23, and 27. The November 28, 2006 District Plan amendment proposed District Plan inclusion of the facility's operating hours as 6:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday and 6:00 am – 1:00 pm, Saturday. The November 28, 2006 District Plan amendment also noted that the height of the Keegan Landfill will be limited to 60 feet above mean sea level. This amendment to the District Plan was certified as approved by the Department on April 10, 2007.

On October 6, 2008, the Department approved a request for administrative action to the NJMC District Plan dated October 1, 2008. This request for administrative action to the District Plan proposed to amend the District Plan to reflect a change in the operating schedule for the Keegan Landfill from 6:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday and 6:00 am – 1:00 pm, Saturday to 6:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday and 6:00 am – 1:30 pm, Saturday.

During the Department's review of the December 5, 2013 amendment to the County Plan, the Bureau of Landfill and Hazardous Waste Permitting noted that the DEP-issued Solid Waste Facility Permit for the Keegan Landfill is set to expire concurrently with the expiration of the NJMC's lease with the Town of Kearny for use of the subject site on June 20, 2016. This is important to note since the subject Solid Waste Disposal Agreement is set to expire on June 30, 2016.

C. Certification of the Union County District Solid Waste Management Plan Amendment

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 13:1E-1 et seq., specifically N.J.S.A. 13:1E-21, which establishes specific requirements regarding the contents of the district solid waste management plans, I have reviewed the December 5, 2013 amendment to the approved County Plan and certify to the County Freeholders that the December 5, 2013 amendment is approved as further specified below.

The County Plan inclusion of:

- The Solid Waste Disposal Agreement by and between the UCUA and the NJMC for the disposal of non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (except automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County;
- The NJMC Keegan Landfill, located in the Town of Kearny, as the facility to which all non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (except automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County are directed for disposal; and,

- The direction of all non-recycled, solid waste types 13 (except automobiles, trucks, trailers, large vehicle parts, drums, and appliances), 13C, 23, and 27 generated within Union County to the NJMC Keegan Landfill for disposal pursuant to regulatory solid waste flow control are approved.

D. Other Provisions Affecting the Plan Amendment

1. Contracts

Any contract renewal or new contract for solid waste collection or disposal which is inconsistent with this amendment to the County Plan and which was executed prior to the approval of this amendment and subsequent to the effective date of the Solid Waste Management Act (July 29, 1977), and which shall further be for a term in excess of one year, shall immediately be renegotiated in order to bring same into conformance with the terms and provisions herein set forth. Any solid waste collection operation or disposal facility registered by the Department and operating pursuant to a contract as herein described, shall be deemed to be in violation of this amendment and of the County Plan if such renegotiation is not completed within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this amendment provided, however, that any such registrant may, upon application to the Department, and for good cause shown, obtain an extension of time to complete such renegotiation.

2. Compliance

All solid waste facility operators and transporters registered with the Department and operating within the County and affected by the amendment contained herein shall operate in compliance with this amendment and all other approved provisions of the County Plan. Any facility operator or transporter who fails to comply with the provisions contained herein shall be deemed to be in violation of N.J.S.A. 13:1E-1 et seq., in violation of N.J.A.C. 7:26-1 et seq., and in violation of their registration to operate a solid waste facility or a collection system issued thereunder by the Department and shall be subject to the provisions and penalties of N.J.S.A. 13:1E-9 and 12 and all other applicable laws.

3. Certification to Proceed with Implementation of Amendment

This document shall serve as the certification of the Commissioner of the Department to the County Freeholders and pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1E-24c. and f., the County Freeholders shall proceed with the implementation of the approved components of the amendment certified herein.

4. Definitions

For the purpose of this amendment and unless the context clearly requires a different meaning, the definitions of terms shall be the same as those found at N.J.S.A. 13:1E-3 and -99.12 and N.J.A.C. 7:26-1.4 and -2.13.

5. Effective Date of Amendment

The approved components of the amendment to the County Plan contained herein shall take effect immediately.

6. Reservation of Authority

Nothing contained herein shall be construed as a limitation on any other action taken by the Department pursuant to its authority under the law. The County Plan, including any amendment made thereto, shall conform to the Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan, with appendices, which includes the Department's planning guidelines, rules, regulations, orders of the Department, and also includes the compilation of individual County Plans and amendments as they are approved.

E. Certification of Approval of the Amendment by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection

In accordance with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 13:1E-1 et seq., I hereby approve the amendment, as outlined in Section C. of this certification, to the County Plan which was adopted by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders on December 5, 2013.

March 26, 2014

Date

Bob Martin, Commissioner
Department of Environmental Protection