



LOW-LEVEL LANDFILL

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WASTE CONTROL SPECIALISTS' CEO WILLIAM LINDQUIST

WCS unveils compact landfill

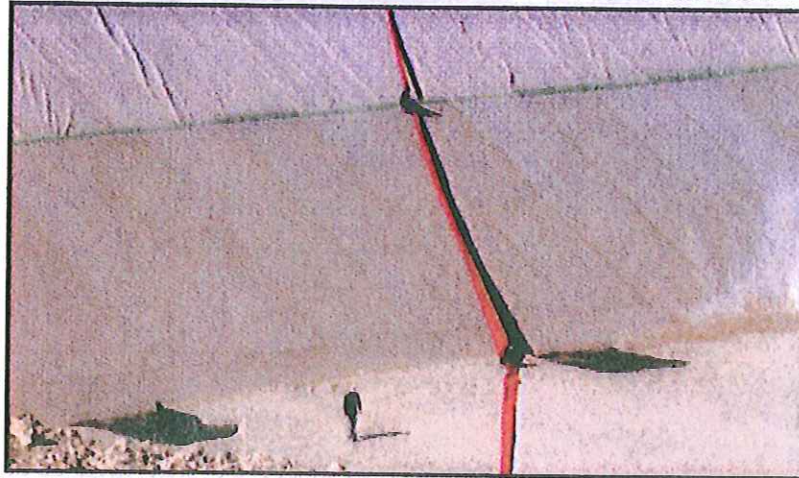
Ribbon cutting ceremony caps long-time efforts for low-level disposal

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Consider it a lengthy, hard-fought victory for Waste Control Specialists that has spanned more than 15 years.

Thursday's ribbon-cutting ceremony for WCS' Texas-Vermont Compact landfill at its site in far western Andrews County was the result of numerous efforts that began in the mid 1990s with lobbying for private low-level disposal possibilities, a thorough six-year state application process, a unique county loan for construction through a narrowly-approved bond issue with litigation and a state supreme court appeal that followed, and finally a 10-month construction process completed in October.

"Of course it's going to be worth it," WCS CEO Bill Lindquist said of the compact facility operation soon becoming a reality. "We're happy



and we think the future is very bright for the business. We're creating an industry and we've got a state-of-the-art project here."

WCS' low-level facility—including the compact landfill and larger federal landfill—was funded largely

through a \$75-million bond issue that passed by three votes in May of 2009. The company is presently making annual payments to the county to cover bond debt, while the county possesses WCS assets and security measures are in place until

the bonds are paid off.

Thursday's ribbon cutting ceremony at the site was attended by a long list of politicians and dignities—including State Rep. Tryon Lewis, Senator Kel Seliger and U.S. Congressman Mike Conaway. WCS owner Har-

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Participating in Thursday ribbon cutting ceremonies at Waste Control Specialists' Texas Compact site were, from left, Andrews Mayor Bob Zap; Valhi CEO Steve Watson; WCS Vice Chairman Kent Hance; Andrews Industrial Foundation President Lloyd Eisenrich; Valhi owner Harold Simmons of Dallas; Andrews County Judge Richard Dolgener; and WCS CEO Bill Lindquist. WCS is a subsidiary of Valhi. The ceremonies culminated a lengthy process by WCS and community leaders to open the low-level radioactive waste depository.

was granted was because the community wanted it," Lindquist explained. "You couldn't put this facility anywhere else in the country. A lot of it goes with the historical economy of the county being oil and gas—people understand the risk and know the geology.

"At the end of the day, it only works with a community that wants it," he added. "That's why it has worked—the community has been extraordinarily receptive and not only wanted it, but recruited it."

The compact facility will likely begin accepting compact-generated waste at the beginning of 2012, Lindquist estimated, while non-compact waste from a possible 36 states outside the Texas-Vermont Compact will follow once the Texas Low-Level Compact Commission establishes its permitting process for required approval of those generators.

The 2.1-million-cubic-foot compact landfill pales in size comparison to the larger federal landfill, which is 23 million cubic feet and will be completed in January. The federal landfill will accept mostly U.S. Department of Energy waste.

WCS is the only facility in the U.S. licensed to dispose of Class A, B and C low-level waste. A landfill in Utah accepts Class A waste outside its compact. But getting to this point in the game has been a long, involved process for WCS, according to Lindquist. The company's

investment into low-level disposal prospects began in the mid-1990s with lobbying efforts to change the law to allow private industry to apply for a state-issued license.

Those efforts paid off in 2003 when that possibility became a reality and WCS applied for a low-level disposal license through the state the following year. Next was the rigorous application process requiring the company to provide extensive geology and hydrology tests at the Andrews County site.

Lindquist said the thorough testing provided proof of a well-suited site for low-level disposal.

The site averages only 14 inches of rain annually and a 100-foot deep red bed clay exists that is 10 times less permeable than concrete, according to Lindquist.

"Water does not flow through it at all," he explained. The extensive protective measures also consist of a seven-foot liner system that includes concrete liner, clay liner and a standard RCRA liner and disposing of material in concrete canisters, he said. A total of 600 borings were drilled to prove the site's safety. Lindquist also said testing revealed the site's red clay surface blocks an aquifer presence six miles north of the WCS facility.

WCS' regulating agency—the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality—thoroughly reviewed the company's application process over a several-year span. The TCEQ commis-



A long list of local and state dignitaries plus company officials participated in ribbon cutting ceremonies Thursday afternoon at Waste Control Specialists, opening the Texas Compact site for low-level radioactive waste. The site is expected to begin accepting waste in January.

sion voted 2-0 in January of 2009 in Austin to grant WCS its long-awaited low-level disposal license. A large contingent of community members and WCS employees attended the TCEQ commission meeting wearing green T-shirts supporting the company. It was also a historic move as the first new dis-

posal facility to be licensed under the compact system since the low-level policy was instituted more than 30 years ago. Texas' compact originally included Vermont and Maine but now consists of Texas and Vermont. Once the low-level disposal license was intact, construction was the next step. Company offi-

cials approached the county in March of that year to stage a \$75-million bond election to help fund construction costs. It was a unique partnership that county voters passed by a mere three votes.

A re-count followed, as did an unsuccessful litigation attempt from a WCS opposition group. Appeals all

the way to the state supreme court were also unsuccessful by the same opposition group.

Delhur of Colorado was selected by WCS as the contractor for the low-level disposal facility construction project last year, while West Texas Consultants came on board for surveying duties.