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Group seeking special aquifer designation

By Gordon Woods

gwoods@theclintonjournal.com

CLINTON — The local group WATCH began compiling documents this week to seek a special designation for the Mahomet Aquifer. The group is fighting an EPA permit that would allow expanded chemical waste storage at Clinton Landfill. The landfill rests over the aquifer, a major municipal drinking water source.

WATCH president Matt Varble said the organization would petition the U.S. EPA office in Chicago to designate the aquifer a Sole Source Aquifer, establishing that at least 50 percent of the water drawn from the aquifer is used for drinking water and that there is no suitable water source substitute.

"This is our strongest chance to stop this," Varble said in reference to the chemical waste permit.

Varble said he had talked to members of the Mahomet Valley Water Authority to ask the board hold a special meeting Dec. 3 on the issue. Varble said that, while some of the area's drinking water came from other sources, estimates were significantly over 50 percent as the amount drawn from the Mahomet Aquifer for drinking purposes. The city of Bryan, Ohio is also currently asking the Chicago EPA office to designate its aquifer, the Michindoh Glacial Aquifer, a Sole Source Aquifer.