

What is Landfill?

There are two ways to bury trash:

- **Dump** - an open hole in the ground where trash is buried and that has various animals (rats, mice, birds) swarming around. (This is most people's idea of a landfill!)
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- **Landfill** - carefully designed structure built into or on top of the ground in which trash is isolated from the surrounding environment (groundwater, air, rain). This isolation is accomplished with a bottom liner and daily covering of soil. A **sanitary landfill** uses a clay liner to isolate the trash from the environment. A **municipal solid waste (MSW) landfill** uses a synthetic (plastic) liner to isolate the trash from the environment

The purpose of a landfill is to bury the trash in such a way that it will be isolated from groundwater, will be kept dry and will not be in contact with air. Under these conditions, trash will not decompose much. A landfill is not like a **compost** pile, where the purpose is to bury trash in such a way that it will decompose quickly.

We cover the rules and regulations and the management associated with landfill sites.