

U.S. EPA press release:

U.S. EPA Orders Landfill Operator Republic: 'Get to Work'

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Republic must begin work on comprehensive engineering remedy, landfill cover, storm water controls at Sunrise Mountain Landfill

(6/9/2008 -- SAN FRANCISCO) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has ordered landfill operator Republic Services of Southern Nevada, to immediately begin remediation work at the Sunrise Mountain Landfill in Clark County, Nev.

Sunrise Landfill, a 440-acre closed municipal solid waste landfill, is located three miles outside of Las Vegas city limits. The landfill cover failed during a series of storms in September 1998, sending waste into the Las Vegas Wash. The landfill is located two miles above the Las Vegas Wash, which discharges directly into Lake Mead -- a primary drinking water resource for southern Nevada, including the Las Vegas metro area, as well as the Phoenix metro area and southern California.

"This order directs Republic to initiate stabilization work at the landfill to protect public health while steps are taken to finalize a comprehensive agreement to implement the entire remedy," said Jeff Scott, Waste Division director in the EPA's Pacific Southwest region.

The order requires Republic to immediately begin work and submit plans to the EPA including: a final cover plan, a storm water control plan, a groundwater monitoring plan, and other additional reporting and implementation tasks. The total cost of the work required is approximately \$7 million.

"The EPA has identified a comprehensive engineering remedy with long-term integrity," said Steve Wall, an environmental engineer in the EPA's Pollution Prevention and Solid Waste Office. "This durable and cost-effective landfill cover and stormwater system will meet the specific geographic and climatic needs of Nevada's arid desert landscape."

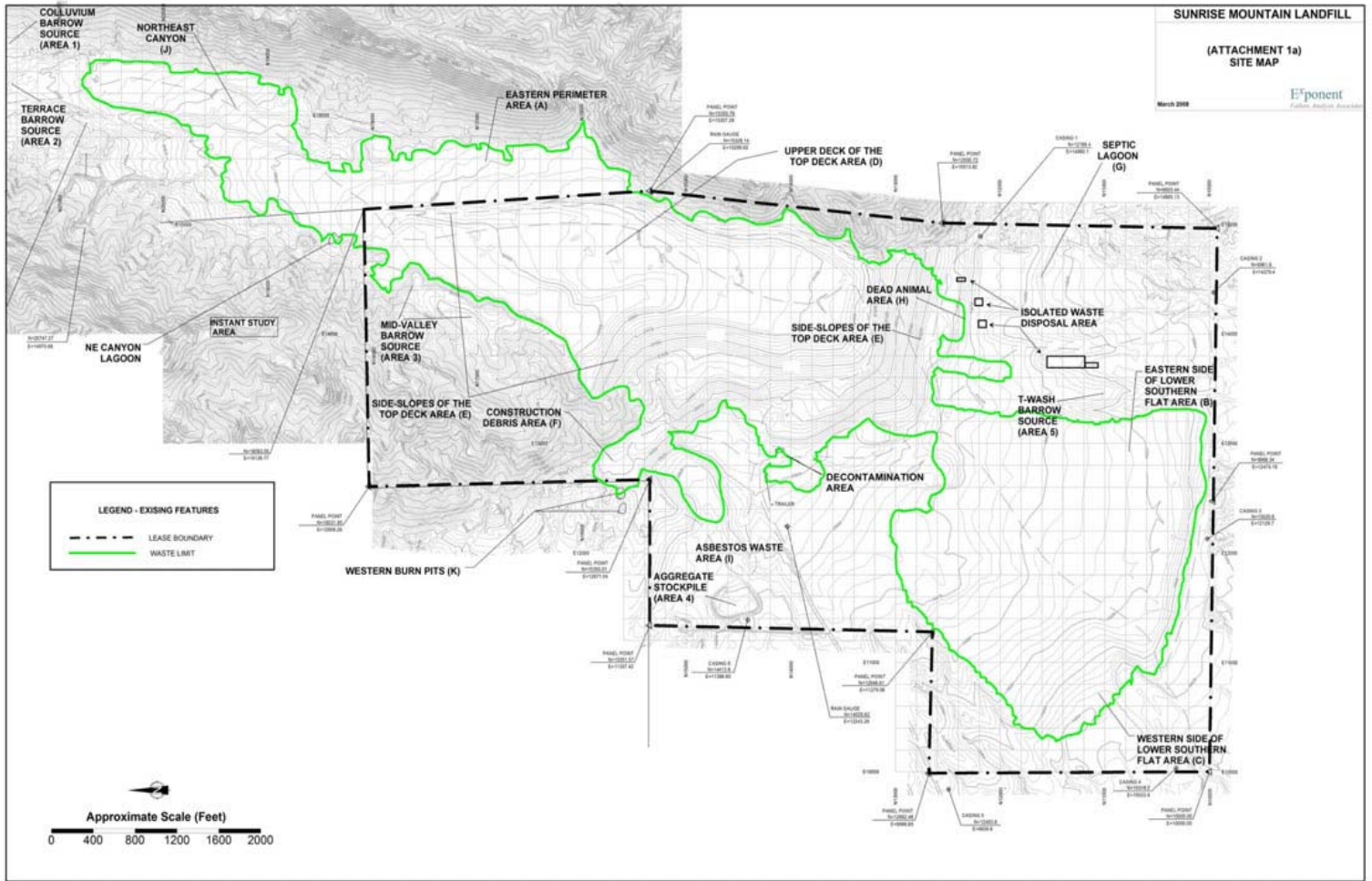
The landfill was operated on behalf of the County by entities related to Republic Services of Southern Nevada from the 1950's through 1993. Following the landfill cover failure in 1998, the EPA cited Republic Dumpco and the Clark County Public Works Department for violations of the Clean Water Act and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. At that time, the EPA ordered the company to implement a stormwater control plan; repair the existing drainage system; upgrade the landfill cap to federal standards; control and monitor methane and groundwater, and submit a plan to maintain and monitor the site.

Although they have completed interim work, Republic has failed to implement surface drainage controls that would minimize erosion during major storm events; improve the cover to address threats of erosion and infiltration; or install an adequate groundwater monitoring system.

Sunrise Mountain Landfill is unlined and contains more than 18-million tons of waste including: municipal solid waste, medical waste, sewage sludge, hydrocarbon-contaminated soils, asbestos, and construction waste.

For more information on the order, visit:
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sunrise/>

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(Photo taken from <http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sunrise/pdfs/Attachment-1a.pdf>)