

# CONNECTICUT RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY



We'd like to set the record straight as you contemplate how you're going to vote during the April 30 referendum on the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority's proposal to locate an ash landfill behind the former Franklin Farms on Route 32. Opponents of the proposal have been saying a lot about CRRA's proposal – most of it untrue or, at the minimum, their statements have bent the truth. So please take just a couple of minutes to read and digest what the opponents of the ash landfill are saying and compare it to the reality!

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** Franklin's taxes won't go down because of the ash landfill. We won't get any money from CRRA.

**REALITY:** While CRRA cannot tell the Franklin Board of Selectmen how to use the revenue the town receives from CRRA, under state law the **town would be guaranteed to receive a minimum of \$5 per ton** of ash deposited in the Franklin ash landfill. Based on current projections of 300,000 tons per year, this guaranteed income would be **at least \$1.5 million annually. This is equal to 25 percent of Franklin's current town budget.** In addition, Connecticut municipalities would save approximately \$10 million annually by sending the ash to a publicly owned ash landfill rather than a private or out-of-state ash landfill.

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** "CRRA wants to excavate 350 acres along the Shetucket River."

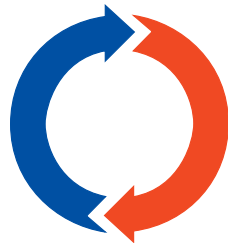
**REALITY:** The overall site that CRRA is proposing for the ash landfill is 350 acres, but most of that would be left in its natural state as a buffer between the ash landfill and the surrounding property. This buffer would ensure that the ash landfill would not be seen by anyone passing on Route 32, in the Pleasure Hill section of Franklin, or by anyone in a boat floating on the Shetucket. **The ash landfill would actually occupy approximately 90 acres in the middle of the site – about one-fourth of the total area.** Additionally, there are significant gravel deposits under the ash landfill property. As long as sand and gravel are valuable resources, it is not unreasonable to believe the gravel mining operation that is there now could be expanded if the proposal for the ash landfill is denied. An area much larger than the approximately 90-acre ash landfill would be stripped of its trees, while holes would be dug to mine the gravel. A larger area than the ash landfill would no longer be pristine woodland. However, if the ash landfill is permitted some of the excavated material would be used to fill the large holes that have already been created by the gravel mining. The excavated area for the ash landfill, meanwhile, would be lined with seven layers of protection, then covered with earth and grass when the ash landfill is closed.

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** Peter Egan, CRRA's Director of Environmental Affairs, testified before the legislature's Environment Committee in April 2008 that ash landfills leak.

**REALITY:** The ash landfill's opponents have misinterpreted Mr. Egan's testimony. He said that the DEP requires any landfill to be constructed **as if** there will be leaks. This is why the DEP requires ash landfills to be constructed above groundwater adjacent to Class B rivers or streams like the Shetucket. Although highly unlikely, if there were a leak, the groundwater would allow the leakage to flow into the river where it would be harmlessly dissipated. There is no evidence that the closed Windham ash landfill, located a little more than four miles upstream from the Franklin site and which has NO liner system, has ever had an adverse impact on the Shetucket.

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** The proposed ash landfill "will be a blight on Franklin and surrounding towns. It will be an area, once a beautiful woodland and riverside, that will be unusable for MANY, MANY generations."

**REALITY:** CRRA would create nature trails through the property so that the people of Connecticut – especially the people of Franklin – could **hike in the woodlands and enjoy what is now private property.** There is also the possibility that several ball fields could also be created on the site, increasing usage by the public. **The riverside, meanwhile, would remain unchanged from what it is now.** We would ensure that several hundred acres of the site would remain green and undeveloped forever. However, if the gravel operation continues on the property, the children of the opponents of the ash landfill might be looking at a denuded site instead of the green forest they currently view.



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**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** "The ash landfill will potentially be 14-stories high."

**REALITY:** The ash landfill would not rise to anywhere near that height. The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) considers visual impacts during the permit approval process and would restrict the height of the ash landfill accordingly. **We anticipate that the ash landfill would eventually be approximately the same height as the surrounding trees.**

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** The site is inappropriate because the ash landfill "will be located on top of a Class A (drinkable as is) moderate to high-yield aquifer." And the Shetucket River will also be needed to supply water to this region.

**REALITY:** The DEP requires that any landfill in Connecticut be located above an aquifer that is adjacent to a Class B river or stream. There is groundwater underneath the proposed site of the CRRA ash landfill in Franklin, but it is still undetermined whether it is a high-yield aquifer. **The DEP would prohibit the construction of a landfill above a high-yield aquifer.** Consequently, if tests CRRA is currently conducting on the site determine it is a high-yield aquifer, CRRA will withdraw its proposal. However, tests to determine the capacity of this aquifer have not been completed and until they are **there is no evidence that this area would be considered a viable drinking water supply.** Further, the DEP would also prohibit the construction of the ash landfill if there were a threat the water quality of the Shetucket would be degraded.

In addition, trout caught in the Shetucket and consumed by local fishermen are already swimming in waters that flow past the unlined Windham ash landfill upstream from the Franklin site. The same trout are also subject to the outflow from the Windham sewage treatment plant. The fish have had no ill effects from these conditions, as evidenced by the fact the DEP has not stopped fishermen from catching and consuming them.

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** Route 32 is already an extremely busy road and cannot accommodate the addition of 60 trucks going to and from the ash landfill daily.

**REALITY:** The **independent Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team report** to the Franklin Board of Selectmen dated March 2009 makes it clear that traffic logs for Route 32 from the state Department of Transportation show a decline in the volume of traffic, beginning in 2003. The ERT therefore **concluded that, "these volumes indicate that Route 32 has the capacity to safely handle the additional 60 trucks per day stated by CRRA."**

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** The ash landfill would eradicate the history of the site where building "foundations and cemeteries can still be found."

**REALITY:** CRRA is currently conducting an archeological survey of the site. There are some ruins of former structures there, but they are not located within the actual footprint area of the proposed ash landfill. This archeological survey, and all the other on-site tests CRRA is performing, will be reviewed by both the DEP and the Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team, which is conducting independent oversight on behalf of the Town of Franklin.

**OPPONENTS' CLAIM:** Reducing, reusing and recycling trash would help reach the goal of zero waste.

**REALITY:** **CRRA is Connecticut's largest recycler and the state's leading advocate for recycling.** In fact, CRRA's education programs have received the Beth Brown Boettner Award for Outstanding Public Education from the National Recycling Coalition. As a result, Connecticut's recycling rate is around 30 percent, as opposed to other states that have lower recycling rates in the 5-percent-to-10-percent range. However, despite the best efforts of CRRA and other entities, not everyone recycles. This leaves 70 percent of Connecticut's trash that must be disposed of in the state's trash-to-energy facilities, producing electricity for public consumption. **The by-product is the inorganic, odorless ash that must still be deposited in a safe, environmentally responsible ash landfill like the one proposed by CRRA in Franklin.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ctsafeashlandfill.com>**