

Beyond Waste IWG Meeting Summary
Meeting #3: July 23, 2008, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Fabulich Center, Port of Tacoma

In AttendanceCo-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, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association (via phone)

Jerry Bartlett, Cedar Grove Compost

Tim Croll, Seattle Public Utilities

Lisa Friend (for Robyn du Pre), ReStore (via phone)

Tiffany Hatch, Goodwill Industries

Preston Horne-Brine, Washington State Recycling Association (via phone)

Ken Johnson, Weyerhaeuser

Bart Kale, Nucor Steel (via phone)

John Leber, Swanson Bark and Wood Products

Brad Lovaas, Washington Refuse & Recycling Association

Suellen Mele, Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation

Scott Robertson, Yakima Waste Systems (via phone)

Susan Robinson, Waste Management

Charlie Scott, Principal, Cascadia Consulting Group

Lisa Sepanski (for David Stitzhal), King County

Cheryl Smith, CTED

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

Observers:

Hedia Adelsman, Ecology (via phone)

Brad Boswell, WBA

Carrie Gregory, LRI

Dave Sjoding, WSU Energy Extension

Steve Wamback, Pierce County

Eddie Westmoreland, Waste Connections

Support:

Roma Call, Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting, Ltd.

Andy Chinn, Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting, Ltd.

Absent:

Sally Brown, UW

David Dougherty, Dougherty Group

Gene Eckhardt, WA UTC

Tracy Farrell, Association of Washington Cities
Jim Jensen, Environmental Credit Corp.
Kevin Kiernan, King County Solid Waste
Chris Martin, CleanScapes
David Quigg, Grays Harbor Paper

Background Documents (available [online](#))

- Agenda
- Emission Reduction Potentials Spreadsheet
- Optimizing the Current Collection System and Getting the Paper Out
- Construction and Demolition Waste Diversion
- B & O Tax System
- Sustainable Product Design Center
- When Food Scraps Dream: Energy, Fertilizer and Soil
- Product Stewardship Framework Policy
- Waste Reduction through Retailer Collaboration
- Environmentally Responsible Purchasing
- Draft grouping proposal

Discussion Items and Key Issues

Discussion Area 1: Optimizing the Current Collection System

Task Group 1 examined optimizing the current collection system to find missed collection opportunities. The proposal involves updating solid waste plans to require recycling and organics collection, promoting local government recycling campaigns, providing recycling and organic collection services to commercial accounts, and requiring public sector facilities to require paper recycling (at a minimum). This proposal could be put into place with current mechanisms and authority. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- There should be consideration for businesses and commercial/institutional entities that already have recycling service. In other words, the proposal must ensure that the recommendations are not structured in such a way as to push out entities that are already receiving service. The proposal should include thresholds whereby business and institutional generators can opt out by stating that they are meeting service level goals.
- The greatest recycling efficiencies are going to be gained in urban areas.
- It is important to consider incentives and other tools as an alternative to mandatory recycling.
- Whatcom County's collection system is privatized, with no money for enforcement of a requirement of this type.
- Most of the truly recyclable product in waste streams is paper (fiber).

Discussion Area 2: Organics

The organics group focused on compost-use incentives to create a marketplace for anaerobic digesters. One way to accomplish this is to adjust the energy feed-in tariff law, which is the legislative price set for green energy from multiple sources. The group also identified power wheeling as an issue that must be

addressed in order to remove market restrictions on green energy. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- On the issue of the geographic distance from collection to processing centers, the emissions savings from food waste recycling allows for relatively long shipping distances.
- The group discussed the possibility of competition between anaerobic digestion and composting. Group members noted that anaerobic digestion is scalable downward and by-products from anaerobic digesters can be used in a complementary composting system.
- Next steps for this proposal are to consult with the Department of Revenue about subsidizing composting for the agricultural community, a potential 5% compost tax on solid waste, and the infrastructure cost associated with anaerobic digestion versus composting.

Discussion Area 3: Construction and Demolition Debris Diversion

The construction and demolition debris group's proposal would require contractors to have waste management plans and to pay a deposit that would be returned upon completion of those plans. Disposal facilities conservatively estimate 1.1 million tons of C&D waste disposed in Washington annually, including carpet, carpet pad, wood, and concrete. There is a potential GHG savings of 1.15 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent if this waste stream were diverted and recycled. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- The end market for reused materials is an important consideration, since it will be a primary incentive for contractors. The end market question includes not only the processing infrastructure that would be needed but also other uses such as alternative daily cover.
- California has enacted similar proposals which require contractors to develop their waste management plans early in the planning process, resulting in more carefully thought-out plans.
- Since contractors typically operate on small margins, the proposal would level the playing field for those contractors currently practicing waste diversion.
- Next steps for the C&D proposal include reviewing model ordinances and consulting with representatives from the construction industry.

Discussion Area 4: Product Stewardship

The product stewardship group's proposal is a framework bill that would set up stewardship recycling programs, paid for by producers, which would include a process for adding products in over time. Product phase-in would be tiered to GHG reduction potential as well as utilization of the current infrastructure and green jobs. The next step for the proposal is to have a subgroup draft detailed legislative language and to discuss the products that would be included in the legislation. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- In some cases, the proposal would finance collection at curbside, which would reduce the number of trips to remote industrial sites where some product recycling (such as electronics) currently occurs.
- The proposal would also have the benefit of improving waste stream quality; for example under the current system a cracked compact florescent bulb could contaminate an entire load of recyclables.
- The financing aspect of the proposal could include a provision for market development for products that currently lack markets or have market barriers.
- The collection system is capable of taking on additional different types of waste, bulky items, etc.

Discussion Area 5: Retailer Collaboration

The retailer collaboration proposal builds on the problem that the bulk of household waste comes through retailers and therefore retailers are in good position to influence products that people buy, use, and dispose of. The proposal is to develop a memorandum of understanding to be signed by the Governor and major CEOs of retailers in the state. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- Workgroup members discussed the appropriate role of government in the proposal. The reasons cited for involvement at the Governor's level included demonstrating leadership at the executive level, and promoting a joint initiative in order to dispel the perception that industry is only taking action for public relations purposes.
- The next step for this proposal is to draft a one page invitation to retailers.

Discussion Area 6: B & O Tax Reduction

The B&O proposal is a reintroduction of a B&O tax recycling bill put forward in the legislature during the last two sessions. The subgroup spoke with the legislators who introduced the bill in previous sessions, and the legislators indicated that they would like to reintroduce the bill if there is enough support for it. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- The GHG reduction estimates in the proposal reflect the use of recycled material in the manufacturing process, not the collection of the material itself.
- The intent of the proposal is to encourage local manufacturing and create in-state employment opportunities.
- Next steps for this proposal are to draft language that includes other materials in addition to glass, and to draft a fiscal note.
- The benefits of this bill are not just to attract new manufacturers to state, they are also to incentivize existing recyclers to use more recycled materials
- In addition to gathering support for the bill, the workgroup should consider which sectors would take advantage of the tax incentive. Once those sectors are identified, better GHG reduction estimates could be calculated.

Discussion Area 7: Product Design Center

The premise of the product design center proposal is that in manufacturing there are huge upstream discards generated relative to finished products. The design center would provide support and catalytic actions to those retailers which consider industrial product design as a way of reducing the amount of discards. The most likely industries are paper and packaging, or metals, plastics and composites for the electronics or aerospace industry. There are potentially significant GHG reductions associated with this proposal. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- Many of the implementing organizations and tools are already in place. One of the next steps for this proposal is vetting it with potential stakeholders to gauge their level of commitment. Another next step would be to discuss where the design center would be housed.
- One potential pitfall with the proposal is that if a manufacturer develops a system that gives his or her company a competitive advantage, the design center will ensure that it becomes standard practice, thus removing the competitive advantage. This should be weighed against the need for design guidelines and product manufacturing standards.

Discussion Area 8: Environmentally Responsible Purchasing

The environmentally responsible purchasing proposal aims to consolidate and amend a large number of RCWs related to government procurement. Potential GHG reductions are high; however the stakeholder work and amendment needs have not been assessed or conducted yet, which is the next step for this proposal. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- One indication of the potential impact of improved purchasing policies is that government is one of the largest users of paper.
- Currently the principal mantra for government purchasing is to buy the most product for the least cost.

Grouping Proposal Discussion

The co-leads introduced the group to a proposal to aggregate the previously assigned task areas into broader categories for presentation to the CAT, keeping in mind the workgroup's deliverables of draft legislative language and/or administrative proposals. The proposed grouping is designed with timing of implementation as a consideration. Workgroup members provided the following comments:

- The CAT Co-Chairs want each IWG to give as much specificity as possible, recognizing that more work will have to be done in the future. The Co-Chairs also want the group to prioritize which strategies are timely, which are more strategic, and which should be placed on hold for later.
- Establishing strong procurement practices should be among the high priority strategies since it demonstrates leading by example. Providing incentives for product manufacturing should also be a high priority since such a strategy drives system improvements.
- Most of the proposed strategies could be viewed under the umbrella of modifications to RCW 70.95, which would be a major proposal. One strategy could be to advance one or two proposals to the CAT and suggest a joint legislative committee develop a more complete overhaul of RCW 70.95 in 2010 or 2011.
- The workgroup discussed the issue of a market for the increased amount of collected materials. Generally speaking, there is a market for paper and organics, and for C&D materials there are some limitations. There is currently a capacity for yard waste handling, but not food waste (both composting and anaerobic digestion). For Eastern Washington, paper and C&D materials are a priority; food waste has limited capacity.
- From the CAT's perspective the critical issue is the impediment to optimizing the collection system and the mechanism for overcoming it.
- The largest GHG savings come from substituting recycled materials for virgin materials, which means the material demand side should be a major consideration. Environmentally preferred purchasing mandates for the public sector are an excellent start since government is the largest single purchaser of goods.

Public Comment Period

Steve Wamback, Pierce County Solid Waste Manager:

Steve encouraged the group to think about the opportunity for public and local government to have a role to play in order to ensure long-term success. The collection optimization proposal is great because it uses existing curbside collection. It is also important to include education throughout the state to teach people that recycling conserves the environment and reduces GHG emissions. Under RCW 70.95, collection/recycling authority is granted to local governments, which this group should respect. Environmentally preferred purchasing and product design are also necessary elements.

Next Steps and Agreements:

- The leaders of each discussion area will set up meetings (via doodle) to discuss their next steps.
- The Co-leads will provide the group with updates from the July 25 CAT meeting.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled Beyond Waste IWG meeting will be a face-to-face meeting on Wednesday, August 6.