

Municipal garbage charges

The problems with solid waste disposal in the Shumen Region have been in the focus of public attention for a long time. Recently they have acquired a new urgency under the EU landfills directive. The Directive and the National Programme for solid waste management of the environment ministry



require all substandard landfills to be closed and municipal garbage should be transported to and disposed at regulated regional landfills. The new situation gave rise to fears among citizens that the new system of disposal will lead to higher transportation costs which would inevitably reflect on the municipal charges for garbage.

These attitudes in society prompted the Atanaska Vasileva, project coordinator at the Society for Promotion of Knowledge 'Znanie' to visit the Regional Environmental Inspectorate in Shumen and to file a request for access to information under Art. 20 of the Law for Protection of the Environment and Art. 24 of the Law on Access to Public Information demanding the following data: data of systems and installations of solid waste treatment including disposal and/or treatment of dangerous waste; data about the regulatory requirements, conditions and places where construction of temporary sites for dangerous waste disposal is allowed. The information was granted in a timely manner but its contents raised some questions. There is only one regional landfill in the Shumen region and the legal implications of relations between the owner, the municipality of Shumen and the other municipalities remain an open issue. Therefore a second request was filed by Aleksander Assenov, BSNN expert asking about the conditions offered by the landfill management to the municipalities which have to use it for the disposal of their solid waste. Work on the issue continued. Currently the Law on Solid Waste Management is under revision and the proposed amendments have raised concern in the NGO sector. Mr Assenov filed an expert statement with comments to the amendments in June 2011 stressing the possible unfavourable consequences and possible sanctions from EU if the draft is adopted.