

Marjol cap completion now set for spring

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THROOP - Efforts to apply additional layers to the cap covering contaminated material at the Marjol Battery site are at nature's mercy now that the construction season is over, according to an official.

"The weather now dictates whether or not anything can be done for the rest of the year," said Maureen Essenthier of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Cap completion, originally set for early November, is now not expected until spring, Ms. Essenthier said, adding, "I can't see how it would be finished this winter."

All contaminated material excavated from the site is under a thick layer of clean soil, save some contaminated sediment in the stormwater management basin, Ms. Essenthier said.

The basin will be drained in December if dry weather prevails, and the contaminated sediment will be taken out, mixed with clean soil and placed in the containment area before the cap is completed.

The basin allowed sediment to settle out of water before it was discharged into Sulfur Creek.

"That's why the sediment is contaminated, because the pond worked," she said.

Materials including protective fabric, clean soil and vegetation comprise the final layers of the cap, which will be completed in the spring as weather allows, she said.

For now, crews are taking measures to stabilize the site for winter, putting down erosion control mats made of weaved plastic, mesh and straw.

"There really is no risk of release now," she said.

Michael Baltrusaitis, health and community liaison for Cocciardi and Associates Inc., said his organization will supervise these stabilization procedures and continue to analyze air data from the site's high-volume monitors.

They've also requested that additional perimeter monitoring continue for a few more weeks for quality assurance purposes.

Both Ms. Essenthier and Mr. Baltrusaitis said they could not comment on the status of lead testing requested by the borough for homes owned by the Mattioli and Reed families. Residents in both homes have complained of possible lead contamination.

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