

## Council discusses energy efficient landfill



Sean Orszulak, an environmental specialist at the Casper landfill, prepares cans containing latex paint, to be crushed. The Casper city council will vote on Tuesday to approve possibly funding a new plan for an energy efficient hazardous waste building. Photo by Kerry Huller, Star-Tribune

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The Casper landfill may soon contain the fourth building in the state to earn a prestigious energy efficient certification.

Casper City Council members will vote on Tuesday on a new plan with Randall Hein Architects to build a hazardous waste facility building with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification.

The new building would be 6,000 square feet and replace the current insufficiently-sized 2,000-square-foot building, according to Solid Waste Division Manager Cynthia Langston.

Certification requires the Casper architects work with an independent agent who would help ensure the building meets specific guidelines. The independent agent adds roughly \$35,000 to the cost of the project, Public Services Director Gary Clough told the council in a recent work session.

Even though the building would increase the cost of the project about \$300,000, Clough said it could pay for itself in the long run.

Similar buildings with this certification have shown 25 to 50 percent energy savings and 20 to 40 percent water savings, Clough said.

The payback period wouldn't be finalized until the design is complete, Clough said. But, estimates show during the 50-year life of the building, paybacks come after 12 to 16 years. The building would also be available for students and school groups to study energy efficiency and sustainability.

Council member Kim Holloway said she's excited about the prospect of this certification for Casper, adding that this is the direction construction is going and will go in the future.

On the other hand, Council member Paul Bertoglio said he thinks it is a waste of money. Many of the items that will be done are already things the city does normally, such as xeriscaping.

"Do we need to be energy efficient? Sure, absolutely," he said. "Political correctness seems to be more important right now in our society than simply looking at it from a cost effective point of view."

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