

## Officials ban new debris at landfill

Louis Cooper

A six-month moratorium on new construction and demolition debris pits in Santa Rosa County was adopted Thursday as officials work to beef up regulations involving the sometimes troublesome facilities.

County commissioners voted 4-0 for the moratorium, with Commissioner Don Salter absent.

The commission acted because of ongoing health concerns at the Coyote Landfill in Holley-Navarre and concern that a developer is considering building such a pit near the Plantation Woods subdivision in East Milton.

Joiner Landfill in Milton is the only other active construction and demolition debris pit in the county.

Residents living near the Coyote Landfill recently filed suit against the owners, claiming air and water pollution from the facility has affected their health. The county Health Department is in the early stages of studying that issue.

Plantation Woods residents were at the commission meeting to support the moratorium and object to a Coyote-like landfill being built in their neighborhood.

"This is our sole place to live for the rest of our life," resident Rena Thornton said. "My husband has asthma. I have asthma. I'm on about six medications for asthma."

Another resident, Jane Lambertus, said she also has health problems that a polluting dump might exacerbate.

"I'm about to have to go on oxygen," she said. "I still want to be able to go outside and breathe the fresh air."

During the moratorium, the county will research and establish "best practices" guidelines for operating construction and demolition debris pits. The commission may extend the moratorium if more time is needed to come up with regulations.

Commissioner Gordon Goodin, who once operated such a facility in Navarre, said he wants Santa Rosa's regulations to be twice as tough as the state's.

"The C&D landfills in Santa Rosa County have not been good neighbors," he said. "We're going to make them good neighbors."