

Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)
January 23, 2020, 1:00 – 3:30 pm
MassDEP, One Winter Street, Boston, MA
Meeting Summary

John Fischer from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) provided updates on the 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan draft and Waste Ban inspections and enforcement.

Q: Can you tell us the nature of the 330 public comments on the Solid Waste Master plan 2030 draft?

A: All of the comments are posted to the MassDEP web site at:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-comments-received-on-draft-2030-solid-waste-master-plan/download>.

Q: How many of the 337 enforcements issued were administrative and required requests for information?

A: About seven (7) of those enforcements were Requests for Information.

Q: Was there an increase for the ACOPs issued from the previous year?

A: Yes, MassDEP issued 17 ACOPs in the most recent year, compared to eight (8) ACOPs the previous year.

Q: Was the increase in Administrative Consent Orders with Penalties (ACOPs) due to an overall increase in enforcement?

A: The growth of ACOPs came from increase of Notices of Noncompliance (NONs). An increase of NONs drives an increase in ACOPs.

Erin Victor from MassDEP gave an update on the Source Reduction & Reuse working group.

Q: How does this particular group interact with the Master Plan?

A: The Master Plan draft includes the creation of a Source Reduction & Reuse Action Plan and this group will provide input into the development of that plan. That plan will guide implementation of the source reduction and reuse section of the Solid Waste Master Plan. This is similar to how MassDEP has implemented organics waste reduction and construction and demolition materials waste reduction.

C: The group would help with the day-to-day nuts and bolts of how to meet goals and continue to spell out more specifically what we will do.

C: I would like to see a goal in the Master Plan of zero textiles to disposal. We must have a working group discussion to meet this goal.

C: The Source Reduction & Reuse Action Plan will include goals and how to achieve them. More granular goals and objectives and the best practices to achieve those will develop as the process continues. Appendix B in the Draft Master Plan lists goals for reduction, reuse and recycling by material. Working groups go a little deeper to implement specific strategies and approaches over 10 years to meet these goals.

C: Looking at the Organics Action Plan will give you a good idea of what we are looking to do with the Source Reduction & Reuse group. This includes identifying barriers, such as regulatory changes, as well as the need to work with commercial generators and processors and the need to develop case studies. The action plan also addresses markets, such as anaerobic digestion and composting. The Source Reduction & Reuse group will mimic that framework.

Q: Have there been any comments/thoughts about potential reduction in economic revenue for the state as we encourage residents and businesses to reuse more and buy new things less?

A: That could be part of the data we collect to understand reuse. Reuse does create jobs – typically more on a per ton basis than recycling. We do not have set plans yet; the working group could advise if needed.

Q: For textiles, will there be more initiatives to better distribute collection boxes and educate the public about what can go in them? One barrier to textile reuse is that a lot of people don't know what can be recycled or reused and put into these bins. Some organizations accept items other than textiles.

A: Yes, that barrier will probably come up and MassDEP plans to work with the textiles recovery industry to increase education and outreach efforts.

Q: Are priority materials listed in order of importance?

A: No, MassDEP welcomes questions and feedback on how to prioritize these materials.

C: Greater access to textile drop-off programs would be welcomed. The state should inform residents with single stream curbside collection mixing textiles can hurt collection and processing equipment.

Q: Will meetings be limited to only one topic, such as textiles?

A: Yes, but some materials may go beyond a single working group and overlap into other groups.

C: We need to figure how to implement and expand textile reuse and recycling.

C: I'm struck by the amount of people and groups thinking about and wanting to take action against climate change. Linking reduction & reuse to climate change opens the conversation to people wanting to take action. People are interested in climate change and if reduction & reuse are linked to climate change we can make a connection with those groups.

C: In the City of Newton right now we are leaving notes to people on their recycling carts about contamination. We've seen a good improvement on recycling contamination. Newton uses the

MassDEP Recycling IQ kit to assist in tagging carts. A similar approach could deliver the message about source reduction and reuse directly to residents.

C: Curbside compost collection programs on the west coast give a report card to residents. Volunteers go out to look at bins and give suggestions. Higher education has a motivated student population who could do audits and give direct feedback to users.

C: Facebook is a good way to engage the community. There are lots of zero-waste groups and buy nothing groups that are very active.

C: We need to engage the broader community. We should get a list of the repair and reuse organizations in the state – this can be done through online search or perhaps NAICS and reach out directly to them.

C: I'd like to see a campaign to promote sharing tables in our public schools to reduce food waste.

C: Package-free shopping should be encouraged.

C: MassDEP should reach out to Massachusetts municipalities and regional planning groups to create a robust network to help spread information.

C: Public school lunches, disposable food service ware and packaging are a good place to start. Reusable systems in public schools are a good place to start to reduce waste. Municipalities have controls over this. Reusable silverware and trays are an example. Several schools have already gone back to trays and dishwashers.

John Fischer from MassDEP discussed MassDEP's proposed waste ban changes, including the C&D performance standard, adding mattresses and textiles as waste ban materials, and a reduced threshold for commercial organic material.

Webinar Q: Will MassDEP publish the recovery rates from C&D processing facilities?

A: Yes. When we review and prepare data, the information will be published on the MassDEP website.

Q: When do these facilities have to be in compliance?

A: MassDEP will publish calendar year 2019 data for advisory purposes in June 2020. The first effective reporting year for this standard will be calendar year 2020. MassDEP will publish this data in June 2021.

Q: Will these standards pertain to anyone accepting C&D?

A: Any facility that is permitted to handle C&D - this includes transfer stations and processors accepting more than 50 tons per day of C&D.

Q: Does a processor have to be at 15 percent or above to accept C&D?

A: If a processor is below the 15 percent separation rate, they can either take in only processed material from a facility that meets the 15 percent standard or send all outgoing material to a processor that meets the standard.

Q: What about a transfer station that takes more than 50 tons per day and ships to out of state processors?

A: Facilities regulated in Massachusetts that send material out of state will have to provide MassDEP with data from those facilities to confirm they meet the MassDEP standard.

Q: When will ATO permit modifications and revised waste ban compliance plans need to be submitted?

A: For incoming ATOs, we will be referencing that guidance now. Facilities will have to update waste ban compliance guidance plans to implement MassDEP's waste ban changes. MassDEP is proposing to publish those regulations in fall 2020, with an effective date of fall 2021. Our waste ban guidance will align with the minimum performance standard.

Q: Why 50 tons per day? Why not extend this to all facilities that handle C&D?

A: Small transfer stations (accepting less than 50 tons per day) are not required to submit annual reports to MassDEP. These facilities should be sending C&D material to C&D processors, anyways. This includes MSW transfer stations that take less than 50 tons of C&D per day.

C: Our Safety Department has rejected separating cardboard on a busy tipping floor. We want fewer people on the tip floors, not more. This is a huge safety compliance problem.

C: This is often cited as a reason to avoid separating cardboard however we can address these issues. MassDEP appreciates worker health and safety concerns, however the separation of cardboard can often be done the same way as zero-tolerance items. This can be done using equipment such as a loader or bobcat. While cardboard should be separated at the point of generation, there is a loss of opportunity to separate more cardboard from some MSW loads.

C: Facilities can pre-screen loads before hitting the tip floor. Tires can be kicked around; however cardboard shouldn't be pushed around on the floor as doing so can make it unrecyclable.

C: Transfer stations that take MSW and C&D can push cardboard into the C&D pile for processing. That's a potential way of handling cardboard.

C: With house cleanouts, everything goes into one container, including cardboard and metal.

C: We do not require, but we encourage recycling in the city of Newton. The Chamber of Commerce is pushing back about this. A statewide recycling requirement should be in the Master Plan.

C: Recycling markets are in the dumps right now. Some materials have no value.

C: We hear this, too. However there are strong domestic markets for many recyclables. Cardboard markets had dropped, but cardboard still has value and these markets have rebounded

recently. In addition, many recyclables have growing domestic recycling capacity and markets. From an environmental and resource management perspective, Massachusetts has limited disposal capacity and recycling is needed as a capacity solution.

C: The working group should discuss the notion that all recycling is single stream recycling. We have to blow that idea out of the water. We used to separate those materials. Markets are in the tank because single stream has become garbage.

C: That is not accurate; single stream is not garbage. Single stream systems can work well if the correct materials are delivered to the facility. Massachusetts MRFs have invested capital funds to improve separation.

Q: Lots of folks partner with food rescue organizations. Will there be grants or money available to assist food rescue organizations?

A: Some have looked into it and MassDEP recently awarded a grant to Lovin' Spoonfuls. There have been other investments; however MassDEP not be the best organization to address them. More funding may be available from other sources, including other state agencies and foundations. We would be interested in further discussion and encouraging these stakeholders to work together.

A point of clarification: under the current commercial organics ban, if a business generates more than one ton per week for disposal, they must at least reduce their disposal to less than one ton per week. However they do not have to get down to zero disposal, just as long as they do not dispose of more than one ton per week.

C: An increase in food waste will be a challenge for compost and anaerobic digestion sites. There will be challenges to handle increased materials. There will also be a challenge to open more sites and facilities.

C: There is opportunity to grow. Implementing changes in tracking and operations can reduce food waste. RecyclingWorks technical assistance can help to fill in regional gaps. There is a need for more intermediate processing, such as slurry and anaerobic digestion. Contamination can rise, and there will be a need to screen and remove contaminants. There will also be a continued need to build route density and improve hauling capacity.

Q: How did the MassDEP treat the threshold for public school districts? 30 schools seems low - a missed opportunity. All public schools should compost. There should be a push for all schools to comply with food separation.

A: Each individual school is a generator, and a combined campus counts as one generator. This is across the board - not just schools. We would love to see more composting at schools. MassDEP's [Green Team](#) and RecyclingWorks programs supports school composting programs.

Q: Will there be grants to help schools with food waste disposal?

A: Yes, MassDEP expects to support these initiatives through the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program.

Q: Can you discuss residential food waste diversion. Are you going to support it?

A: MassDEP has discussed residential food waste diversion as one component of an updated Organics Action Plan. This plan would include multiple approaches to reduce food waste from residents including education and outreach, home compost programs, drop-off programs and curbside collection. MassDEP has supported some of those programs already and will continue to do so.

Q: As with organics, will there be a mattress recycling capacity analysis?

A: Yes, MassDEP has assessed capacity for mattress recycling. We believe current capacity is about half of total generation and this capacity is expected to grow in the months ahead as mattress recyclers expand their operations and more come online. About half of the mattresses generated are handled by retailers. A good portion leave the state to be refurbished. Retailers do not want to disclose refurbishing information. So other capacity is out there beyond the recycling capacity that MassDEP has identified. Some mattresses can be contaminated and not recyclable so recycling 100 percent of mattresses is not realistic. MassDEP believes we have adequate capacity to move forward with a proposed ban, which can help to further drive market investments.

Q: Tires and wood can go to a waste-to-energy facility. Can a mattress go there under the proposed ban?

A: We have not considered that proposal, but it is a possibility. We want to drive mattresses to recyclers through the ban.

Q: Newer mattresses are largely foam and less textile. What is the recycling market(s) for these materials?

A: A mattress recycler in attendance stated that memory foam mattress foam is 100 percent recyclable.

C: EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) exists for mattresses in other states. We believe that could work well in conjunction with a ban.

Q: Do you give these comments to the legislature?

A: That decision is made at a higher level. MassDEP has expressed support for specific material EPR in the draft Master Plan.

Q: Recycling linens into rags produces trim cuttings. Barrier garments and contaminated hospital materials are not recyclable. Will these materials be excluded from the ban?

A: Textiles that cannot be recycled because they are contaminated (e.g., industrial rags) or residuals from a textile recycling operation would not be subject to the proposed ban. MassDEP will develop a Q and A document as part of guidance to support implementation of this waste ban.

Q: With a projected increase in inspections and efforts to reduce the disposal of existing banned materials, is there enough capacity for these materials? How are the markets for existing banned materials?

A: Yes, generally speaking, MassDEP believes that there is adequate capacity for current banned materials.

Q: Will there be a threshold or an outright ban on textiles?

A: MassDEP expects that this will be an outright ban for textiles, similar to the bans for materials like cardboard and bottles and cans. For the purposes of solid waste facility implementation, facilities will have volume based action levels for identifying failed loads. For example, 10 percent or more by volume of cardboard is a failed load under current guidance.

C: We are having trouble finding haulers to pick up small quantities of textiles and mattresses. Intermediate processing is needed for small generators. We need to build out collection infrastructure for textiles and mattresses from smaller sources.

Q: What happens with cities that ban clothing bins?

A: MassDEP would work with municipalities to create best practice guidelines. Guidance will be created for box placement and monitoring. Model ordinances are available from the [Secondary Materials Association for Recycling Textiles](#).

Q: Can the frequency of collection – before the bin is full and spilling - be built into permitting?

A: MassDEP would support a best management practice that includes the regular service of containers before they overflow.

Q: This ban could be a victim of its own success by generating more material. There should be a working group to help with markets. We should be thinking of programs to implement as we go.

More textiles being recycled could lower the value of the material.

A: MassDEP will develop recommendations as needed to grow the textiles recovery infrastructure to support the proposed waste ban.

C: As the ban is implemented it may create better efficiency and growth of the market.