

**MD-186  
Worcester County**

**BERLIN LANDFILL  
Berlin, Maryland**

1950	Worcester County opened Berlin landfill.
1951	Citizens complained of odors and smoke.
1953-1983	DHMH inspected landfill periodically.
1979	Worcester County applied for Refuse Disposal Permit.
1979-1986	Landfill operation was upgraded.
1986	MDE issued Refuse Disposal Permit.
1988	Groundwater Discharge Permit became active.
1990	Landfill closed.
1994	Landfill still accepted brush and yard waste materials.

**Site Location**

The Berlin Landfill is an inactive, un-permitted sanitary landfill located approximately ½ mile east of the town of Berlin in Worcester County, Maryland. The site is southwest of the juncture of Flower Street and Seahawk Road (formerly Stephen Decatur Road). The total area of the landfill was 45 acres; 27 acres located in the northern two-thirds of the property was used for landfilling. The southern one-third of the property consisted of a borrow pit and a storm water pond. The geographic coordinates of the site are 38° 20' 00" North and 75° 11' 55" West.

**Site History**

The Berlin Landfill was opened by Worcester County in 1950 and operated for 40 years. Between 1950 and 1983, the landfill was an open-burning dump. From 1983 until its closure in March 1990, the landfill accepted domestic and solid wastes of a non-liquid, non-hazardous nature from the northeastern section of Worcester County. The principal source of the waste was from the resort town of Ocean City, Maryland. After its closure, the rubble-fill section of

the landfill remained open for another two years. As late as December 1994, the landfill served as a transfer station for household waste and recyclable products, and continued to accept brush and yard waste materials.

**Environmental Investigations**

The Berlin Landfill was discovered and brought to the attention of the Maryland State Health Department in 1951 when citizens complained of odors and smoke. Between 1953 and 1983, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) inspected the landfill periodically. The inspections revealed problems that included rodent infestation, dust, smoke, fire, litter, noise and odor.

The Waste Management Administration (WMA) filed a criminal complaint against the Worcester County Commissioners concerning past landfill violations. As a result, the landfill operation was upgraded between 1979 and 1986. Improvements included the purchase of additional equipment, control of surface water runoff and the addition of a leachate collection system. There has never been a methane gas venting system at the landfill. The County Commissioners also hired a full-time landfill manager and a consultant to design and implement a comprehensive groundwater-monitoring program.

The Worcester County Commissioners initially applied for a Refuse Disposal Permit in 1979, but the State did not issue an approved permit until December 1986, when WMA issued a Refuse Disposal Permit 87-23-03-03A to the County for the northeastern extension of the landfill. DHMH issued a groundwater discharge permit to Worcester County for the discharge of wastewater (leachate) by seepage to groundwater, which became effective on January 22, 1988 and expired on May 1, 1989. The County did not apply for a new permit due to anticipated closure of the facility.

**Current Status**

This site is on the State Master List that identifies potential hazardous waste sites in Maryland. The Master List includes sites currently identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Information System. EPA has given the site a designation of No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP). The designation of NFRAP by EPA does not mean that MDE has reached the same conclusion concerning further investigation at the site. The information contained in the fact sheet presents a summary of past investigations and site conditions currently known to MDE.

**Facility Contact**

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