



May 24, 2023
For immediate release

May 24 update on county landfill fire

Debris is still smoldering and the Rice County landfill will remain closed to the public with the exception of licensed haulers today, May 24, 2023.

It is still difficult to predict exactly when we will have totally quelled the smoldering debris.

County staff are diligently working to mitigate any potential risks associated with it and are continuously monitoring the situation. Rice County remains in contact with officials from the state and Northfield Area Fire & Rescue Service regarding the status of and response to the Rice County landfill fire.

Today, the county will receive air quality monitoring equipment for personal air and facility perimeter monitoring. The personal air monitoring will be used to assess air quality in the working environment and protect worker health.

The facility perimeter monitoring will assess air quality surrounding the facility and evaluate off-site migration. In addition, the engineering and environmental consulting firm Foth has begun compiling information to assess ambient air quality conditions before, during and after the fire.

These include available regional meteorological information from the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration monitoring station located at the Faribault Municipal Airport, and regional air quality health index information from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency monitoring stations in Stanton, Rochester, Apple Valley and Lakeville.

According to the MPCA, the air quality index is calculated by converting measured pollutant concentrations to a uniform index based on the health effects associated with a pollutant.

Note that since Sunday, May 21 the MPCA has designated southern Minnesota AQI between unhealthy and moderate due to ground level ozone.

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