Abstract

Solid Waste Management is severely deficient in rural Alaska. The majority of rural communities have unpermitted Class III landfills for waste disposal. These unpermitted landfills are commonly known as open dumps. Open dumps increase human health risks by exposure to solid and hazardous materials, including pathogens from human excreta disposed at dump sites due to lack of adequate solid waste, water and sewer facilities. Current federal and state policies lack adequate public health policies or public health actions to address this deficiency. This project analyzed five solid waste management policies that affect rural Alaska and provided three policy options and one public health action recommendation, including:

1. Transferring Authority for Unpermitted Class III Landfills

2. Developing a Statewide Solid Waste Policy

3. Establishing a Solid Waste Fund for Unmet Needs

4. Implementing a Public Health Approach