Waste management: landfill

1997/0085(SYN) - 26/04/1999 - Final act

PURPOSE: to prevent or minimise, as far as possible, negative effects on the environment arising from landfill, by means of the introduction of strict technical and operational requirements with respect to waste and landfills. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Directive 99/31/EC on the landfill of waste. CONTENT: The Directive lays down high standards for waste treatment in the Union and seeks to discourage the use of landfill. The main aspects of the Directive are as follows: Scope: the Directive defines different categories of waste and applies to all types of landfills, which are defined as waste disposal sites for the deposit of the waste onto or into land (i.e. underground), including: internal waste sites (landfill where a producer of waste is carrying out its own waste disposal at the place of production), and a permanent site, i.e. more than one year, which is used for the temporary storage of waste. Landfills are divided into 3 classes: those for hazardous waste, for non-hazardous waste and those for inert waste. The Directive does not apply to the following: - the spreading on the soil of sludges; - the use of landfills for inert waste for redevelopment or restoration work; - the deposit of unpolluted soil or of non-hazardous inert waste resulting from prospecting and extraction, treatment and storage of mineral resources, as well as from the operation of quarries; - the deposit of non-hazardous dredging sludges alongside small waterways from which they have been dredged and of non-hazardous sludges in surface water, including the bed and its subsoil. The Member States may legislate that some of the provisions of the Directive do not apply: landfill sites for non-hazardous or inert wastes with a total capacity not exceeding 15,000 tonnes or with an annual intake not exceeding 1,000 tonnes serving islands; landfill sites for non-hazardous or inert waste in isolated settlements if the landfill site is destined for the disposal of waste generated only by that isolated settlement. Provisions are made regarding waste and treatment not acceptable in landfills: liquid wastes, waste which is explosive, corrosive, oxidising, highly flammable or flammable, infectious hospital or other clinical wastes arising from medical or veterinary establishments, used tyres (with certain exceptions), any other type of waste that does not fulfil the acceptance criteria (laid down in Annex II). The dilution of a mixture of waste solely in order to meet the waste acceptance criteria is prohibited. - Wastes accepted in different classes of landfill: a standard procedure for the acceptance of waste is established; wastes have to be treated before they are accepted for landfill; hazardous waste within the meaning of the Directive has to be assigned to a hazardous waste landfill; landfills for non-hazardous waste must be used for municipal waste and for nonhazardous waste; landfill sites for inert waste must be used only for inert waste. The application for a landfill permit has to contain the following details: identity of the applicant and, in some cases, of the operator; a description of the types and total quantity of waste to be deposited; the capacity of the disposal site; a description of the site; the proposed methods for pollution prevention and abatement; the proposed operation, monitoring and control plan; the plan for closure and aftercare procedures; the applicant's financial security; an impact assessment, where required under Council Directive 85/337/EEC. - Cost of the landfill of waste: Member States must ensure that all of the costs involved in the setting up and operation of a landfill site, as well as the cost of the financial security and the estimated costs of the closure and after-care of the site for a period of at least 30 years. - Existing landfill sites: Member States must ensure that existing landfill sites do not continue to operate unless they comply with the provisions of the Directive as soon as possible and within 8 years of the date of transposition of the Directive. In this regard, a conditioning plan has to be submitted for approval by the competent authority). As far as landfills for hazardous waste are concerned, the time limit for compliance is one or three years, depending on the provisions of the Directive. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 16/07/1999. DEADLINE SET FOR TRANSPOSITION: 16/07/2001.