

# Environmental Valuation & Cost-Benefit News

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## Landfill gives off power, payoff

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In two months, the Warren County District Landfill will be generating enough power to light every home in Independence Township.

That's when the landfill's new gas-to-energy facility will start up. The \$8 million project -- paid for by two private power companies from southern New Jersey -- will turn the gas extracted from the landfill into electricity.

In addition to the creation of environmentally friendly energy, the new system has another environmental benefit. Local air quality will improve because gas from the landfill will no longer have to be burned to reduce its odor.

...

It's also a financial win-win. DCO Energy of Atlantic City and Marina Energy of Folsom, N.J., the private companies building and running the gas-to-energy facility, will reap most of the financial benefits from electricity sales, but PCFA will get a share. In five years, the authority expects to make \$2.5 million from the facility, Carlton said.

Some of that money will go toward paying off PCFA's costs associated with the landfill. The authority had to build a \$3 million sulfur-scrubbing machine to reduce the high levels of sulfur in the landfill's gas. The authority also built a \$2 million gas-burning machine in 2000.

The authority didn't make any profit from burning the landfill gas, so overall, generating electricity from it will better help its bottom line, said board Chairman Robert Zelley. The authority board's main reason for switching systems, however, is the environmental benefit, he said.

...

The Atlantic County Utilities Authority in Egg Harbor Township, N.J., also partners with DCO Energy and Marina Energy to turn its landfill gas into electricity. The three companies have been working together since May 2005, authority President Rick Dovey said.

... ACUA decided a couple of months ago to allow DCO and Marina to build two more generators in addition to the one the companies currently have.

ACUA is expected to make \$400,000 this year from the electricity, Dovey said.

In Northampton County, a nonprofit organization called the Green Knight Economic Development Corp. owns a 10-megawatt gas-to-energy facility at the Grand Central Sanitary Landfill in Plainfield Township. After making annual payments on the \$9.2 million facility, Green Knight has made almost \$2 million since 2001, the year the facility opened. The profit goes toward economic development projects, scholarships and community grants in Plainfield, Pen Argyl and Wind Gap, landfill spokesman Harry Smith said.

Officials in Lower Saucon Township will consider Wednesday whether to allow Bethlehem Renewable Energy to build a gas-to-energy facility on the privately owned IESI Landfill. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection also is considering the proposal.



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By LYNN OLANOFF

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