

Beyond Waste IWG Meeting Summary
Meeting #2: July 9, 2008, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Issacson Classroom, UW Center for Urban Horticulture

In Attendance

Co-Leads:

Sego Jackson, Snohomish County

Jay Shepard, Department of Ecology

Jody Snyder, Pierce County Recycling, Composting and Disposal LLC, dba LRI

Workgroup Members:

Vicki Austin (for Brad Lovaas), Washington Refuse and Recycling Association (via phone)

Dr. Sally Brown, University of Washington

Gene Eckhardt, WA UTC (via phone)

Lisa Friend (for Robyn du Pre), Re Sources/Re Store (via phone)

Preston Horne-Brine, Washington State Recycling Association

Jim Jensen, Environmental Credit Corp.

Ken Johnson, Weyerhaeuser (via phone)

Kevin Kiernan, King County Solid Waste

Brad Lovaas, Washington Refuse & Recycling Association (via phone)

Suellen Mele, Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation

Russ Menke, Spokane Regional Solid Waste System (via phone)

Ashley Probart (for Tracy Farrell), Association of Washington Cities (via phone)

John Robinson (via phone)

Susan Robinson, Waste Management (via phone)

Charlie Scott, Principal, Cascadia Consulting Group

Lisa Sepanski (for David Stitzhal), King County (via phone)

Jerry Smedes (for Scott Robertson), Basin Disposal, Inc. (via phone)

Cheryl Smith, CTED (via phone)

Tom Walter, Washington Organics Recycling Council

Observers:

Margaret McCully

Wade Miller

Dave Sjoding, WSU Energy Extension (via phone)

Karen Larkin (via phone), CTED

Mark Fuchs, Ecology

Support:

Elizabeth McManus, Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting

Lydia Dobrovolny, Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting, Ltd. (via phone)

Absent

Jerry Bartlett, Cedar Grove Compost

Tim Croll, Seattle Public Utilities
David Dougherty, Dougherty Group
Tiffany Hatch, Seattle Goodwill Industries
Bart Kale, Nucor Steel
John Leber, Swanson Bark and Wood Products
Chris Martin, CleanScapes
David Quigg, Grays Harbor Paper

Background Documents (available at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CAT_iwg_bw.htm)

- Agenda
- Emission Reduction Potentials Spreadsheet
- Beyond Waste IWG Task Areas Presentation
- Task Area 2 Recommendations
- Task Area 3 Recommendations
- Task Area 4 Recommendations
- Task Area 6 Recommendations
- Task Area 8 Recommendations

Discussion Items and Key Issues

Task Areas

The IWG began with a presentation and discussion of the findings from the eight task groups created at the previous IWG meeting. The assignment for each task group was to identify important ideas and strategies for their task areas, and the actions needed to put them in place. Task area assignments and proposed strategies are summarized in the “Beyond Waste IWG Task Areas Presentation” PowerPoint.

Overarching Discussion Issues:

- The IWG is currently considering broad items whose main criteria are GHG reductions and achievability. As the focus areas narrow, it will be important to understand revenue impacts as part of the considerations that the group submits to the Climate Action Team (CAT). For example, waste is a taxed item that contributes \$60 million to the state trust fund, and a policy of promoting zero waste will have an impact on this revenue stream.
- It is critical that any new programs or processes utilize existing infrastructure rather than creating additional vehicle miles travelled (VMT) as consumers bring their various items to different store fronts. This was a significant issue among the 2007 Climate Advisory Team’s original list of recommendations under AW-3, and it remains high on the list for the Beyond Waste IWG to consider.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 1:

- With respect to identifying existing recycling facilities, the task group discussed ways to incentivize expanding recyclers and types of products recycled, but did not go into detail. The task group recognized the need to remain mindful of following through with mandates and assisting with the permitting and expansion of existing facilities.
- On the subject of specific commodities, although aluminum cans rate highly in terms of greenhouse gas (GHG) emission factors, the “lowest-hanging fruit” in terms of collection are the businesses and residences that the current infrastructure omits (i.e. potential sources of recycling that the recycling

trucks are bypassing). Additionally, corrugated and mixed papers have high generation and low recovery rates combined with potential emissions reductions (nearly 2.5 million tons of GHG from these sources could be converted to paper fiber). Aside from paper it will be important to revisit the list of commodities and see where additional gains can be made.

- One potential strategy is to amend or enhance [RCW 70.95](#) to require a 50% recycling rate and to promulgate best management practices for curbside collection.
- There is a tremendous opportunity to retool the message and education of collection programs to reflect the climate change issue.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 2:

- An additional action for task area 2 could be to provide access to capital/investment vehicles. For example, Shore Bank/Cascadia has a community development fund whose investments include organizations performing environmental sustainability projects.
- Including industrial partners is important in order to capture the work being done by the private sector. For example, Washington Manufacturing Services is providing services that are tangentially related to climate issues, therefore adding GHG reduction to their agenda would be easy to do.
- Technology transfer from colleges and universities is another opportunity to work through existing organizations on climate change efforts.
- Another possibility to increase investment would be to expand CURB investments or other existing CTED programs.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 3:

- Organic materials can be converted for use as alternative daily cover (ADC) on landfills, with associated methane reductions, but if the goal is to divert organics from landfills there are inorganic materials that can also be used as ADC.
- The urban/rural dichotomy will require different approaches for the two areas, given their different participation rates. Urban centers, for example, have a greater concentration of food waste and could therefore have a fee for non-participation. By contrast, rural areas might have more of an educational focus on composting.
- Requirements for organic materials handling could be broadly expressed at the state level and specifically tailored to local jurisdictions, depending on their situation.
- If the state forces a behavior change it is important to provide the tools to implement that change.
- Although the emphasis of task group three's discussion is on food waste, many of the points apply to other organics also.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 4:

- Task group four discussed packaging but did not discuss the criteria for which products to focus on. There are a number of products that have been discussed previously that currently lack associated GHG reduction potential, which would require an additional research step before the approach is populated. One possibility is to move forward with a general policy without listing products, another possibility is to list some initial products for consideration.
- The criteria listed in the legislation to reduce product toxicity (among other goals) will require pushing industry for improvements to downstream products as well as upstream practices.
- A state product framework would set standards for products sold within the state. In other words, the manufacturing location would not be a factor.

- Diverting organics from landfills in ways that generate revenue through public and private methods is one potential avenue to improve the interface between public waste entities and private sector organizations that seek to render waste into energy products.
- Using organics as soil amendments can be done based on application rates. For example, if a given soil has a high nitrogen rate, it can be composted with a carbon-rich material. This will allow the user to comply with the Department of Ecology's nitrogen-load requirements, provided the user is given the proper incentives to make balanced soil amendments cost-effective.
- WSU conducted a biomass inventory for organics recovery that included a 2005 estimate of materials coming out of solid waste systems, agriculture, and some forestry practices. It would be useful for the group to assess material types and what energy recovery is available, particularly the GHG impacts of recovering those materials and using it in energetic processes. In addition to that work, WSU has done work on co-digestion which shows tremendous value.
- A potential "low hanging fruit" could be for counties to implement a mandatory pay program for organics, similar to what is in place for recycling.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 5:

- On the subject of a disposal ban, it is important to include language that ensures the correct infrastructure is in place before a ban is enacted, since it is a public health and safety issue.
- Medium and small businesses' situations should be considered with a zero waste target, since smaller businesses do not have the staff to implement those types of programs. One approach would be to target larger companies first and then see if the practices trickle down to smaller companies.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 6:

- The basic point of this task area is that state procurement laws need to be harmonized and better focused on environmentally preferred purchasing policies. The strategy allows the government to lead by example on climate change action.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 7:

- Task Group 7 was unable to meet in the given time frame, but agreed that re-use is an important subject area. One possibility is that this task area could be folded into task area 8.

Key Discussion Points for Task Area 8:

- Retailer initiatives such as the UK manufacturer's light-weight wine bottles have been very successful and should be added to the list of actions in this task area.
- It is necessary to distinguish whether GHG reductions are achieved before a material goes into a landfill or after. The reductions will be different for different materials.
- Mandatory actions should not be required for retailers; retailers should be encouraged to take action, by means such as education.
- Anything that leads to greater enforcement of current programs or an extension of a similar program should be considered.
- A "plastics labeling" law would be better framed as a "truth in recycling" law (or act), since there are currently materials that are not recyclable but are labeled as such.
- A CND ordinance could follow the model of a traffic ordinance: The state puts together a model, and local jurisdictions either adopt it in total or adopt elements of it.

Voting Exercise

The IWG conducted a voting exercise to narrow down the list of approximately 35 ideas/strategies generated within the task areas to a concise list of five ideas/strategies upon which the group could focus its near-term efforts. Each IWG member selected the five ideas/strategies that they believed the group should pursue next. During the voting and discussion group members suggested combining certain strategies, resulting in the following list of top strategies:

- Options 1A (remove paper from the waste stream) and 1B (collection) would be combined, with Brad Lovaas as the group lead
- Option 2A (B&O tax incentive) would have Bart Kale as the group lead
- Options 2C (establishing a center for sustainability) and 4B (green product design) would be combined with Preston Horne-Brine as lead and Suellen Mele helping guide the work
- Option 4A (product stewardship framework legislation) would have Suellen Mele as the group lead
- Option 6E (optimize government purchasing) would have Cheryl Smith as the group lead
- Option 8A (collaborate with retailers) would have Jay Shepard as the group lead
- Option 8C (C&D permit deposit) would have Jody Snyder and Jay Shepard as co-leads

Next Steps and Agreements

- The co-leads will contact any IWG member who was not present at the meeting for their feedback on the prioritization exercise.
- The co-leads will consider the results of members' prioritization and draft a list of focus areas to send to group members for their review. The co-leads may decide to combine or split strategies as appropriate.
- The co-leads will contact group members about setting up an interim meeting prior to the next scheduled meeting on July 23rd.
- IWG members are free to participate on any task group.

Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled Beyond Waste IWG meeting will be a face-to-face meeting on July 23 (time TBD).