

Broome County Environmental Management Council

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Broome County Environmental Management Council Recycling & Waste Management Committee (RWMC) Minutes from October 27, 2008

Conference Room "A", Broome County Health Department, 225 Front St, Binghamton, NY

Present: Tony Lubzanski, Debra Smith, Kevin Mathers, Josephine Chu, Julia Hoover, Ron Keibel, Ildi Mitchell, Jenni Royer, Crystal Regalado, Stacy Merola and Kris Lau. **Absent w/ excuse:** Chris Burger

1. Tony called the meeting to order at **4:07 pm**. Introductions followed. Minutes from July were not ready for approval. Kevin moved, Julia seconded to approve minutes from September with one correction: under item 4, bullet one, the fifth passage should read "Mary is looking at SWMP from *Iowa* and *Sioux Falls, South Dakota* to see which one closely mimics Broome. So far, Broome is similar to *Iowa* in terms of size and college community." Motion to adopted amended minutes carried.

2. Division of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) Reports

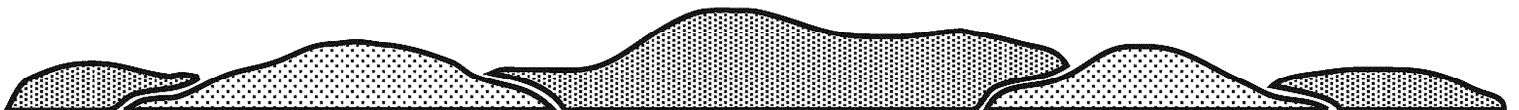
Recycling issues

- New Recycling Guide – drafts of the new Recycling Guide with more specific details and an insert for the Press & Sun-Bulletin were circulated. DSWM will attempt broader education outreach using the newspaper, although a release date is not set because the DSWM wants the Recycling Guide printed first. The full-color press insert will hit approx. 58,000 homes, and the new Guides will be sent to all towns, villages, libraries and garbage haulers.
- Electronic Waste Collections – During the Sept/Oct special events, 1,283 people participated and generated 70 tons of material (and collected lots of consol TVs). The breakdown is as follows: Windsor 71 people, 7 tons; Vestal 350 people, 20 tons; Chenango 267 people, 12 tons; Endicott (Grippen Park) 237 people, 11 tons; Otsiningo Park 297 people, 16 tons; and Whitney Point 60 people, 4 tons. The public looks forward to these events, and DSWM believes they are worth continuing, especially with the upcoming TV change in Feb 2009.
- Wastes in the classroom: Debra participated in a roundtable discussion with Vestal science teachers to discuss what's recyclables and what's hazardous in the classroom.
- The Press & Sun-Bulletin contacted DSWM for info about green holidays and recycling tips for their November 13 edition of *365 – Your life Made Easier* publication.
- Debra distributed the County's Tis the Season to Reduce, Reuse and Buy Recycle holiday brochure that includes tips and Christmas Tree recycling drop-off locations, which will also appear in the *365* publication.
- Landfill tours: Debra's busy with education; she has five landfill tours booked now for elementary schools.

Landfill entrance design

- Shumaker Consulting Engineer's test borings/drillers report is expected October 29 [Editor's note: *test borings were taken along the area of the 90-degree on Knapp Road where the present entrance of the landfill is, to see the feasibility of eliminating that curve and going up to county-owned land to tie into Knapp Road*]. Wetland delineation mapping is expected at the end of the month also. [Editor's note: *a wetland interferes with road reconfiguration near the Knapp Rd/Dunham Hill Rd intersection.*] In the preliminary plan there is room to adjust the road profile to avoid rock and to obtain the maximum allowable grade. DSWM expects a Road Alignment and Profile Plan from Shumaker by November 7 that shows the impact on the wetland.

Landfill Operations - Landfill staff have been primarily working on litter control because of strong winds.



3. BC Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) Update

Results of Stakeholder Interviews – Fifteen interviews were conducted in late July/early August; all went well; replies were close to what was anticipated.

- In term of solid wastes, some expressed desire for cheaper landfill fees, and that the tip fee for yard waste was too high and should be lowered, which was surprising. Also expressed were support for lowering the asbestos tip fee at the landfill, and developing a program for food wastes (transfer station that both Binghamton and Johnson City could use). Identification of outlets for end-user waste like large pieces of concrete and asphalt, was also noted.
- The primary issue of recycling was public education/outreach, specifically in institutions and businesses, which is a weak point that DSWM is adjusting. Debra said it is crucial to increase money available for outreach/education if improvements in the program are desired. DSWM has \$15000 for outreach.
- In terms of the Hazardous Wastes Program, the primary issue was having more collections on a more routine basis, perhaps opening it up to all days of the week.
- Other issues identified: Develop a Solid Waste Management internship for college students, and develop a grants program with municipalities.

Results of Recycling Characterization – R.W. Beck will submit final results soon. Pictures taken during the manual sort days were circulated. Debra described the process: every other truck load was tipped on a platform, then shoveled into a waste container, which was weighed. The materials were then sorted by hand into respective categories, including “Fines” or residuals, and those containers weighed.

- Lots of containers came with liquids, mostly from water bottles with caps still attached.
- Some plastic film was present but not in significant quantities.
- RW Beck ensured sorters were thorough. They also tried to track the amount of deposit containers.

Discussion about materials recycled and prices of recyclables followed - fiber markets dropped \$30/ton; newsprint is down \$10-20/ton; plastics are down \$22/ton.

SWMP Next Steps

- While awaiting results from recycling characterization, the consultants (RW Beck) began work on a waste characterization using the Iowa study for comparison. The consultants must file a FOIL (Freedom of Information Law) request to obtain the Iowa study.
- Consultants (Stearns & Wheler) began looking at and working on the Alternative Technology portion of the SWMP and will create white papers accordingly. DSWM will review and narrow down to the two most feasible technologies/applications, which will be considered more extensively in the SWMP.
- The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) gave the DSWM their blessing for consultants Brown & Caldwell to start a pilot study of a constructed wetland for to further “polish” treated leachate. A start date has not been set.
- Tony asked about the possibility of DSWM getting involved with collecting unused/unwanted pharmaceuticals. Debra said that the DEC is offering some guidance by promoting the “Do Not Flush” policy and working with places for collection. The Endicott Waste Treatment Plant contacted the County about working together on this issue; a meeting is scheduled for November 4 to discuss. Deb pointed out that planning a take back program will take a minimum of six months, and that getting all the team players together is crucial – DEC, Health Department, pharmacologists, town/municipality officers, law enforcement, a hazardous waste company, and pharmacists. Choosing a location (for safety concerns) and estimating the total cost of the program are also critical. Discussion followed.

4. Announcements/Member Items of Interest

- Concern about City Council’s considering privatization of their garbage collection system was discussed. Debra noted that to her understanding that the City was only bringing it to Council’s attention for informational purposes, not for any action.

- Smart Plastics Guide – distributed Guide produced by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. It contains a comprehensive summary about concerns of different number of plastics. It addresses chemicals like DEHA and bisphenol that are used in the manufacturing of plastics that may leach into food when heated. A lot of food packaging, including the lining of some cans and beverage containers, is using the type of plastics that should not be heated or have contact with food due to possible leaching. Discussion followed. A Q & A pamphlet was also shared.
- Landfill Citizen Advisory Committee (LCAC) – The LCAC met October 20 at Barker Town Hall to hear various updates from County staff. The LCAC meets again December 15 and will hear from Shumaker Consulting Engineers on the progress of the design and construction of the new landfill entrance and related road improvements. The results of the LCAC election for one of two landfill residents will also be disclosed – two residents living within one-half mile of the landfill are eligible to serve on the LCAC as a voting representative for three year terms.
- SRBC Public Hearing – EMC staff attended the Susquehanna River Basin Committee (SRBC) public hearing Oct. 22 on the proposed regulatory changes to streamline SRBC review and to address the large volumes of water necessary for hyrdofracturing (for natural gas drilling). Informational resources are posted on SRBC’s website: <http://www.srbc.net/programs/projreviewmarcellus.htm>.
- Article of Interest – Plastic’s Baggage – *Recycling Today* magazine published an article, which was circulated, about plastic bags – a debate about taxation, bans, and recycling of the film. Some elements gathered from the article note that the commodities markets want the plastics; biodegradable plastics do not serve as a solution since they take waste accountability out of the scene; changes in behavior are important for any programs success. Discussion followed.

5. Next Meeting: January 26 at 4pm, BC Health Dept, Front St Binghamton.

[Editor’s Note: the next RWMC meeting is Monday, November 24 at 4pm, Conf Rm A, BC Health Dept, 225 Front St. Binghamton.]

The meeting adjourned at **5:50 pm**.

Kris Lau, Recorder
Stacy Merola, Editor