

Waste Reduction Task Force

First Meeting -September 27, 2007

Meeting Summary

In response to newly passed legislation, the Department of Environment and Conservation is seeking advice from the Solid Waste Advisory Committee on all aspects of how Tennessee manages its solid waste disposal and waste reduction efforts. In response, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) has convened a twenty-three member Waste Reduction Task Force (Task Force) of solid waste professionals, county, municipal, industry and environmental representatives to look into the big picture of how Tennessee manages its solid waste and recycle material streams to set future goals and establish methods used to measure it.

This Task Force met the first time on September 27, 2007. The objective for this first Task Force meeting was organizational in nature. The intent was to give an overview of legislation recently passed, instruct the Task Force on the intended objectives, set meeting ground rules, review a potential solid waste survey, identify issues and divide into four identified work group categories (Waste Reduction Goal and Methodology, Public and Private Participation, Government Organization Roles, and Financial and Infrastructure Development).

A summary of the meeting is provided below,

Chuck Head, Senior Director of Land Programs for the Department opened the meeting with a welcome and thanked everyone for their time and their future participation on this Task Force. He discussed the great importance of this opportunity and how it could change the course of solid waste and waste reduction in Tennessee over the next decade. Great emphasis was put on the importance of the work of this group of professionals.

Mike Apple, Director of the Division of Solid Waste Management, then reiterated the importance of this Task Force and their objectives.

Lewis Bumpus, chairman of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and Williamson County Solid Waste Director, presented the objectives from the Solid Waste Advisory Committee which are: 1.) Develop recommendations for the SWAC for rules to update, change, or revise the State's waste reduction goal, 2.) Define methodology to measure a new waste reduction goal, and 3.) Develop alternatives to reduce waste.

The SWAC will then make recommendations to the Solid Waste Disposal Control Board for rulemaking. Joyce Dunlap, Manager of the Division of Solid Waste Management's, Solid Waste Assistance Programs, greeted David Connors with the Tennessee County Commissioners, and Christina Treglia with Tennessee Recycling Coalition and the Office of Environmental Assistance who were in attendance and introduced the staff from the University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Services and the Development Districts who were in attendance. The technical assistance personnel were present to provide support to the Department's staff and the Task Force in carrying out the objectives in this and future meetings.

After these initial introductions, Joyce Dunlap introduced the Task Force's moderator, Mr. Don McCain, who will be working with the Task Force to help accomplish their objectives. This meeting he assisted the Task Force in establishing meeting ground rules and norms the group would use in this and future meetings to maximize their productivity. He described the use of a "Parking Lot" for ideas that come up during the meeting that may not be on subject. Each Task Force member has a Post-it Note pad that ideas could be jotted down and then "parked" on the "Parking Lot" and responded to at a more appropriate time or in a different segment.

After a short break, Larry Christley, Manager of the Planning and Financial Assistance Sections in the Division of Solid Waste Management, provided a brief overview of the recent legislation passed (**SB 1779**/hb1345 and **HB2289**/sb2267) that allows the SWAC to look more closely at municipal solid waste disposal in the State, the 25% waste reduction and diversion goal, and the big picture of solid waste and waste reduction. He also clarified and discussed the current method for determining waste reduction compliance. This included a description of the per capita base year method, adjusted per capita base year methods, "Real-Time" methodology, and the newly defined Qualitative Assessment which compares solid waste planning regions that were in non-compliance with the 2003 waste reduction goal with other solid waste planning regions that made the goal. This method establishes if the non-compliant regions failed to meet the goal by "no fault of their own".

Larry Christley then presented a draft survey designed to poll local governments on the issues of waste reduction and the waste reduction and diversion goal. Upon initial review, the Task Force raised concerns about the length of the survey and the pertinence of many questions. To save time the survey was referred to the Waste Reduction Goal and Methodology workgroup to re-design and recommendations to the Task Force.

After lunch, Don McCain, the facilitator, lead the Task Force in a brain storming session of issues and potential directions in the four identified categories. Mr. McCain took each category and spent fifteen to twenty minutes on each receiving ideas from the Task Force. The hot topic category was the Waste Reduction Goal and Methodology subject. Near the conclusion of the meeting each Task Force member signed up for one of the work groups made up of five to six Task Force members. These groups will be supported by Department staff. Many of these groups met briefly afterwards to setup additional work group meetings for their specified topic.

Mr. McCain closed the meeting by facilitating the setting of a date for another meeting. The Task Force agreed to a two day meeting to be held tentatively on October 30th-31st 2007 to report back on the work of the various work groups and progress toward the objectives.