

CMEI Presentation to Fundy Region Solid Waste Commission
June 24, 2010

Madame Chair and Commission members, as you are aware, one of the mandates of the Crane Mountain Enhancement, Inc. is to bring to the Commission concerns of the residents of the Host Community. At our Annual General Meeting on April 27th, questions and discussion focused on contingency plans for the landfill.

A member of the community initiated the discussion by asking Board members what remedial or contingency measures have been set up in regard to leachate contamination of the groundwater downgradient of the landfill. He wanted to know what precise responses have been planned and laid out should contamination from leachate be discovered in some aspect of the Monitoring system—underdrains, monitoring wells, domestic wells.

Another community member raised the subject of gas monitoring at the landfill. She asked what kind of monitoring of gas is being done at the landfill, both in the cells and at the new facility. Discussion of this issue also included questions about the contingency plans that have been set up to respond to potential explosive conditions or releases of toxic gasses.

The 2005 ADI Review of the Crane Mountain landfill reported that contingency plans were “vague and lacking in details” and that more work was required in terms of practical implementation of emergency response plans relative to domestic well contamination. The 2009 Review re-emphasized this recommendation, stating that specific and detailed plans should be developed, options should be identified, and funding should be put in place. Hydrogeologist Douglas Craig also stressed the importance of having a “clear protocol” for responding to triggers.

On a larger scale, the current oil well disaster in the Gulf of Mexico reminds us daily of the importance of preparing clear contingency plans. The following is a quote from Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts on that subject:

“We now know the oil industry and the government agency tasked with regulating them determined that there was a zero chance that this kind of undersea disaster could ever happen.

When you believe that there is zero chance of a disaster happening, you do zero disaster planning. And the oil industry has invested nearly zero time and money into developing safety and response efforts.”

CMEI would like to have responses in writing to the above questions. Our practice is to inform members of the community about issues such as these by putting the Commission’s responses on our website. We understand that the General Manager is extremely busy on many fronts and may find it difficult to find time to respond to our questions in writing. Therefore, we would be satisfied if we receive written responses to

issues that we bring before the Commission from the Environmental Coordinator, Ron Nelson. Thank you, Madam Chair and Commissioners, for listening to the important concerns that CMEI has brought before you this evening and for giving them your close attention.