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# Building of more engineered sanitary landfills urged to handle growing waste problem

By [BusinessMirror](#)

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Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. (MCWM), the operator of the Philippines's first engineered sanitary landfill, underscored the importance of building quality, engineered sanitary landfills in tackling the country's growing waste problem.

"The number of sanitary landfills in the Philippines remains small despite the passage of Republic Act 9003, which requires for the closure of open and uncontrolled dumpsites about 17 years ago," MCWM President and CEO Rufo B. Colayco said.

Citing data from the National Solid Waste Management Commission, Colayco noted that 403 open and 108 uncontrolled dumpsites continued to operate across the country, while less than 15 percent of local government units had access to 118 sanitary landfills in 2016.

"We need more engineered sanitary landfills across the country," Colayco said. "We have to ensure they conform to the highest standards and actually serve their purposes."

At the minimum, RA 9003 requires sanitary landfills to have liners; a leachate collection and treatment system; a gas control recovery system; groundwater monitoring well system; covers; closure procedure and post-closure procedure. The environmental protection features aim to protect the air, soil and groundwater from contamination by leachate and other waste-related emissions.

"We hope to set the bar high for waste management in the Philippines through our world-class engineered sanitary landfill within the Clark Freeport Zone," Colayco said.

MCWM operates the Clark Integrated Waste Management Facility within the Clark Freeport Zone. It is the first engineered sanitary landfill in the Philippines and one of the first in Asia to receive ISO certification.

Partly owned by German conglomerates BN Ingenieure GmbH and Heers and Brockstedt Umwelttechnik GmbH, the facility is patterned after the engineered sanitary landfills of Germany, a world leader in waste management.

It has multiple layers of liners, including a 2.5-millimeter high-density polyethylene material that exceeds Philippine standards.

It also includes a leachate collection and treatment system, gas-recovery system, materials recovery facility and environmental buffer.

“We can only build as many sanitary landfills,” Colayco noted. “As our population continues to grow and our economy expands further, we need to find more ways to reduce the increasing volume of our waste.”

Colayco cited the experience of Germany and other European countries, where wastes are turned into an energy source, among others.

“Let us take advantage of the existing waste-management solutions that help us take a significant step forward to our ultimate goal: to preserve our environment for the future generations and ourselves,” Colayco said.

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