

IEPA group to consider transfer station case

By Don Grigas

Staff writer

An Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Enforcement Decision Group meeting scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 26, likely will determine what, if any, action will be taken against a Bolingbrook business operator who has been under fire from Woodridge officials and residents over a landscape recycling transfer station on Murphy Road near Woodward Avenue.

"From that meeting, the IEPA director (Douglas P. Scott) will determine what course of action, if any, that needs to be taken," said Paul Purseglove, manager of field operations for the IEPA.

Over the past few months, E.C. Rizzi & Associates Inc. has become the target of complaints and concerns from Woodridge village officials and nearby residents who say the landscape waste recycling/transfer station has operated out of compliance with IEPA codes, emits foul odors and could have a negative impact on the local environment.

The site also has received numerous citations over the past decade from the Will County Land Use Department, which acts as the IEPA agent and inspector in local matters.

The business had received notifications of noncompliance on a variety of issues ranging from failure to transfer waste within a 24-hour period to storing uncovered horse manure adjacent to a ditch that drains storm water from the property.

J.R. Rizzi, of E.C. Rizzi & Associates Inc., manages the business and confirmed the site has been notified of noncompliance issues in the past, but says complaints are being overblown.

"When we are not in compliance and are notified, we do what we need to do to bring it back into compliance, then go from there," Rizzi said.

"We've operated for more than 15 years, and I know we have done the right things. I only hope that justice prevails," Rizzi said.

The IEPA's Enforcement Decision Group will meet to review a written recommendation to be submitted by Dean Olson, Will County Land Use Department waste services manager, prior to the meeting. The Enforcement Decision Group team is comprised of IEPA staff and legal counsel, Purseglove said.

"Will County is our local agent, but in this case, because the site in question is a permitted site, the IEPA will take the initial steps to review the case," said

Purseglove.

Purseglove said his office recently was contacted by the Will County Land Use Department requesting the issue be placed on the Jan. 26 agenda. The Enforcement Decision Group meets monthly to review cases.

"We'll reserve a spot this month for the Rizzi site," Purseglove said.

IEPA Director Scott's decision could come within a day or two of the meeting, Purseglove said, or "it could take some time."

The options available range from following Olson's written recommendation -- whatever it is -- to referring the matter to the Will County state's attorney's office or the Illinois attorney general.

The IEPA also could take no action at all.

If a recommendation to take legal action is approved by Scott, it would likely be referred to the county state's attorney's office, Purseglove said.

"That usually is the preferred method because it can be addressed more quickly," Purseglove said.

Olson referred calls to the IEPA.

Purseglove said the Jan. 26 meeting is an internal meeting that does not require Rizzi or representatives to attend, Purseglove said.