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LANDFILL IS OPERATING CLEANLY AND ODOR-FREE

by Bill Lindau

A visitor to the Hoke County landfill north of Raeford remarked, "You can't tell it's a landfill."

A state official pronounced the landfill among the best in the state.

These remarks were passed on to *The News-Journal* by George Pittman, who is director of the operation for the City of Raeford.

The city manages the landfill, and the county provides 75% of the financial support and the city the rest.

The observations made by the visitors reflect the condition in which the landfill is maintained.

One visiting the site will soon realize that the landfill does not have an odor like the one common to the oldtime town dumps. In fact, there is little odor of any kind until one nears the huge trench soon after garbage had been dropped there and before the special compactor has pushed it toward the unused portion of the trench and one of the city's three front-end loaders covered it with dirt.

On approaching the newest trench, Pittman pointed to a large field overgrown with vegetation in its dark winter colors. That is the part of the landfill area that has been used and covered permanently, he explained.

Bordering it is part of the area still remaining to be used.

As the visitor said, you couldn't tell it was a landfill. In the distance stood the hills of fresh earth with an earth mover working. These were the only signs it was a landfill. Then, too, the earth hills and machinery could have been a scene from a road-building job.

Pittman said the landfill area covers about 60 acres, and of these about 15 are still available for use after the present trench is filled and retired.

He said about five other acres of the city-county land can't be used because they make up ground above a stream, and the stream would receive some drainage from even buried garbage.

Pittman said each trench runs 500 yards long, 50 feet wide and 15 feet deep. It takes 20 to 25 weeks of dumping to fill a trench, he said. At the end of each day, the fresh garbage is covered with two inches of dirt, and when the trench is filled to capacity, a final cover of two feet of dirt is spread over the entire length and width, and seeded to grow grass.

The daily and final covering are required by state regulations, Pittman said.

The trench is reserved for household garbage and the fat and grease hauled from the House of Raeford turkey plant. Pittman said, since all of it decays. The turkey processing waste is being

hauled to the landfill until the plant's waste pre-treatment system is operating to state satisfaction. Then the grease and fat will be rendered to a condition in which they can be dumped into the city sewage system without danger of polluting Rockfish Creek into which the treated waste water finally runs.

In various areas of landfill property also are three state monitors which check for signs of pollution of underground water from the landfill. These are small wells, one 79 feet deep, the others 40 and 35 feet.

Another area far beyond the trenches is used for receiving waste lumber, tree limbs and pieces of concrete. Pittman said this dump need not be covered since the wood rots naturally.

He said the waste wood is given without charge to anyone who asks for it.

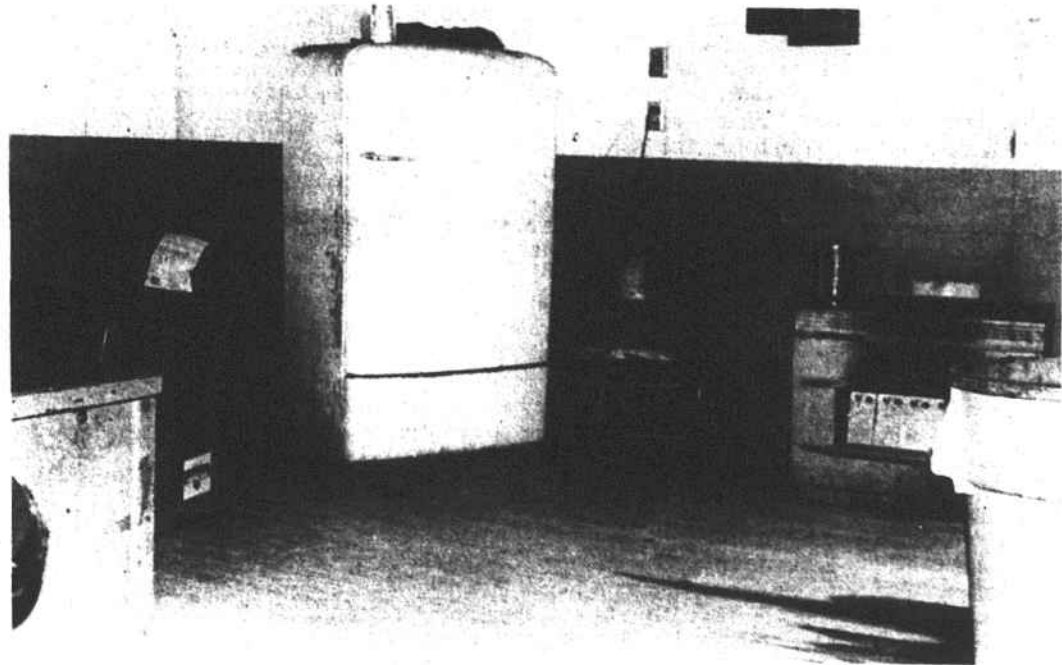
The compactor was bought by the city last year for about \$155,000, and is designed for use only at landfills. The machine, though expensive, is paying for itself in savings of the costs of repairing the vehicles once used to do the job the compactor does, Pittman said.

The other machines would be damaged by waste hardware, he said. This damage can't happen to the compactor, he pointed out, because of the protections which have been built into it.

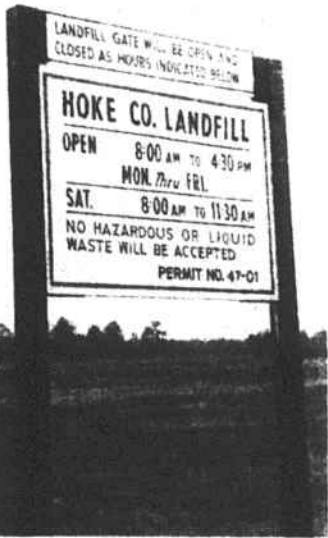
Compactor at work with Howard Batton driving.



James Stevens (left) and Howard Batton in front of the landfill's compactor. They alternate operating it and other landfill vehicles.



Landfill's office.



Sign on road leading to the landfill gives people essential information. No liquids or toxic wastes may be dumped.



Compactor (left) and truck unloading garbage.



State 79-foot-deep monitor well. Note the lock to guard the interior mechanism.