

Tough landfill bill foreseen

Margaret Lillard, The Associated Press

RALEIGH - Landfill operators would face tougher requirements to build or expand their facilities and would have to pay as much as \$50,000 for new operating permits, under recommendations that a legislative panel heard Tuesday.

The proposals made to the Environmental Review Commission are meant to keep North Carolina's landfills cleaner and safer through stricter construction standards and more accountability for permit-holders.

"This will not be a lightweight bill," said Rep. Pryor Gibson, D-Anson, the commission co-chairman.

The ideas, to be drafted into bill form in the near future, range from closer review of the background of landfill permit applicants, to rules regarding waste transport by rail or barge, to environmental studies of the largest landfill sites.

Permit-holders would be required to keep at least \$3 million at the ready to help pay for any problems with their facilities, and the state would assess a \$2-per-ton surcharge for trash sent to landfills to fund cleanup of abandoned or "orphan" dumps and hazardous waste sites.

"They're not even recorded," said Dexter Matthews, director of the Division of Waste Management, "so in many cases, you can have buildings next to those sites, on top of those sites."