

Ongoing Work at the Fort Ord Landfill

Landfill history

Like many cities, Fort Ord maintained a municipal landfill during its years as an Army training base. Like many such municipal landfills, chemicals entered into the soil from Fort Ord's landfill waste. The landfill is now covered with a special "cap" so that water cannot contact the waste and leach chemicals through the soil into the groundwater beneath the landfill.

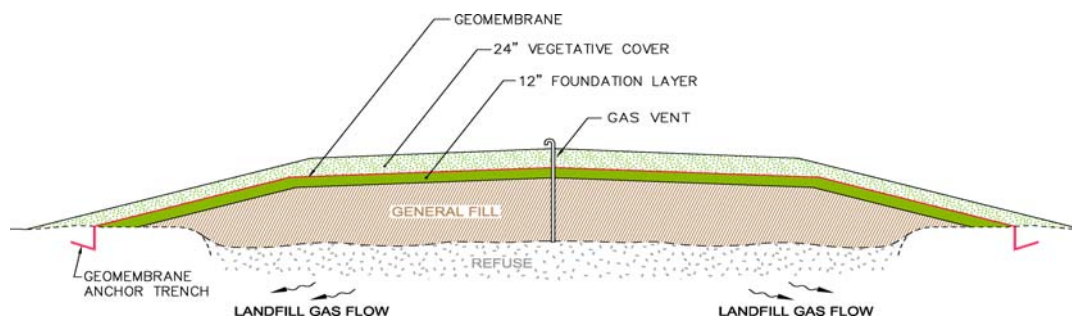
Groundwater beneath the landfill area was contaminated prior to the closure of the landfill, and a groundwater extraction and treatment facility has been operating since 1995. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control have overseen this project, often referred to as Operable Unit 2 or "OU2".



What happens on the capped landfill?

Now that the landfill is capped, there is a regular program to make sure that the treatment systems are efficiently operating and that the cap remains intact. The cap is inspected routinely and repairs are made to any minor damage caused by erosion and animals. The Army

monitors landfill gas in probes and vents, and also analyzes the groundwater



as a part of a groundwater monitoring program. Monitoring at the Fort Ord landfill has been conducted since the landfill was capped.

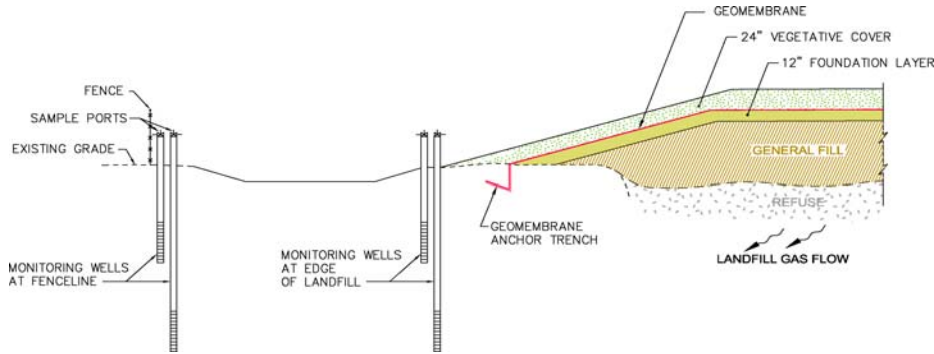
Why is there gas? As with all landfills, the decay of organic waste produces gases (primarily methane and carbon dioxide). Over time, as the wastes continue to decay, less methane will be produced and eventually will decline to near zero. While methane gas has practically no toxic effects, at levels of 5% to 15% in air methane can be ignited and could endanger landfill workers and nearby residents.

Check our web site www.FortOrdCleanup.com or call our Community Outreach Office at (831) 393-1284 for even more information about the landfill, water treatment system or other cleanup issues.

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Collecting samples of gas under the landfill cap

The Army has installed underground probes to monitor the landfill gas.



Previous measurements indicated that the methane in the soil at the perimeter of the landfill was higher than state standards (5%) on one side of one landfill cell known as Area F. In response, the Army installed a landfill gas collection system adjacent to the landfill near the closest residences--California State University Monterey Bay housing. The system draws methane and other gases from the soil surrounding the landfill and transports them to a treatment facility.



How it works: the landfill gas treatment system

The landfill gas treatment system consists of a thermal treatment unit. The thermal treatment unit destroys the methane and potentially hazardous trace gases in the landfill gas. The treatment system is at the center of the landfill near Area E (see landfill picture on previous page). The Army is operating the treatment system to maintain the methane concentrations in the soil at the landfill perimeter adjacent to Area F at acceptable levels and to remove chemicals that might otherwise migrate to groundwater.

