

**Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Meeting Summary**  
October 23, 2008

**Introductions and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Updates**

Lucy Edmondson, MassDEP Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Planning, gave a quick update on how the recent state budget cuts have affected MassDEP. MassDEP received an across the board cut of about 5.5 %. Although MassDEP was able to absorb much of this cut through cost-savings measures already implemented (e.g., not backfilling certain positions) and MassDEP does not anticipate cutting staff at this time, we do anticipate that a number of MassDEP programs will be affected, including cuts to solid waste grant and assistance programs.

**Review of Green Communities Act**

Courtney Feeley Karp, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), gave a presentation on the Massachusetts Green Communities Act, especially as it relates to solid waste management, and reviewed the status of implementation of the Act up to this point. This presentation is posted with these meeting notes. For more information on the Green Communities Act, please visit the DOER website at [www.mass.gov/doer](http://www.mass.gov/doer).

Attendees raised several comments and questions including:

***What is the process and how can people have input into the C&D Study Commission?***

This commission has not yet begun meeting but will be chaired by Senator Morrissey and Representative Dempsey, co-chairs of the Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy Committee. Attendees with questions about this committee should contact Senator Morrissey's or Representative Dempsey's office and also check DOER's website for updates.

***What is the process and schedule for developing the regulations for the Renewable Portfolio Standard and the Alternative Portfolio Standard?***

DOER held stakeholder meetings to obtain input on development of these regulations earlier this fall. Because these regulations must be promulgated by January 1, 2009, DOER will be promulgating emergency regulations by January 1<sup>st</sup>. Following the promulgation of the emergency regulations, DOER will hold a public hearing and comment period to obtain input on the emergency regulations, prepare a response to comments document, and then issue final regulations.

For other questions on the Green Communities Act, Courtney can be reached at [courtney.karp@state.ma.us](mailto:courtney.karp@state.ma.us)

**Review of Global Warming Solutions Act**

Nancy Seidman, MassDEP, gave a presentation on the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act. This presentation is posted with these meeting notes.

Attendees raised several comments and questions including:

***What is the role of MassDEP in MEPA project review regarding greenhouse gas emissions?***

MassDEP participates in MEPA project review as part of a team approach. The US EPA has funded a MassDEP contract to develop a guidance document for reviewing MEPA projects and their carbon emissions. MEPA is encouraging project proponents to schedule pre-filing meetings with MEPA and MassDEP, as appropriate, to get clarification on MEPA requirements relative to specific projects.

***How will indirect greenhouse gas emissions be addressed under the Global Warming Solution Act?***

As written, the statute appears to focus on direct sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Massachusetts (e.g., power plants, factories, etc.) However, MassDEP also will be considering reporting of indirect greenhouse gas emissions in the future under this statute.

***In some cases, the Green Communities Act and Green Jobs Act appear to be inconsistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act, in that they provide incentives and support for waste-to-energy. Waste-to-energy also seems like it may be in conflict with increased recycling, in that increased recycling may reduce the caloric value of waste going to waste-to-energy facilities.***

Comment noted.

***What goal will be set for state agencies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions?***

Specific goals have not been decided yet, but reducing greenhouse gas emissions from state facilities will be addressed in the context of the state's Leading by Example initiative.

For questions or more information, please contact Nancy at [nancy.seidman@state.ma.us](mailto:nancy.seidman@state.ma.us) or visit the MassDEP Greenhouse Gas & Climate Change Website at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/climate/index.htm>.

## **Solid Waste Master Plan Development**

Lucy Edmondson, MassDEP Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Planning, gave an overview of the Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) planning process. While Massachusetts' overall recycling rate of 47% is among the leading states nationally, our progress has leveled off in recent years and we are missing opportunities to put valuable resources into productive use, and, thereby, reduce the environmental impact of our waste management system and reduce our waste management costs. We are in challenging economic times and government subsidies are less likely in the future than they have been in the past. Instead, we must develop new strategies to leverage increased waste reduction and take advantage of the market forces that favor recycling. MassDEP will be holding a series of five public meetings that we will announce shortly and encourages stakeholders to participate and provide input and good ideas through this process.

John Fischer, MassDEP, gave a presentation providing more information on MassDEP's Solid Waste Master Plan development. This presentation is posted with these meeting notes. In

addition, information on MassDEP's SWMP meetings can be found on the MassDEP website at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/public/publicche.htm#swmp>.

Attendees offered the following suggestions and questions:

- The current Master Plan is a pretty good plan, but has not worked well because of a lack of funding and implementation plans. Stakeholders have provided extensive input already and it seems that MassDEP should have information to support development of a new plan without additional stakeholder input.
- With management of construction and demolition debris, MassDEP has emphasized data-driven communication and decision-making. But MassDEP does not have enough financial analysis and data from a waste industry operational standpoint and this lack of data is a barrier to good decision-making
- Massachusetts does not have carrots or sticks that are strong enough to influence change. Massachusetts also does not have a strong enough knowledge base on recycling and solid waste issues. In addition to reductions on the recycling grant budget line item, staff resources also have been diverted to other environmental issues (e.g, water conservation, anti-idling initiatives), taking away from recycling efforts.
- Markets for several materials, including compost, glass aggregate and crushed asphalt, brick, and concrete, are weak and the state should do more to bolster these markets through state purchasing, particularly by state transportation agencies.
- MassDEP should explore the possibility of using a cap and trade system for waste, similar to the RGGI system for GHG emissions from power plants.
- Municipalities are paying the disposal costs for products and packaging, which raises taxpayer costs and provides no incentive for manufacturers to change product and packaging design to reduce waste. Massachusetts should shift these incentives by establishing extended producer responsibility requirements for many products. Examples include electronic waste and an expanded bottle bill.
- Massachusetts should consider establishing a regulatory structure through which entities can realize carbon credits for recycling initiatives that result in lifecycle greenhouse gas emission reductions. However, in order for entities to qualify for carbon credits, they need to meet the principle of “additionality”, meaning that they go beyond regulatory requirements. Therefore, entities could not qualify for carbon credits for materials covered under the Massachusetts waste bans, unless those waste bans were eliminated.
- MassDEP should work with the Office of Business Development to explore options to provide assistance to manufacturers using post-consumer materials as feedstock.
- If we met all of our own waste reduction goals, what would the composition of the remaining residuals look like?
- Massachusetts should look at our recycling goals in terms of what would be needed in tons per day management capacity to reach that goal. Once you break it down into the processing capacity and markets needed for specific target materials, it may be fairly manageable and can then be broken down into bite-size chunks.
- Connecticut is now conducting a waste composition study that may shed some light on the composition of the Massachusetts waste stream, since Connecticut is a similar neighboring state and likely has a similar waste stream composition.

- We need to do a better job of educating the public about waste bans as many people are still not aware of Massachusetts' waste bans.

### **Mercury Management Act Outreach on Disposal Ban**

Greg Cooper provided an overview of progress to date on the Mercury Management Act (MMA) Public Education and Outreach Plan. Please contact Greg Cooper at [greg.cooper@state.ma.us](mailto:greg.cooper@state.ma.us) with any comments or suggestions.

### **Residential Sector Outreach Completed to Date**

- Developed database to track municipal and commercial locations taking back residentially generated mercury-added products. The database focuses on lamps, thermostats, thermometers and button batteries and is available on MassDEP's website
- Sent letter to municipalities (CEO and recycling contact) that:
  - Summarizes disposal prohibition and relevant parts of MMA
  - Announces availability of transfer station signs to relevant munis
  - Describes the Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC) program and MassDEP subsidy for a collection box
  - Provides link to MassDEP's web site for FAQs on implementation of disposal prohibition
  - Links to the MassDEP's Mercury web page
- Revamped fact sheets on compact fluorescents and mercury and cleanup of broken lamps.
- Promoted TRC program for the collection of thermostats, free-of-charge, through municipal locations. MassDEP has offered to pay for the first box for each municipality. Forty municipalities have received these to date.
- Designed and distributed updated waste ban signs to each solid waste facility. 559 Signs have been provided to 264 Municipalities.
- Made presentations at appropriate association meetings
  - Six municipal grant workshops summer 2007
  - SWANA – presentation Sept. 25
  - Regional Municipal Recycling Coordinator meetings – presentation Sept 27
  - Covanta Haverhill Quarterly Recycling Coordinator's meeting, Oct 18
  - SWAC – presentation Oct 23
  - MORE (Municipalities Organized for Regional Effectiveness)
  - Mass Health Officers Association (MHOA) conference – Jan-Feb 2008
  - MassRecycle's Municipal Recycler's Workshop – Jan 2008
- Promoted mercury diversion programs offered by MWCs to their long-term contract communities.
- Awarded 12 universal waste collection sheds through the FY08 grant application.

- Offered four mercury handling trainings to grant recipients and opened to all municipalities in April 08
- Distributed educational materials at Down2Earth, Earthfest, EPP Vendor Fair and other events
- Developed brainshark presentation on how to remove mercury devices from mercury-containing products and posted on web
- Partnered with NEWMOA to create mercury legacy product web site
- Provided 813 digital thermometers (for swaps) to 21 municipalities not already served by a mercury material separation plan.

### **Residential Sector Outreach Planned**

- Develop relationships with hardware stores to take back compact fluorescent lamps to expand the access to lamp recycling. Ongoing
- Provide information to municipalities for posting on their web site and for use in outreach to their residents
  - Lists of common mercury-added products found in the home
  - Template press release to advertise local collection options (residential and commercial)
- Develop public outreach pieces (e.g. “OpEds”) on ‘look for the label’ and ‘remove the button cells’
- Make presentations at appropriate association meetings
  - Mass Municipal Association
  - MassRecycle Municipal Workshop
  - Public Works association
- Publish press release on the Mercury Management Act’s latest elements including the disposal prohibition
- Encourage utilities (phone, gas, electric) to include inserts in billing.
- Develop school memo and op-ed reminder for schools on mercury-containing products
- Through direct mailing package, inform Boards of Health and Building Departments about the disposal prohibition. Encourage adoption of local by-laws and ordinances that require proof of lamp recycling, where used, as part of the permit renewal process. Provide examples adopted in other communities.

### **Commercial Sector Outreach Completed to Date**

- Conduct outreach through a combination of press releases, newsletter articles and/or presentations to a variety of stakeholders, including:
  - Massachusetts Retailers Association
  - State Sustainability listserv
  - Massachusetts Food Association
  - Neon Sign Builders

**Commercial Sector Outreach Planned**

- Conduct outreach through a combination of press releases, newsletter articles and/or presentations to a variety of stakeholders, including:
  - Relamping companies
  - Associated Industries of Massachusetts
  - General Contractors Association
  - Home Builders Association
  - Green Roundtable/Nexus
  - Colleges and universities
  - HVAC contractors and applicable associations
  - Licensed electricians/IBEW
  - Building Owners and Managers Association
  - Massachusetts Facility Managers Association
  - School Business Officials
  - Hauler outreach – direct mail, distribution by NSWMA, solid waste facility handout
  - Massachusetts Restaurant Association
  - Massachusetts Hospital Association
  - Massachusetts Lodging Association
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Cleaning and janitorial service companies
  - Demolition contractors
  - Appliance recyclers
  - Vehicle recyclers
  - Marinas - combine with shrink-wrap message
- Coordinate with National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) on outreach to target sectors for lamp recycling.

**Next Meeting**

The next SWAC meeting will be on Thursday, January 22, 2008, from 1:00 to 3:30 PM.