



King County | Office of the Executive

Executive Girmay Zahilay

Chinook Building, CNK-EX-0800
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

April 1, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Perry:

This letter transmits the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Buffer Area Annual Report as required by Ordinance 18893.

The 920-acre Cedar Hills Regional Landfill, located in Maple Valley, has been in operation since the 1960s and is the last operating landfill in King County. Owned by King County and operated by the Solid Waste Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP), the landfill receives over 800,000 tons of solid waste per year. The King County solid waste system serves the unincorporated area and 37 of the 39 cities in King County.

On September 12, 1960, the Board of County Commissioners – King County, approved a Special Permit via Resolution No. 21696 that established use of a sanitary landfill at the Cedar Hills site and, among other conditions, established a 1,000-foot buffer strip around the entire site to remain in its natural state. The eastern buffer was infringed upon in the mid-1960s, and efforts are ongoing to return the landfill buffer to compliance with permit conditions.

This report provides information on actions to ensure the integrity of the buffer, including two or more annual flights to capture aerial photogrammetry images of the landfill and surrounding properties; inclusion of the buffer location in all planning and design documents to prevent any construction or operational activities from encroaching on the buffer; monitoring of daily landfilling activities to ensure compliance; and the purchase of properties on the east side of the landfill as they become available in order to expand the buffer.

As reported previously, in 2022, DNRP procured and deployed an intelligent odor control system that helps neutralize odors emitted at the active refuse area of the landfill. The system is mobile and thus can be moved to any part of the landfill where odor is a concern. According to data provided by the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, odor complaints attributed to the landfill decreased after installation of the system. A second unit was installed at the landfill in May 2025.

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Stage 1 closure of Area 8, the active refuse cell, began in 2025 and is about 70 percent complete; this development has significantly mitigated the odor impacts noted in the previous buffer report.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. The information in the report helps decision makers and King County residents understand the ongoing efforts by DNRP to maintain and improve the buffer area at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill.

If your staff have questions, please contact Rebecca Singer, Division Director of the Solid Waste Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-263-2244.

Sincerely,



for

Girmay Zahilay
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
 ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council
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