

Various environmental incidents are constantly happening all over Serbia, and it is only a matter of time before something catches fire again or when a river changes color. It is also obvious that the competent authorities schedule their work, and either do not pay attention to these problems or consciously ignore them in agreement with businessmen. All in all, in Serbia, which strives to solve these problems, much more efforts will be needed, especially in the implementation of regulations, which is largely within the competence of institutions that are still insufficiently active in this field.

A fire near a warehouse that does not have a permit to store ammonium nitrate

During the night of March 15, a large fire broke out in the former factory for the production of glass in Pancevo, which is now used by the company Promist for the needs of storing artificial fertilizers. While all the details of this incident are being determined, the issue of storing artificial fertilizer in this plant remains unresolved.

This plant attracted special public attention after the explosion in Beirut due to allegations that the same type of waste is stored in Pancevo. However, it turned out that there was no porous ammonium nitrate, which is used for the production of explosives, in Pancevo, but stabilized ammonium nitrate, which is used as fertilizer.

However, what has been a problem for several years is the work of this company. Although permission was requested from the relevant ministry for the storage of ammonium nitrate, Promist did not receive it. The Inspectorate for Environmental Protection of the Provincial Secretariat in the previous period also wrote reports, considering that the mineral fertilizer was still stored in the company's plant. And while the fire in this case was quickly localized, it remains questionable what is happening with the work of the institutions. The reason for that is the lack of information from the authorities about the outcomes of these reports, as well as the suspicion that there are still ammonium nitrate warehouses that do not have the appropriate permits. Are the authorities then persistent enough in their work?

Landfill fires as a common problem

Fires are a common occurrence in landfills. In the interior of landfills, ie at their deeper levels, flammable gases often mix. If these gases mix with oxygen inside the landfill, the matter burns. At the same time, longer deposition also creates methane pockets, which can cause fires or explosions of more serious dimensions. Given the very poor condition of many registered landfills in Serbia, fires are not uncommon.

There are 164 registered municipal landfills in Serbia, of which about 70% do not have the necessary permits and environmental impact assessments. While about 1/5 of the total

waste ends up in over 2000 registered (recorded) illegal landfills throughout Serbia. The case of the fire at the landfill in Vinca is well known to the public, and the last in a series of fires at the landfills happened in Kovin. The big fire that burned for several days, despite the appeal to the authorities, created serious problems for the citizens of this municipality. When the fire was localized, the Ministry of Environmental Protection decided to close this landfill and to take the waste to the landfill in neighboring Pancevo in the future. This did not solve the problem, because the landfill in Pancevo will now have an additional burden with the influx of new quantities of waste.

In addition to problems with fires, in previous years there have been situations with inadequate treatment of hazardous waste, which was mostly buried in the ground.

In the vicinity of Obrenovac, Pancevo, Smederevo, Bela Crkva, there was improper storage or disposal of this waste. What should be of particular concern to us is the possibility that there are more such cases that have not been discovered. A special reason for this suspicion is the processes of decomposition of this waste underground, which over time contaminates the soil and groundwater, which in the future may lead to serious health problems in humans.

Lakes and rivers - what do they swim in and why do they have color?

At the beginning of the year, pictures of Potpecko Lake full of waste appeared, which is, to say the least, a great shame. Unfortunately, this is a reality not only in Serbia but in the entire Western Balkans. Although tens of tons of cubic meters of waste have been removed and transported to the Regional Center Duboko, near Uzice, a long-term solution is still awaited. Namely, although meetings of the representatives of the ministries of Serbia, BiH and Montenegro were held, it seems that more water will pass until concrete moves are made in order to solve this decade-long problem.

Source: klima101.rs