

MEETING MINUTES
DRAFT 1 20-07-2007

Materials Recycling Facilities Standard Initiative – Project Kick-Off Meeting

July 11, 2007 * 8:15am – 5:15pm

University of Washington Waterfront Activities Center / Seattle, WA

Stakeholders Present: *Please click [HERE](#) for a list of attendees and their organizations*

Project Goal:

To develop and implement a processing level standard for Materials Recycling Facilities (MRFs) that would reduce contamination levels leaving the MRFs and directly increase recycling of materials in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska.

Desired Outcomes:

- *Shared understanding of key interests and concerns of all stakeholders
 - *Shared understanding of “the status quo” (what we do and don’t know), including more information about the ISRI standard and individual MRF operations
 - *Agreement that there is a need to develop a new standard for MRF materials
 - *Agreement on the Vision and Mission of the group that will develop the standard
 - *Input into an implementation strategy for achieving the mission
 - *Identification of opportunities for collaboration:
 - Assess commitment level of stakeholders
 - Identify follow-up needed to determine resource commitments
 - *Input into what we want the standard to accomplish (not nuts and bolts)
 - *A diverse group of stakeholders to develop and implement the contamination standard
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MEETING PROCESS HIGHLIGHTS:

- Stakeholders agreed that the vision of the workgroup needed to change to encompass the quality of *incoming* materials to MRFs as well as the contamination levels in the outgoing material. The new **VISION** is as follows:

To develop a standard and guidelines for co-mingled recycling systems such that:

- 1) **Cross-contamination of recyclable materials would be reduced**
- 2) **The quality and quantity of materials recycled would be increased**
- 3) **The highest percentage of materials that are intended to be recycled would be captured.**

- Stakeholders slightly altered the mission of the workgroup to reflect the changed vision. The new **MISSION** is as follows:

To agree to a clear and measurable standard and guidelines that:

- 1) **Allows governments and other contracting entities to easily and consistently specify that their materials are collected and processed according to the standard and guidelines for haulers**
- 2) **Allows haulers and MRFs to achieve a market advantage by meeting the standard**
- 3) **Increases the overall quantity and quality of material recycled**

- 4) **Reduces the quantity of recyclable material lost as either outthrow or prohibitive materials in other recycling streams.**
- 5) **Has a consistent measurement and evaluation system that is cost effective and transparent**
- 6) **Encourages and rewards more effective and efficient collection systems**

Subgroups were formed to work on the vision and mission outside of the large stakeholder meeting. Subgroup leaders were chosen and stakeholders assigned themselves to certain groups. Subgroups, their members and their purposes are listed below. All subgroup meetings will take place via teleconference. *If you want to join a subgroup please e-mail Melissa Winters at Winters.Melissa@epa.gov.*

Subgroup #1: Standards and Guidelines

Note: This subgroup will begin work IMMEDIATELY.

***LEADERS:**

- Lois Young, Skagit River Steel & Recycling
loisy@skagitriversteel.com
- Joe Bushnell, Tacoma Recycling Co., Inc.
joeb@wasteconnections.com

***PURPOSE:** To develop a draft standard and guidelines for approval by the larger group that does the following:

- 1) Clearly defines the acceptable level of contamination for incoming material to MRFs from collection processes or specifies Best Management Practices for collectors of co-mingled materials.
- 2) Clearly defines levels at which materials processed at MRFs are considered not cross contaminated by other recyclable materials and are considered usable for high end products.
- 3) Reflects the larger mission of work group

***MEMBERS:** Jay Donnaway (SP Recycling Corporation), Dodge Zellner (Smurfit-Stone Recycling Company), Doug Swan (JMK Fibers), Suzanne Tresko (Spokane Regional Solid Waste System), Jay Simmons (NORPAC), Jay McCuistion (Oregon Recycling Systems), Pat Fahey* (Southern Oregon Sanitation), Shannon McClelland (Washington State Department of Ecology), Jeff Murray (Far West Fibers), Dave White* (Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association), Janet Malloch (Blue Heron Paper Company), Scott Campbell (Waste Connections), Dave Bader (Northwest Recycling)

Note: Stakeholders with an asterisk () by their names indicated that they wanted to focus on collection issues.*

2) Subgroup #2: Evaluation

LEADER: Lee Barrett, Metro

barrettl@metro.dst.or.us

PURPOSE: To develop and propose an evaluation system for a standard and guidelines that includes financing, roles and accountability.

MEMBERS: Alex Cuyler (City of Eugene), Jay Simmons (NORPAC), Doug Swan (JMK Fibers), John Lucini (SP Recycling Corporation), Ed Tolan (Nippon Paper Industries), Gretchen Newman (Washington State Department of Ecology), Jeff Murray (Far West Fibers), Dave White (Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association)

3) Subgroup #3: Market Value

Note: This subgroup will begin its work AFTER the evaluation subgroup has completed its tasks.

LEADER: Dave Frutiger, City of Tacoma
dfrutige@cityoftacoma.org

PURPOSE: To develop and propose a plan to ensure that the standard and guidelines are incorporated into contracts, purchasing, policy and permitting.

MEMBERS: Tom Mabie (Glass Packaging Institute), Dan Gee (Weyerhaeuser), Shannon McClelland (Washington State Department of Ecology)

- Stakeholders agreed to the year-long timeline to develop the standards and guidelines. Please review the [PROCESS MAP](#) for the full timeline (*you may want to click on 'Browse' and then 'Full Screen' to better view the document*). The process map will also be made available on the permanent website at <https://epaqpx.rtp.epa.gov/r10co-mingledrecyclingsystemsstandardandguidelinesinitiative>.

(Please see the following sections for more detailed minutes from the meeting)

***MEETING INTRODUCTION**

By Vicky Salazar and Deborah Robinson of Region 10, EPA

- ~Review of project goal, purpose of the meeting and desired outcomes
 - need agreement that there is a need to develop the standard
 - will you put your time and energy into this for it to happen?
- ~Note salmon colored evaluation sheets
 - if there are other people who need to be involved, please write them down and let us know about it!
- ~Review of agenda
- ~Introductions: **What would be a positive outcome of today's meeting for you?**
Each stakeholder responded to this question and their responses are noted below:
- *Agreement to work toward development of standard

- *Make sure the market is clear of any bad players
- *Come out with more information on how to look at single stream recycling systems
- *Interested to see what happens regarding glass up here and MRF standards
- *Understand challenges with getting good quality products
- *Understand what standards we are trying to set
- *Confidence that I can market my material
- *We are currently providing recycled materials and are concerned about impact of standard
- *Improve container recycling rates (product and quantity)
- *What needs the manufacturers have for the material they are using
- *Work with everyone to get better material flowing out
- *Understand what specifications affect us (ISRI specifically)
- *See what group can come up with
- *Take away how cities can be involved in this process & how they can have the best quality marketing material
- *Talk to rate payer effectively (collection customer) and what their role is and how the city can position itself to assure them or not assure them that materials are being recycled
- *Tacoma has a 3 bin system with organic waste on the side – should we go to single stream or not? This meeting will help
- *Marketable material going in leads to good marketables going out – interested to see how this meeting will lead to this
- *Clean up the quality and get the glass out so we can make paper
- *Move recycling forward – promoting recycling industry is critical to the evolution of the industry
- *Remove past barriers and think outside the box because mills get stuck with materials that they don't want
- *The whole process is a system and starts with the homeowner. We need a better understanding by municipalities of what standards are these days and what can be taken out efficiently and this can be translated back to homeowners.
- *Educate participants and entities contracted with us – what makes sense regarding collection
- *It would be nice for the group to understand that this process is a system so we need to look at the quality coming out of the MRFs but the material going in as well.
- *Domestic mills made a serious commitment to absorb materials coming out of curbside programs but what is coming out of the other end of MRFs is being exported because of contamination, etc. I want to see a better process and a more level playing field
- *See how we can better manage the recycling rate and better recycling in the state in a streamlined process
- *Relation to Agenda 2020...consortium to recover fiber
- *Best Practices for home recycling is the true issue and I would like the umbrella to be bigger than just the MRFs. Also if paper isn't available we use woodchips so natural resources issues are present too.
- *We had to shut down a mill (because it couldn't compete) and people lost jobs. We need to focus on buying products that MRFs produce and recover them at a pulp and paper mill
- *Would like to see a whole system wide process. We need to work together
- *Leave here with commitments from a variety of stakeholders that will have substantive impacts across the system to increase the quality and quantity of the materials going through the system (closed loop)
- *Spend a lot of resources on recycling and work on the local government connection
- *Commitment from all of us to move forward and what are the key leverage points to work around
- *Share data to improve system overall

- *Increase the quality and quantity of recyclables (especially glass) – anything that this group can do to help that is good
- *Operations side is important and also want to bring ISRI information to the meeting. Also, other packaging people need to be here (cardboard, plastic, aluminum)
- *There are numerous curbside customers and we need to give a simple formula to MRFs (garbage in – garbage out, i.e. the amount of garbage a MRF gets is what one will get out). We need accurate numbers of how successful our programs are – without those numbers we are dead in the water. The rate payer pays for feeling good to put something in the container – there is a reluctance to tell them what to put in those containers. We are not looking for sampling numbers
- *We need good feedback on what is being recycled and we need true numbers coming out of the MRFs and the mills so that we can tell the local governments what to do
- *Tell what my recycling partners need – absorb and contribute

SET THE CONTEXT OF THE MEETING

**Vicky Salazar spoke about the EPA's role in this process and Shannon McClelland discussed why the states are here at the table*

---**Vicky Salazar:** EPA sees that the product going out of the MRF and to the mill is one of the most measurable points in the system

- ~it is a system and all the pieces are needed, but what is the leverage point
 - ***leverage point:** what is the product that is leaving the MRF and going to the mill
- ~EPA does not see ourselves as experts...we have the ability to convene
 - *stakeholders educate us
- ~Make an environmentally and economically sustainable system
 - *we are not the direct implementation of the solid waste system so we are not here for that purpose
 - *our goal is to get the best numeric use out of the materials that are collected

Question: Is this part of RCC?

*EPA has a program called the resource conservation challenge (solid waste and recycling is one of the 3 programs under this RCC). The RCC goals are associated with how much can be connected – we want to take it to the next piece and say how can we process more effectively. This discussion came from the Beverage Container Initiative and the contamination subgroup. These discussions are being tracked by HQ (they are interested).

~History of Beverage Container Dialogue

- We convened a regional meeting last August to address how to increase Bev. Cont. recycling in WA State – 4 subgroups formed
 - 1*incentive for collection (this moved forward...in partnership with NWPSC and went out for an RFP to increase recycling through incentives)
 - 2*contamination (reduce contamination coming out of MRFs and going to mills...Tom Mabie and Peter Spindelow helped with this – these discussions led to this meeting and process today)
 - 3*outreach and communications (needed to be specific to a project)
 - 4*data (WA state had good data)

~To be clear – this discussion is not intended to be exclusive to containers at all. The Beverage Container group decided to broaden to all recyclable materials as well...

~We want to work together over a year to work on this

~Diversion and collection is not recycling so that material is made into something new. No matter what we collect, if it is not leaving the MRF clean it doesn't do any good. We need to get all of the added value and benefit that we can. There is a lot of contamination happening and it hurts the whole system.

~We would like to have consistency nationwide eventually

~What EPA wants to see from this process:

*ID what standards should be

*Who is meeting the standard

*Reward those who are meeting the standard (thus making the standard viable in the long term)

---**Shannon McClelland:** The main reasons why the states are at the table are as follows:

- 1) Accurate data for recycling rate
- 2) Annual recycling reports from facilities that are not working to capture contamination/residuals levels
- 3) A significant amount of local government time and resources (a portion of which are funded through the state) go into residential recycling programs
- 4) Waste to product issues – If our system is going to move away from waste as a concept, as is the vision of the Beyond Waste Plan, the sorting technology and infrastructure needs to be in place to support that shift.
- 5) Highest end use markets --- Materials are not downgraded as a result of moving through the collection or recovery system
- 6) Overall citizen confidence in the closed-loop system – If the public does their part by separating it at the curb, the system does its part by ensuring those materials stay in the recycled commodity stream

STATUS QUO PRESENTATIONS & STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION

Presentations were given by the following individuals about the status quo regarding Materials Recycling Facilities. The presentations used by these individuals are available at the permanent website online at: <https://epaqp.rtp.epa.gov/r10co-mingledrecyclingsystemsstandardandguidelinesinitiative>. You may also e-mail Melissa Winters at Winters.Melissa@epa.gov for a copy of the presentations. After the presentations were given, stakeholders were asked to discuss the key points of the presentations, reactions and missing information

Presentations Set 1 - Topic: What is the Issue

*PRESENTERS:

---Mill: Jay Simmons, NORPAC

---Government: Peter Spendelow, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

---Material Recycling Facility: Rita Smith, Waste Management

*TALKING POINTS FOR EACH PRESENTATION (each presenter needs to address these questions/topics in their speech):

- What is the problem that has brought us here today (from your own perspective)?
- Why is this a problem (from your own perspective)?
- What are the implications of this problem (from your own perspective)?
- What are the opportunities (from your own perspective)?
- What are the constraints (from your own perspective)?
- What is your vision for the future (from your own perspective)?

Presentations Set 2 - Topic: Existing Data

***PRESENTERS:**

- Lee Barrett, Metro
- Jeff Gaisford, King County Solid Waste Division

***TALKING POINTS FOR EACH PRESENTATION** (each presenter needs to address these questions/topics in their speech):

- Report/Comment on the implications of your findings
- What are some gaps in the data?
- What are your conclusions?

Presentations Set 3 - Topic: What is out there now

***PRESENTERS:**

- Lois Young, Skagit, Skagit River Steel & Recycling, Inc. (Regarding the ISRI Standard)
- Dave Frutiger, City of Tacoma

****TALKING POINTS FOR EACH PRESENTATION** (each presenter needs to address these questions in their speech):

- What works about the standard/tool that is used?
- What doesn't work about the standard/tool that is used?
- How is the standard/tool measured?
- If you had to do it again (i.e. develop a new tool/standard again) what would you do differently?

STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION REGARDING THE STATUS QUO PRESENTATIONS

*Stakeholders discussed 1) the key points of the status quo presentations, 2) their reactions to the presentations, and 3) any missing information from the presentations. **Please note that the bolded sections indicate responses recorded by stakeholders on handout sheets that were later typed into these minutes.***

1. KEY POINTS

- *Keep glass separate
- *Shredded paper is a problem
- *Domestic markets vs. export markets
 - MRFs depend on export markets
 - information is not good about what is happening in export markets
- *Consistent local government programs about what should be collected at curbside and getting that consistent with programs around the state is important
- *Education is critical
- *Even though residual levels were low (in King County study) they are still not meeting ISRI specs
- *Need to be consistent

- municipal agreements needed
- *RFPs sent out are critical
- *Status quo descriptions were accurate (nothing shocking)
- *Achieving a modest standard is possible (mission is not impossible)
- *At ONP mills, contamination is an issue and cost contamination is significant
- *With automation in single stream the ability to effectively communicate to people who are putting bins out is hindered (we are losing our audience)
- *Broad range of contributing factors (a MRF standard is not going to solve everything)
- *Mills say contamination is paramount
- *Data: real numbers are important (operations day in and day out)
- *Glass and plastic bags are a huge problem
- *Education is key (where there is a strong educational focus you have cleaner material coming in)
- *Overall competition in market issues (similar between MRFs and mills). Pressure exists to go to the “other guy”
- *Lots of material and money is lost at both places – the MRF and the mill (in terms of the data collection that would be interesting to talk about)
- *There are no standards and everyone agrees across the system that this is a problem

2. REACTIONS

- *The systems that we have set up made everything so complicated so that the things that are recyclable is very confusing (how can we expect the public to understand)
- *Tolerance for outthrow at MRFs is different than it was a decade ago
- *The mills don’t seem to have communicated their issues to some of the jurisdictions
- *Good conversation about brief comment Peter made about local jurisdictions having the requirement that materials go to a site that has certain standards (but there is no set standard and no enforcement mechanisms for those standards)
- *2 things we wanted MRFs to work on (residuals vs. cross contamination)

3. MISSING INFORMATION

- *Cost benefit analysis of what the MRFs are getting
- *Environmental factors
- *Processors (glass/plastic)
- *Glass and aluminum manufacturers
- *No full discussion of economic incentives for MRFs to export
- *Use of data to show impact of contamination was not exercised
- *What are the goals and objectives of regulators in the next 10 years (how are we going to increase our recycling)
- *Would a collection company be willing to give back efficiencies to the MRF b/c of increased sorting types
- *Economic analysis (money being lost)
 - how does the rate payer pay into that sort of system (there are hundreds of thousands of rate payers)? Once you have it collected – how is it distributed?
- *Public education and what that means for quality
 - *MRF operators and operations specialists are not marketers (need to enlist professional people to do this)
- *Overseas portion of contamination (further losses overseas)
- *Plastic bags (no technological fix it appears for MRF operators) as the shift goes along, you get reduced efficiency because of bags clogging them up and you have lost material and money
- *If you want regional MRF standards, then you need to have regional collection standards (take different materials from different markets)
- *Energy related costs (including transportation) have exploded at the middle end

- *Glass folks concerning method of depots being a part of the solution
- *Packaging manufactures that create the products we have to deal with are missing
- *No hauler viewpoint presented (the status quo works for the hauler)
- ***Other recyclers and manufacturers**
- ***Other processors (glass and plastic)**
- ***Think out into the future what could change**
- ***What is happening internationally**
- ***Cost/benefit analysis**
- ***Packaging manufacturers missing (they are creating the products that we end up with)**
- ***Retailers**
- ***Tolerance**
- ***what's the true cost/benefit and long term implications**
- ***Start looking at hauler equipment replacement in 2010**
- ***Higher MRF tipping fees**
- ***Closure of local mills**
- ***Economic Analysis (rate payer impacts and education (marketing specialists))**
- ***Replacement needs**
- ***Options out there that can keep glass out but keep automation**
- ***Overseas impact and contamination**
- ***Bags issue (plastic bags are impacting sort and increasing cross contamination of recyclables because equipment doesn't work as well)**
- ***No technological fix on horizon and reduced efficiency is compounding impact (work as shift evolves)**
- ***Analysis: what are implications to rate payers**
- ***Because of the lack of standard at the MRFs, energy related costs, including transportation, have exploded at the mill end**
- ***The current economic system does not take into effect the external environmental costs of export**
- ***Glass collection and buyers of glass a way to control pricing for positive competition**

STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS AND CONCERNS

Each table of stakeholders were asked to answer the a series of questions (1-With respect to developing a new standard for MRFs, what are you most interested in and/or what are you most concerned about?, 2-How might we address these issues and concerns in any projects we undertake together?, 3 – If this process is successful, what will be key outcomes?) and then report back their answers back to the larger group. Please note that the bolded sections indicate responses recorded by stakeholders on handout sheets that were inserted into these notes.

1. WITH RESPECT TO DEVELOPING A NEW STANDARD FOR MRFs, WHAT ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN AND/OR WHAT ARE YOU MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?

- *Standard could stifle innovation, establish subsidies that could cause problems
 - the standard needs to be self sustaining in the market place
- *The material that people put out needs to be fully recycled at a given percentage (95% of bottles should go to back to bottles or higher use products)
- *A lot of mills get good material (that is sorted correctly) but it is not coming out of the mill correctly
- *'Beneficial use' definitions are ambiguous
- *There should not be a standard on the MRF that will penalize them from the quality of the material coming in (example: you have to keep your residual below X%)
- *Cross contamination (bottles going to newspaper) is a bigger issue than residual

- *New standard must address the economic status of rural market
- *Enforceable standard
- *Improve quality of glass and quantity of glass
- *Feedback from MRFs on incoming material (to get cleaner material going in)
- *MRF should recycle all items community is asked to recycle
- *Look for ways to measure, monitor and enforce quality for these standards
- *Standard must be realistic (economical and achievable)
 - ISRI standards for paper are NOT achievable
- *Benefit from consistent and common understanding of terminologies
 - everyone needs to agree what is a contaminant, outthrow, etc...
- *Be realistic standard that we are still able to enforce
 - One standard or variability in standards from region to region?
- *Equity in who is going to pay
- *Standard would stop collection of glass curbside
- *There should be uniform standards for materials picked up
- *Changing technologies
- *Sustainable markets
- *If regulators mandate these standards, what is the impact of the standards that were originally agreed to?
- *Ramifications for not meeting these standards
- *Mandated standard might be something that all existing facilities could immediately achieve
- *Not enough budget dollars from government perspective to have standards at curb meet MRF standards
- *Need for standard or need to implement standards?
- ***Budgeting issues – statewide oversight would be expensive and unpopular**
 - collection issue is to prohibit residuals
 - processing (MRF) issue it to improve proper sort
- ***Concern that not all facilities could achieve a mandated standard**
- ***Not enough education dollars (budget) to achieve curbside standards**
- ***How to implement a standard? Enforce standard?**
- ***Economically viable ideas to solve contamination**
- ***Improving quality and quantity**
- ***Realistic standard that can be met but still an environmental leadership standard**
- ***Enforceability of standard**
- ***One standard or variable standard**
- ***Who is going to pay**
 - How do we create equity
- ***People will stop collecting glass**
- ***Concerned about the regulations impacting the viability of the MRF with regulation. Let the market determine product specification, prices and acceptance policies (p. 36 of King County Waste Monitoring Plan)**
- ***How to protect investment(s) made by MRFs to reach standard from being undercut by others not meeting the standard?**
- ***Level the playing field**
- ***What will be the ramifications of exceeding the standards – even if a product buyer is available?**
- ***Collection benefits are distributed over all players of the system, with an overall net gain to entire system – both short and long term**
- ***Meets community goals = economics and resource conservation**
- ***Collector determines what is collectable**
- ***Improve quality of glass and quantity (2X)**

- magnets, air separation, ?, optical sorting for ceramics
- *Feedback from MRF on quality of involving material to educate community
- *MRF should recycle all items we ask community to recycle
- *Establish realistic quality standards that are enforceable. Recyclable end up in the right stream.
- *Glass removal sources
- *invalid plastics contamination
- *Smaller recycling centers for independent drops
- *Concern – won't stick to standards (not enforceable)
 - standards need to be self-sustaining
- *Interest – level playing field where every stakeholder adopts/uses (including export)
- *Concern – government mandate
- *Economy is not considered – won't be successful
- *Quality of material marketed
- *Cross contamination
- *Recycled material process from diagrams from the home to the material processor (mill) this should drive curb definitions
- *What happens to small plastic containers and small cardboard boxes...i.e. what about nesting boxes. Is there a way to concentrate materials in corrugated.
- *Contrast to Europe – where producers are required to take back packaging. Are there parts of this system we could use? (Milk Jugs?)
 - Also some Europe systems (fiber rich, containers)
- *Cross contamination bigger issue than residual
- *Must address economic reality of world market
- *Must be enforceable standard

2.HOW MIGHT WE ADDRESS THESE ISSUES AND CONCERNS IN ANY PROJECTS WE UNDERTAKE TOGETHER?

- *Education of public
- *Cooperation between MRF operator, city, collector, rate payers
- *Way to charge residual back to those who generate it
- *Agreement between municipalities, haulers and MRFs to improve quality down the line
- *% of material should go to regional markets (to maintain viability of domestic mills)
- *Commodity markets have a life of their own (international markets are going to drive prices and local folks have to react to that)
 - standards may be good, but we have to understand they are a small player
- *Better to collect separated at the curb or together
- *MRF buys equipment for sorting but may not have assurance from manufactures that it performs at the right level
- *ID best management practices
- *Regional education programs
- *Incentives (environmental credits)
- *Measure, monitor and enforce
- *EPA to survey as many municipalities as possible (take suggestions from a work group)
 - a – rules for curbside
 - b – other avenues for recycling – bottle bill, plastic bags at grocer, drop off centers
 - c – Successes and modifications in last 5 years
 - d – Also survey MRFs – best suppliers so they can be surveyed
- *How can commingled recyclables be put in the rolling cart bin in a more concentrated form so they are removed in a MRF? No one seems to like this idea – but could we experiment with different bags to hold plastic containers that could be picked out?

- *Who pays?
- *Identify best management practices
- *Better co-mingled procedures
- *Responsibility for residential awareness?
- *Advertising dollars
- *Manufacturers that employ high volumes should be mandated to implement a plan
- *Awareness of the fact that we can't do it all for the public no matter how much we are paid. Realistic and steady improvement from a holistic approach (energy, carbon emissions, less natural resources used, noise, pollution, social economics as well)
- *Agreement among municipality – hauler – MRF
- *% of material goes to regional market
- *Producer responsibilities – yes – but consumers have a responsibility also. Consumers are happy to accept and pay for the convenience of packaging, but reluctant to accept
- *Standard could be voluntary with a third person independent certification organization
- *Regional education
- *Centrally enforced standard
- *Incentives – environmental credits
- *Concentrate on a regional education plan to identify what can and should be included in regional
- *Do a study on what is economically better – collecting clean or cleaning after collection
- *How do you hold manufacturer accountable for product
- *Create enforcement/evaluation mechanism
- *Identify Best Management Practices
- *Track Economics
- *Common Technology
- *Achievable Markets

3. IF THIS PROCESS IS SUCCESSFUL, WHAT WILL BE KEY OUTCOMES?

- *Collection benefits will be spread out over the entire system, short term and long term (50 years+)
- municipalities are not determining what they want (they are being lobbied as to what they collect)
- *Community needs to understand consequences of not proper sorting
- *Every stakeholder adopts and uses standard
- *Quantitative measurements in place to make sure standards are met and that those measurements are based on statistically significant sample sizes
- *All recyclables go to the right stream
- *Make data available to all stakeholders without maiming MRFs
- *Less contamination coming into MRFs and into mills
- *More community confidence and higher recovery rates and mills
- *Increased recycling rate that is a true recycling rate that takes into account the stuff that the mills (end users) throw away
- more accurately measure the recycling rate to take those into account
- *Increase quality and quantity of materials
- *Minimize cross contamination
- *Waste less
- *What we come up with needs to be politically feasible
- *True viable markets and better recyclable rates
- *Sustainable
- *Decreased operating costs
- *Standards at the curb need to meet standards at the mill

- *Collection standards would be more related to residuals and MRF standards would prevent cross contamination
- *Need to communicate between MRFs and government
- *Achievable mandates
- *Audit what is happening
- *Idea that there could be a curbside stream that is rich in fibers
 - other solutions for plastics, glass, etc...
- *Might be another stream that is more important for product stewardship type approaches
- *Better statewide collaboration**
- *Highest and best use (does this include some recognitions of domestic markets?)**
- *Community confidence**
- *Standards at MRF should directly relate to standards at curb. Collection standards geared to decrease residuals; MRF standards focused on decreasing X-contamination of recyclables (e.g. bottles in ONP)**
- *Need communication between MRFs and governments re: standards**
- *Quantity / audit outcomes to ensure standards are met**
- *Mandate must be achievable**
- *Common terminology**
- *Possibility: curbside stream rich in fibers; other stream rich in containers. Product stewardship approaches for various streams**
- *Recyclables must end up in right stream**
- *Better products for all recycled products “ISTRI #8”**
- *Increase quality and quantity**
- *Total cost low as possible and equitably distributed**
- *Minimize cross contamination**
- *We know what is really happening – data measurement**
- *Politically feasibly**
- *Less waste and more real recycling**
- *Better quality. Better rates of recycling.**
- *Viable markets and decreased cost**
- *Definitely who is responsible (to correct the problem)**
 - the generator, the collector/transporter, the MRF, end user
- *Identify how flow control or lack thereof will impact a MRFs ability to add increase operating costs without losing the material to other facilities or options not covered by the standard**
- *Development of standards that makes sure that recyclables get recycled at paper markets and do not go to a market were they will get disposed.**
- *MRFs should recycle all items that the community asks them to recycle**
- *Less contamination coming in and going out of MRF**
- *Going to manufacturers**
- *More community confidence**
- *Higher recovery rates at the mills**
- *Standard expectation for incoming standard and standards for output material – uniform standards.**
- *Auditable measurement in place**
- *Best management practices**
- *Also – out of country trading is highly encouraged by our state. Recycling exports are a 65 billion dollar industry and help balance national trade deficit and in Washington.**
- *More resources for end users**
- *Less landfill deposits**
- *Next generation commitments**

- *Responsibility to the mainstream
- *100% goes to the right user
- *Incentives for compliance
- *With one arm movement by a worker at a MRF compared to 25 picks? Then these clear 3 million plastic bag bundles could go through a secondary sort.
- *All the recyclables end up in the right stream
- *Quantitative measurements to ensure standards are met and based on statistical significant sample sizes
- *Make data available to all stakeholders but without naming MRFs

GENERAL DISCUSSION

- *There were notes in one of the documents which said that recycling was considered to be more resource management
 - helpful if community sets goals about what they expect out of recycling system
 - there are other benefits of what we are trying to do beside market sustainability
- *One challenge we are going to have with regional standards, is that there are programs in Washington that allow glass with paper (Oregon decided to take glass out of paper)
 - might need 2 different standards
- *Concerns from state perspective: when depots were instigated to curbside, the amount of material recycled took a jump and when curbside went to commingled there was another jump
 - look at how realistic it is for people to make that effort to think about what they are recycling
- *Recycling rate does go up, but we don't have accurate measurement about what is recycling and what isn't
 - are we measuring what comes off the back end?
 - we don't have enough data to do that
 - need to take a holistic approach regarding the actual consumer and public in general (less natural resources used needs to be translated to the consumers so they aren't just 'feeling good' about recycling)
- *Consumer convenience is the touchstone for making sure you have recycling rates at a high level...switchover from at separation at the curb to commingled at the curb. However, the reason recycling increased was not because it was commingled, it was because it switched to a rolling bin
 - when they gave people same rolling bins to commingle or source separate, volume was the same...
- *The biggest contaminate to a mill is brown fiber and chip board (cereal boxes, etc...) We still have plastic bags coming through our system...
- *Different system for mills if there is a 2 bin system
- *The reason local governments like commingling is because there are less collection costs
 - costs born by the rate payer

Comment: But costs don't leave the system – overall what is the most cost effective system?
- *Oregon had made significant steps...maybe fiber rich on curb and container rich on the collection (everyone wins)
- *One thing don't lose sight of – when a municipality makes a change in a recycling system...they need to go further downstream than just the hauler...the MRFs in their region need to be capable of dealing with what is going on
- *Clarification on fiber rich (put deposit on containers or redemption centers...now you are providing other incentives for the consumer to go somewhere else)
- *Need to adjust recycling rates
- *Citizens want to see recycling
- *Don't discourage closed loop recycling

- standards need to be strong enough so that they don't discourage closed loop recycling
- *Domestic mills...we would like to keep the material as domestic as possible...
 - call it closed loop
 - avoid "down cycling"
- *Global warming and carbon trading
 - there is money in there and it is a real possibility to augment global warming
- *Provide opportunities to push toward more full circle recycling and more newspaper in Seattle – have a dual stream collection...
 - looked at other issues relating to quality of performance standards
 - we established expectations to bring MRF line workers up to a living wage standard
 - we were worried about market response
 - ~high cost to what we are talking about
 - though there is a lot of angst about glass in single stream (glass together and glass separate was not that significant)
- *Overall environmental benefit has to be looked at as an overall goal
 - domestic vs. foreign markets
- *Discussion of producer responsibility
 - manufacturers of glass containers, plastic containers...we are dealing with their detritus

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION & KEY POINTS

Vicky Salazar summarized the key points of the discussion.

~Vicky recognized that conversations with manufacturers need to happen as well, but we are not going to have that today

~Key Points of Discussion:

- *Overall components or goal of the system is to recycle more material to highest and best use
- *Equitable cost across system
- *Measurable (metrics needed)
 - data about what is being recycled, how clean are materials going in/out and what mills are recycling
- *There needs to be a link to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reductions. Other programs that are out there to deal with GHG should be utilized.
- *Collection, processing, and marketing need to address government goals and where they send products and spend money
- *Identify Best practices (confusion in the market place)
- *System wide conversation about impacts
- *Increase environmental protection and environmental benefits

VISION AND MISSION CONVERSATION

Stakeholders discussed the draft vision and mission and altered each. The finalized versions are written below:

NEW VISION:

To develop a standard and guidelines for co-mingled recycling systems such that:

- 1) Cross-contamination of recyclable materials would be reduced**
- 2) The quality and quantity of materials recycled would be increased**
- 3) The highest percentage of materials that are intended to be recycled would be captured.**

NEW MISSION:

To agree to a clear and measurable standard and guidelines that:

- 1) Allows governments and other contracting entities to easily and consistently specify that their materials are collected and processed according to the standard and guidelines for haulers
- 2) Allows haulers and MRFs to achieve a market advantage by meeting the standard
- 3) Increases the overall quantity and quality of material recycled
- 4) Reduces the quantity of recyclable material lost as either outthrow or prohibitive materials in other recycling streams.
- 5) Has a consistent measurement and evaluation system that is cost effective and transparent
- 6) Encourages and rewards more effective and efficient collection systems

Stakeholder Discussion Regarding Vision/Mission (comments recorded from handout sheets):

1. Comments on the Vision and Mission

- *It needs work. It is too complicated. Remember a camel was a horse designed by a committee.
- *Subject to wordsmithing. The concepts are fine. A standard for MRFs without considering the collection system seems destined to fail.
- *To have standards on packaged materials from MRFs that meet the requirements needed for utilization at local/regional facilities, not necessarily to meet global markets.
- *Needs to focus on education/collection guidelines before the material ends up at the MRF.
- *Sounds like a very daunting process at best. Money to be spent. Consumers to be educated.
- *Vision should be high level and broad. Mission should speak to maximizing economic value and would consider all stakeholders along supply chain.
- *I like the overall vision of developing standards and guidelines for commingled recycling systems. Then to tackle two tasks: develop curbside set out and education guidelines and develop standard percent prohibiting and outthrows and paper bales. Looking also at economic incentives is important such as carbon credits and trading money to MRFs for recycling that could be used for quality control on sort lines.

2. Major Concerns about Whether the Project Can Succeed

- *Discussion keeps fragmenting into whose fault it is rather than focusing on why so many recyclables are being baled as paper and lost at the mills. First and foremost we need to limit the amount of plastic bottles, aluminum cans and other recyclables in a bale of paper. Let's start with the MRF standard or spec and work out from there.
- *Multi-jurisdictions with differing regulatory statutory systems.
- *Cost issues when we get down to details
- *Political feasibility
- *Enforcement of standards. What happens to material that does not meet standards?
- *Need to keep a consensus going on guidelines
- *Who will be accountable for moving forward in the time frame allotted.
- *After thinking about it, I am concerned that nowhere in the vision/mission is it acknowledged that any new standards or guidelines have to be constrained by some kind of economics. Whatever is done is likely to increase cost and if those are too high, the standards will not succeed.

***I believe the successful outcomes needs to be regulatory in nature and not a collaborative standard. In effect, I would prefer for instance, framework for draft legislation applied at the state level (and hope that Oregon and Washington can work collaboratively).**

WORKGROUP (SUBGROUPS) DISCUSSION

Stakeholders discussed whether anyone from the design team was missing. Also, stakeholders discussed the different workgroups that will be formed as a result of our discussions. Then, stakeholders assigned themselves to the different workgroups.

*Is anyone missing from the design team?

- another mill person is needed
- plastics person
- glass person (Steve Brown – Fibers International at the Seattle Glass Plant)

1) Standards and Guidelines subgroup (MRF and Collection)

***Lois Young, Skagit River Valley and Steel will lead**

***Joe Bushnell from Tacoma Recycling will lead**

- this group will be created first
- 2 types of standards are possible (operation and product standards)

***PURPOSE:** To develop a draft standard and guidelines for approval by the larger group that does the following:

- 1) Clearly defines the acceptable level of contamination for incoming material to MRFs from collection processes or specifies Best Management Practices for collectors of co-mingled materials.
- 2) Clearly defines levels at which materials processed at MRFs are considered not cross contaminated by other recyclable materials and are considered usable for high end products.
- 3) Reflects the larger mission of work group

***MEMBERS:** Jay Donnaway (SP Recycling Corporation), Dodge Zellner (Smurfit-Stone Recycling Company), Doug Swan (JMK Fibers), Suzanne Tresko (Spokane Regional Solid Waste System), Jay Simmons (NORPAC), Jay McCuiston (Oregon Recycling Systems), Pat Fahey* (Southern Oregon Sanitation), Shannon McClelland (Washington State Department of Ecology), Jeff Murray (Far West Fibers), Dave White* (Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association), Janet Malloch (Blue Heron Paper Company), Scott Campbell (Waste Connections), Dave Bader (Northwest Recycling)

Note: Subgroup members with an asterisk () by their names indicated that they wanted to focus on collection issues.*

2) Evaluation

***Lee Barrett, Metro will lead**

PURPOSE: To develop and propose an evaluation system for a standard and guidelines that includes financing, roles and accountability.

MEMBERS: Alex Cuyler (City of Eugene), Jay Simmons (NORPAC), Doug Swan (JMK Fibers), John Lucini (SP Recycling Corporation), Ed Tolan (Nippon Paper Industries), Gretchen Newman (Washington State Department of Ecology), Jeff Murray (Far West Fibers), Dave White (Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association)

3) Market Value

***Dave Frutiger, City of Tacoma will lead**

PURPOSE: To develop and propose a plan to ensure that the standard and guidelines are incorporated into contracts, purchasing, policy and permitting.

MEMBERS: Tom Mabie (Glass Packaging Institute), Dan Gee (Weyerhaeuser), Shannon McClelland (Washington State Department of Ecology)

TIMELINE DISCUSSION

After reviewing the process map (also available on the website at <https://epa.qpx.rtp.epa.gov/r10co-mingledrecyclingsystemsstandardandguidelinesinitiative>), stakeholders were asked the following question: are you willing to make the commitment to get this done in our year long timeline, bearing in mind that subcommittees will meet via conference calls and it will require 2-3 hours per week of your time to participate in a sub-committee?

There was consensus over the year-long timeline from stakeholders

CONCLUSIONS YOU DRAW AS A RESULT OF OUR WORK TOGETHER

*Common terminology fouled us up a bit...

-what is a standard? Does it match my expectation of what would happen?

*There is a problem with the system

*Whole group is willing to work to solve those problems

*Something is possible out of this

*It is not going to be easy to put together the standards and will require a lot of bending of all the stakeholders

*Glad it will lead something other than a best practices manual to those who don't operate outside the industry

*Anything we design has to be workable and not static

*It was not an 'us' 'them' dialogue. In order to be successful this will require a systematic approach

*Feel better that people understand it can't just be the processor and that it takes everybody to do it

*There are challenges in not having the manufacturers in the room. There is a group of people who are not traditionally part of this discussion who could add a lot to it that need to be invited. Specifically, plastics packaging and plastic bags representatives and MRF equipment manufacturers need to be invited.

OTHER COMMENTS AND INPUT (Recorded off comment sheets)

***What kind of recovery can be done at the mill end? Sell back material gleaned/collected at the mill side to other vendors, such as plastics?**

***Do more research about different community best practices for recycling not just MRFs.**

***Can materials be concentrated in the commingled recycling bins so they are less difficult to remove.**

***Please recognize in the standards/guidelines that all companies involved in this (and that have to implement/live with these new standards/guidelines) need to be profitable and so these standards must be tempered by economic constraints.**

FOLLOW-UP WORK

Laura will arrange a website and e-mail link

Laura will also e-mail out participant list (those who were actually there) and presentations and post on the website
Design team will debrief afterward