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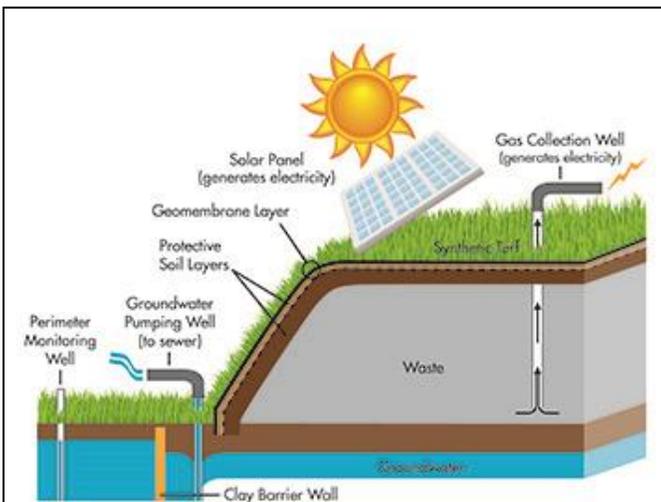
After 75 Years, Hartford Landfill Officially Closed **MIRA Receives Closure Certification;** **DEEP Now Managing Landfill for Its Owner, City of Hartford**

HARTFORD, Conn. – The Hartford landfill, which the City opened in 1940, is finally, officially closed.

The [Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#) has notified the [Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority](#), which had been in charge of the landfill since 1982, that the state-of-the-art synthetic cap MIRA has installed meets state and federal regulations and the \$30.4 million closure project is complete.

“This is the culmination of a process that began in 2004 when the board of our predecessor organization, the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, voted to close the landfill, which had been in operation for 68 years.” said Donald S. Stein, chairman of the MIRA board. “We are now very pleased to hand over to the City of Hartford this site for redevelopment to the benefit of Hartford residents.”

“Taking over this former landfill and turning it into something positive for Hartford residents is an exciting thing. Whether it becomes a park or a wildlife habitat, the community will now decide the best use for these scenic acres next to the Connecticut River,” said Hartford Mayor Pedro E. Segarra.



A cross-section of the environmental protection systems and solar panels that the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority has installed at the Hartford landfill.

The City opened the landfill in 1940 as an open-burning dump and operated an incinerator there from 1953 until 1977. That was after the Town of East Hartford sued, complaining about a cloud of smoke hovering over the town that it claimed came from the incinerator.

The newly-formed CRRA leased the landfill in 1982 and began accepting trash from up to 44 cities and towns until 1988, when CRRA opened the Hartford trash-to-energy plant. Once the plant was in operation, the landfill received combustor ash and non-processible waste from the plant and bulky waste. The landfill received its final delivery on Dec. 31, 2008.

The capping project had begun more than a year earlier and was completed in four phases:

- In the first phase, roughly seven acres of the ash area were capped by the end of 2008.
- Capping the remainder of the ash area, about 11 acres, was completed in 2009.
- Next, the west side of the main land form, about 44 acres, was completed in 2011.
- Capping of the final 35 acres was completed in June 2014. That part of the project included the installation of 3,993 photovoltaic panels that can [generate enough electricity to power about 1,000 homes when operating at full capacity.](#)

With the capping completed, DEEP is now responsible for 30 or more years of monitoring and maintenance [under legislation passed in 2013](#), though MIRA will continue to own and operate the solar facility. What will become of the remainder of the closed landfill is now up to the City, which owns the site.



A view of the Hartford skyline from the Hartford landfill, where grasses and wildflowers grow over the synthetic cap installed by the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority.

One idea that city residents have discussed for many years is to use the landfill as parkland. The site has long been a habitat for protected and endangered wildlife and offers spectacular views.

The Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (“MIRA”), the successor organization to CRRA, is a quasi-public agency whose mission is to work for – and in – the best interests of the participating municipalities of the State of Connecticut. MIRA’s [board of directors](#) and [management team](#) develop and implement environmentally sound solutions and best practices for solid

waste disposal and recycling management on behalf of municipalities. MIRA serves over 90 Connecticut cities and towns. MIRA also operates [award-winning sustainability education programs](#) through the [MIRA Trash Museum](#) in Hartford. For more information about MIRA and its activities, visit <http://www.ctmira.org>.

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Editors: 300-dpi .jpg versions of these and additional images depicting the past and present of the Hartford landfill can be downloaded from the [MIRA website](#).

Following is a brief history of the Hartford landfill.

A Brief History of the Hartford Landfill

The City of Hartford opened the landfill on Leibert Road in the North Meadows for use as an open-burning dump in 1940.

In 1951, the Hartford Fire Department burned shacks erected on the landfill by “dump dwellers.” Between 1953 and 1977 all waste produced in the City of Hartford was burned in the then-state-of-the-art Hartford incinerator. Byproducts from the burning were emitted into the air without any pollution controls. During this period the landfill received incinerator ash and bulky wastes.

Residents of the North End of Hartford complained for years that their cars parked outside were covered with soot, dust and ash which, they said, came from the incinerator.

The incinerator was shut down in 1977 as the result of a lawsuit filed by the Town of East Hartford. East Hartford residents had complained about a cloud that hung over their town which, they charged, came from the incinerator.

The City of Hartford leased the landfill to the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA) in 1982. Until 1988, the landfill received raw municipal solid waste (MSW), non-processible MSW and bulky waste.

Following its leasing the site from the city, CRRA installed several environmental control systems at the landfill, all of which will function for a minimum of 30 years after the landfill is closed:

- A gas extraction and collection system in which dozens of wells capture gas before it enters the air, virtually eliminating odors, while using that gas to generate enough electricity to power about 1,500 homes.
- A slurry wall, made of Bentonite clay, poured around three sides of the landfill. The slurry wall, when connected to the steel sheet piling in the flood control dike along the Connecticut River, creates, in effect, a giant bathtub to ensure that whatever is put in the landfill stays there and does not spread into neighboring land or ground water.
- A groundwater collection and pumping system that captures and treats groundwater that may flow under the landfill.
- An ash-leachate collection system that collects and treats rain water percolating through the ash landfill.
- A groundwater monitoring program ensuring the area surrounding the landfill is safe and remains so.
- A landfill gas monitoring program ensuring the area surrounding the landfill is safe and remains so.

Some residents blamed the landfill for incidences of asthma and other diseases.

However, [a 1998 study by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#), concluded that "air emissions generated by the Hartford landfill do not pose any short-term or long-term health effects to residents who live nearby."

In 2003, as the landfill began nearing its permitted capacity, the CRRA Board of Directors commissioned a study to gauge the feasibility of expanding the Hartford landfill. The study found that the landfill's footprint would allow a maximum height of 188 feet, compared to its permitted height of 138 feet, and could do so without compromising either the flood control dike or the slurry wall.

Residents were opposed to the idea of expansion. So in 2004, [the CRRA Board of Directors, agreeing that the people of Hartford should be relieved of the burden of living near an active landfill](#), voted to abandon the idea of expansion.

In 2007, CRRA began installation of a state-of-the-art synthetic cap that effectively sealed the landfill and its contents from the surrounding environment. Installation was completed in 2014; the final phase included a 3,993-panel solar energy facility that can generate enough electricity to power about 1,000 homes when operating at full capacity.