

Court: Alabama environmental agency overstepped bounds

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Crews compact municipal solid waste at the Arrowhead Landfill near Uniontown, Ala. on Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2016.

By The Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — An appeals court says Alabama's environmental regulators went too far in allowing landfill operators to cover waste with anything other than dirt.

The Alabama Court of Civil Appeals ruled Friday in a lawsuit filed by people who live near two central Alabama dumps, Arrowhead Landfill in Perry County and Stone's Throw Landfill in Tallapoosa County.

The decision says the law required that companies use at least 6 inches of soil to cover material that's dumped into landfills.

But it says the Alabama Department of Environmental Management changed its rules to allow for the use of other materials. The lawsuit claims that the use of waste covers including tarps has led to a foul smell and vermin around landfills.

The judges overturned a lower court that dismissed the lawsuit.