

To Clean Up Rubbish Dumps—

HEW's 'Mission 5,000' Gets State Backing

JUNEAU—Governor Keith H. Miller pledged Alaska's full support of "Mission 5,000", a U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare campaign to close down 5,000 of the Nation's 12,000 open rubbish dumps.

"The Division of Environmental Health is drafting regulations which will establish the standards for solid waste disposal," Governor Miller stated.

"We must look forward to the day when all open dumps in the State are eliminated, and that day must be soon."

The Division of Environmental Health participated in a survey of open dumps conducted by the Bureau of Solid Waste Management in Alaska in August.

The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the magnitude of the problem and to ascertain alternative methods for solid waste disposal.

"There are two methods of satisfactory disposal," Miller said. "One is a sanitary landfill; the other is burning the waste in an incinerator that does not pollute the air."

A sanitary landfill is the least expensive method of solid waste disposal. This involves burying the waste under a clean cover of earth on a daily basis.

Governor Miller said that the Bureau of Solid Waste Management has offered support and technical assistance to any community eager to close its dump.

Special training courses on closing dumps and establishing sanitary landfills will be conducted by Bureau personnel for operators, supervisors, and public officials.

"Alaska's Division of Environmental Health is concerned with enforcement of regulations that safeguard the environment," Miller said, "and it is also ready to assist any community in developing plans to correct the problems of waste disposal."

"Open dumps are a disgraceful and unnecessary blight on Alaska's landscape," Governor Miller said.

"Nearly all of the land disposal sites in Alaska are unsatisfactory. Many of them contribute to water pollution or cause a surface drainage problem, and many more of them, through open burning, are contributing to local air pollution."

"In addition," he said, "open dumps provide food and shelter for rats and flies. They are potential sources of disease and accidents. They are eyesores in any community."

Governor Miller also said that the State will continue to explore ways in which it can further assist local communities in coping with the problem of solid waste disposal.