

Christie Pits protest planned

By DON PEAT, SUN MEDIA

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As garbage bags start piling up in Christie Pits Park, residents are planning a protest tonight.

The park is one of 19 temporary dump sites opened today to help stockpile the city's garbage during the ongoing civic workers strike.

A flyer announcing the 7 p.m. protest states, "Parks are not dumps, not Christie Pits, not any park!"

Deputy Mayor and local councillor Joe Pantalone is expected to attend the protest, organizers said.

Yesterday a handful of protesters raised a stink over the city turning the park's outdoor ice rink into a dump.

Facing a revolt in his ward from Christie Pits residents furious their park is about to be filled with stockpiles of trash, Pantalone issued a statement yesterday slamming city officials, including the mayor's office, for turning the Pits into one of 19 dumps.

"Over the past few days, I have been advocating strongly with Joe Pennachetti (City Manager), Geoff Rathbone (Solid Waste Management), Richard Butts (Deputy City Manager) and Mayor Miller's office, NOT to use Christie Pits as one of the City's alternate dump sites," Pantalone stated in a release yesterday.

"Until this afternoon, City staff refused to share the 19 sites with City Councillors."

The deputy mayor, who refused further interview requests, says he gave staff alternative locations in his ward but they didn't listen to him.

"(I) did not receive the courtesy of serious consideration of those alternate sites!" he wrote. "I strongly oppose the use of this location as a dump site and will continue to advocate this position.

"Christie Pits should not be used as a dump!"