



Environmental group files petition against ADEM

12/17/2007, 6:06 p.m. ET

The Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — An environmental group announced Monday that it has filed a petition asking the EPA to withdraw its approval of Alabama's hazardous waste management program because of alleged mismanagement of a mercury contamination project.

The petition, filed on behalf of the Citizens for a Clean Southwest Alabama, says the Alabama Department of Environmental Management allowed mercury-contaminated soil to be taken by Olin Corporation in McIntosh to the Timberlands landfill in Brewton.

Scott Hughes, a spokesman for ADEM, said Monday the agency had not seen a copy of the petition but that it has obtained U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approval for its management of Timberlands.

"The department administers a fully authorized hazardous waste program and has garnered favorable audits and reviews by the EPA for its implementation of that program," he said.

The petition, which was filed Dec. 7 and announced in a news release Monday, says the contaminated soil is a listed hazardous waste and, according to EPA regulations, cannot be put in Timberlands, which is classified as a Subtitle D landfill.

The release says ADEM and Allied Waste have documented the leakage of mercury from the liners of the Timberland landfill and the contamination of groundwater.

Since ADEM has allowed a violation of EPA regulations, the petition argues, the agency is no longer qualified to manage the state's hazardous waste program.

Hughes said ADEM has conducted full reviews of the hazardous waste management program at the landfill and has "had EPA concurrence on our actions."

Copyright 2007 Associated Press. All rights reserved.
This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

© 2007 al.com All Rights Reserved.