

Didsbury landfill receiving 120,000 tonnes of soil

BY PETER SHOKEIR

MVP Staff

Around 120,000 tonnes of contaminated soil will be brought into the Didsbury landfill over the next three months.

Ridgeline Canada is supplying the Mountain View Regional Waste Management Commission (MVRWMC) with the soil to be used as a cover material for waste cells.

"This is the first time we've ever had such a large amount come in," said Pat Sliworsky, the CAO of MVRWMC. "We figured if Mother Nature behaves, we'd get it done in three months."

Hydrocarbon contaminated soil is taken from where fuel spills occurred and where old oil sites used to be. Ridgeline is gathering this soil from across Alberta for use in the Didsbury landfill.

As cover, the soil's purpose is to keep bugs, birds and other animals away from the trash, as well as to reduce the amount of litter blowing around the landfill.

Contaminated soil is being used due to its cheapness. It also doesn't catch fire as easily as other landfill covers, such as woodchips. If the contaminates in the

soil are too high, he said the Didsbury landfill rejects the soil, and it goes to another landfill.

"We're working with taxpayer money, so we want to make it as cheap as possible," Sliworsky said. "You're going to need your good soil for your final cover anyway."

Every day, six inches of contaminated soil is used to cover up the waste, while up to a foot of soil is used as an intermediate cover whenever trash levels get too high.

MVRWMC has been accepting contaminated soil for the past three years, but this is the largest amount they will have ever received. Sliworsky said he expects this stockpile to last for years.

Details are still up in the air, such as the number of trucks needed to perform this operation. Sliworsky said a second weighing scale has already been added to the site to accommodate the trucks expected to come through.

An additional staff member has been hired to operate this scale. Assistant flag people will also be there to help direct traffic.

"It's all going to be a trial and error until we get everything running smoothly," Sliworsky said.