

## CHESAPEAKE BAY Meeting State and Federal Standards for Nutrients

York County sits within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, meaning all point and nonpoint discharge sources face stringent water quality requirements, with nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus being of particular interest. State and federal environmental agencies continue to ratchet down Total Nitrogen (TN) and Total Phosphorus (TP) contributions not only from industrial and wastewater treatment plants but also from all agricultural sources as well.

Recognizing the significant costs of the technology necessary to remove nutrient loads from wastewater, and the challenges with getting farmers in the watershed to implement costly manure and chemical fertilizer management practices, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) developed a nutrient trading program that allows a discharge source facility to purchase nutrient credits generated by other permitted point and non-point discharge sources.

With this authorized trading program, the net result is a cost-effective, overall reduction in nutrient loading to the Chesapeake Bay throughout the entire watershed, with the purchase of credits accepted as achieving compliance with discharge limits.

Modern Landfill currently is investing more than \$13 million dollars over the next two years to implement improvements to its on-site leachate treatment plant, which has been operating under a state permit since 1988, to meet new and more stringent discharge requirements as part of its state-issued National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, a program that regulates point source discharges from a variety of similar commercial and industrial operations.

Even though the treatment plant operates above design, the modifications will enhance efficiency and help to address new regulatory parameters and nutrient loading standards. Until the leachate treatment plant upgrades are fully implemented, the facility is purchasing the necessary nutrient credits as is permitted under the state's innovative trading program to ensure compliance and to help achieve overall reductions in nutrient loading to the Chesapeake Bay.

For more information: <https://modernlandfillpa.com/>.