

GARBAGE JUICE: Residents, officials oppose possible deep injection well

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In order to save money, some people want to inject wastewater into the ground.

Opponents are concerned that the well could impact the Floridan Aquifer, which is the main source of drinking water for Walton, Okaloosa and other counties.

You can add our name to the opponents.

DEP, who happily gives out the permits for this, writes the following: "Class I injection wells are monitored so that if migration of injection fluids were to occur it would be detected before reaching the USDW."

Our question is, what can you do if migration is detected? Our guess is "very little" other than not drinking the water.

This idiotic practice of injecting wastewater into the ground is very much the same as the stupid, old practice of throwing our garbage into the rivers. Out of sight and out of mind.

The bottom line is that our experts do not know the results of this practice over the long run. Any risk to our fragile,

finite aquifer is too great. These people are messing with something they cannot fix if something goes wrong.

And that something is critical to our well-being.

The Floridan aquifer belongs to us all, and we all need it. We are all connected, and groundwater knows no political boundaries. Those who put it at risk do not have that right.

Read the original article [here in the Destin Log](#).

Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.

-A river is like a life: once taken, it cannot be brought back-

GARBAGE JUICE: Residents, officials oppose possible deep injection well

By [TONY JUDNICH](#)

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The nonprofit Safe Water for Walton organization and many local elected officials oppose Waste Management's proposed deep injection well that would send hazardous landfill wastewater deep underground.

Opponents are concerned that the well could impact the Floridan Aquifer, which is the main source of drinking water for Walton, Okaloosa and other counties.

If Waste Management obtains a permit from the state Department of Environmental Protection, it reportedly would dig an exploratory well before putting in the deep injection well at the Springhill Regional Landfill near Cambellton in Jackson County.

The possible Class I industrial wastewater deep injection well would be sunk more than 4,000 feet into the ground to dispose of the wastewater, called "leachate," according to news reports.

Leachate is formed when rainwater filters through wastes placed in a landfill. When the water comes in contact with buried wastes, it leaches, or draws out, chemicals or constituents from those wastes, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Safe Water for Walton's mission includes studying and educating the public about the health of and any threats to water sources across the watershed for Walton, Okaloosa, Bay, Jackson, Washington and Holmes counties, according to the group's website.

It states that the county commissions in Walton and Jackson counties, as well as elected officials in all three municipalities in Walton County – Freeport, Paxton and DeFuniak Springs – passed resolutions last year opposing the issuance of permits for the exploratory and deep injection wells.

Waste Management currently collects wastewater at the Springhill Landfill in holding tanks, then takes it to wastewater treatment facilities in Sneads, Marianna and Okaloosa County for treatment and release to sprayfields or other endpoints, according to a story in the Dothan Eagle newspaper.

Waste Management officials say they are considering the deep injection well because of the cost of transporting wastewater and a concern that, in the face of increasingly strict regulations, municipalities could stop accepting the leachate.

The idea of using deep injection wells for industrial wastewater is not new to the Panhandle.

Currently, Gulf Power has three industrial wastewater deep

injection wells in Bay County and two under construction at the Lansing Smith coal plant, according to Florida DEP. The power company also has four wells in Pensacola, two that were installed in 2009.

Class I deep injection well

In Florida, there are six classes of injection wells. The proposed well at the Springhill Regional Landfill is Class I.

Class I

Wells used to inject hazardous waste (new hazardous waste wells were banned in 1983), nonhazardous waste or municipal waste below the lowermost Underground Source of Drinking Water (USDW). There are more than 180 active Class I wells in Florida. The majority of the Class I injection facilities in Florida dispose of non-hazardous, secondary-treated effluent from domestic wastewater treatment plants. At locations where hydrogeologic conditions are suitable and where other disposal methods are not possible or may cause contamination, subsurface injection below all USDWs is considered a viable and lawful disposal method. There are favorable hydrogeologic conditions in Florida where the underground formations have the natural ability to accept and confine the waste. See an illustration of a Class I municipal well.

The injection wells are required to be constructed, maintained and operated so that the injected fluid remains in the injection zone, and the unapproved interchange of water between aquifers is prohibited. Class I injection wells are monitored so that if migration of injection fluids were to occur it would be detected before reaching the USDW. Permitting for these wells is done in our Tallahassee office. Testing is conducted on all Class I injection wells at a minimum of every five years to determine

that the well structure has integrity.

[Read more about the other classifications >>](#)

Source: Florida Department of Environmental Protection