

# Waste Reduction Task Force

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## *Waste Reduction Goal & Methodology Work Group #1*

### **Fifth Meeting – March 13th, 2008 Conference Call & March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Breakout Sessions**

#### **Meeting Summary**

Work Group Members Present: Lucian Lawson, Bill Yearwood, Lisa Williams, Phillip Nappi, Bruce Wood, Charles Wood

Facilitator: Nick Lytle & Matt Maynard

A conference call was held on Thursday March 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss the three recommendations made by the work group at the previous task force meeting.

The primary goal of these meetings was to strengthen the previously stated policy points and recommendations. The group also wanted to go over the points presented by other groups as well as our own ideas to come to sort out where the work group members stood on various issues.

Policy Point 1: In place of the 25% reduction goal, a statewide goal focusing on reducing the amount of waste per capita placed in Class I landfills would be enacted.

Discussion points: The main obstacle to this type of a goal is the concern from most all members of the task force that the goal would not have any way of being enforced on a regional, county or municipal level. The defense to this is:

- Although this goal should be taken serious, it is meant to serve as a goal that would be written into legislation that the state as a whole would be compelled to meet it.
- Under current measurement methods, consistent and more importantly, accurate origin of waste from specific counties is not available for ever county. Without near 100% accuracy of origins of waste, strictly holding a county or municipality accountable for a disposal number would be invalid.
- Most importantly, this goal is “a goal”, and would serve only as the final measurement to state whether or not the state is actually achieving a reduction in waste reduction.
- Other measurement methods would be in place to determine If regions, counties, or municipalities are making independent strides towards waste reduction.
- A goal of this nature would put sole emphasis on waste reduction.

Upon presentation of this goal, the task force still felt that good recycling and waste diversion efforts would not be recognized because a lack of reporting. Similarly some felt the advantage would be that time would be saved in not tracking down recycling reports from dozens of private entities.

Policy Point 2: Performance of regions, counties, and municipalities should be measure based upon their programs and services that promote waste reduction. TDEC should provide a series of promoted

programs that the regions can pick and choose from and receive the necessary resources to implement these programs.

Discussion points: Ultimately, a region, county or municipality cannot control the disposal habits of individuals without disposal bans; they can only provide alternatives to landfilling and provide education and services to promote these alternatives.

Advantages: Counties could choose the programs that are best for their areas. If a county already had successful, functional programs in place, those could stand in place of the sponsored programs, and assistance could be made available to further improve and expound upon these existing programs. Counties would also be free to implement waste reduction programs not outside of those sponsored programs and may receive support for them. The sponsored programs would mainly be available to those counties who do not wish to design their own programs.

Disadvantages: If a program were to fail, another program would have to put into its place.

Resources: Additional grant dollars to fund programs

More technical services from existing TDEC contractors, and most likely more expert contractors.

Costs: Variable, but high at the start up of this policy. It is expected that some counties will have out of pocket expenses, especially if they currently have no or little waste reduction services in place. Counties already on board with the concept of "waste reduction" would likely already be compliant with services levels and have no costs. Costs would mainly be with those counties who have never spent money or resources on waste reduction before, while many of their neighbors have.

Benefit: Hopefully, a statewide implementation will result in decreases at the landfill, thus decreasing the tons per person per year placed in Class I landfills.

Policy Point 3: Class III/IV landfills should be required to report origin of all material with accurate weights. Class III/IV material should not be counted towards waste diversion unless the material is truly recycled or used towards a beneficial end-use other than being simply buried in the ground.

Discussion points: At this point, 3 out of 4 groups have proposed a similar opinion so this is redundant to other points.

Advantages: It's the right thing to do and make logical sense.

Disadvantages: Accurate measurements cannot be obtained without scales, which will require money, and other groups have suggested a surcharge to help cover that. This could be seen as an additional tax. Also the increased regulation might increase the tip fees at these places making them less advantageous to use sending more material to Class I facilities.

Resources: Money for scales. Oversight of haulers. Manpower and resources to collect any surcharges. Staff to perform inspections and audit.

Costs: Initial capital to get scales in place. Possible extra staff costs.

Benefits: Increase oversight burying items into ground in unlined landfills. Also it would give extra value in law to recycling as III/IV landfilling will no longer be a loophole.

Obstacles: There is a perceived notion that without the III/IV landfill diversion rule in place, counties will have a difficult time reaching goal; however, the goal has yet to be defined.