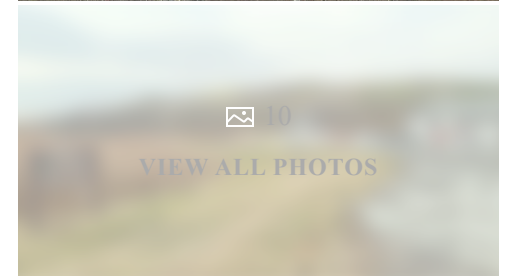


Trash talk: Next steps for Ontario County dump

by Christian GarzoneTue, December 10th 2024 at 5:04 PM
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Waste is dumped into the Ontario County Landfill in the town of Seneca, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2024. (Photo by Christian Garzone/WHAM)

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Geneva, N.Y. (WHAM) — Geneva Town Supervisor [Mark Venuti](#) said for too long, the region has taken in enough of other people's trash at the Ontario County Landfill.

"(Our) county is 9, 10 percent of what goes up in there, so 90 percent of it is coming from elsewhere," he said.

About 200 trucks a day from New York City, Ohio, Pennsylvania — all over.

That area in the neighboring town of Seneca has been a dumping ground for 50 years, and Venuti said it sure smells like it.

"Terrible odors, driving people out of their yards, closing their windows, filling up our meeting room, saying 'We can't live like this,'" he said, with people as far south as Bristol getting a whiff.

The [Ontario County Board of Supervisors](#) approved two resolutions Thursday. One was to close the dump Dec. 31, 2028, when the operations and management lease expires. The second directs the local Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management to identify viable methods with an emphasis on waste diversion and advancing sustainability.

BACKGROUND: [Ontario County Landfill to close by end of 2028](#)

Venuti is no stranger to being vocal on the environment.

"Several years ago, they dug up hundreds of thousands of tons of petroleum, contaminants, contaminated soil from a place outside of Utica, and trucked it up here and put it on our landfill," he said.

"We've got a huge pile up there — contaminated soil, asbestos, thousands of tons of asbestos (that was) allowed to be dumped in the trash," he added.

Residents in downtown Geneva, about 4 miles east of the landfill, seemed pleased it will cease operations. Karen Bowersock says the "PU factor" drives visitors away.

"So much of this area is based on tourism and the natural beauty of the lakes, and to have the smell and the growing mountain of garbage is detrimental to all of that," she said.

Jim Kurilovitch got right to the point.

"Yeah, it's an eyesore and yes, it does stink," he said.

So what could this end product look like? Venuti said it will probably be capped off eventually.

"When they're done, (they will) put like a layer of cover on it," he said.

It's already plastic on the bottom, so Ventui said it becomes a big, covered ball.

"And then over that will be soil that'll get seeded," he said — essentially a grassy mountain with gas wells that will continue to operate.

Venuti said [Casella](#), which has operated the dump since 2003, has a large task before it.

"And it's going to cost (them) about \$25 million to cap it properly and close it," he said.

Casella has not responded to 13WHAM's request for comment.

In the meantime, Venuti said the Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management will "get after sustainability kind of practices, reduction and recycling."

"We want to reduce what we're throwing away," he added.

But the precise next steps? For now, no ideas away are being thrown away.



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"We don't know what we're going to do yet," Venuti said, "but the county has four years to come up with what we're going to do."