

Solid Waste Master Plan Data Subcommittee
June 14, 2018 – 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
MassDEP, One Winter Street, Boston, MA
Meeting Summary

Materials Management Capacity Study

John Fischer of MassDEP, John Culbertson, Greg Lenaz and Steve Lynch of MSW Consultants introduced an upcoming Massachusetts-wide materials management capacity study. A presentation summarizing the planned study format and content is available on the MassDEP website.

Q: What categories of materials will the study track?

A: The study will primarily track municipal solid waste (MSW) and construction and demolition debris (C&D). However it will include all materials managed in disposal, transfer, recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion, and reuse facilities and operations.

C: The City of Boston has consultants looking into reuse infrastructure. MassDEP should look into potential collaboration.

Q: What metric will be used to measure capacity?

A: This will be measured in tons. Some of the data is presented in tons per day, but this will be converted into tons per year. Where available, both permitted capacity and capacity actually used.

Q: Are you tracking residuals from the MRFs?

A: Yes, MRF residuals would typically show up in disposal data either for in-state disposal facilities, or in out of state data on export from Massachusetts.

Q: Are you planning to track materials that go out of state as processed material? For instance, if wood waste goes to a processor to achieve a required spec for a biomass plant, will the study stop at the processor or go to the biomass plant and follow the resulting ash? Also, why was a 30-mile radius chosen to track out-of-state recycling processing?

A: Generally the study will only track material to the first level of processing – for instance, disposal or incineration – though we also will track ash from municipal waste combustors as that is part of Massachusetts capacity picture. However, in the example of the out of state biomass facility, the study would not go to the next step to count ash or other outputs from that type of facility. We chose the 30-mile radius since that is the typical radius for recyclables to travel by truck. Where material is hauled by rail to more distant states (typically for disposal), MSW Consultants will also attempt to gather that data.

Q: Are you going to look at the availability of rail and truck capacity? For example, will you calculate how much it would cost to send MSW to a landfill in Ohio?

A: The study will gather information and assess trends on both truck and rail transportation, but will not do a detailed capacity or cost estimate for transportation resources.

Q: To what extent will regional markets be addressed? For example, disposal and processing in the southeast area of state represents a different circumstance/condition than other parts of the state.

A: While these dynamics are worth mentioning, the study won't dive too deeply into regional analysis within the state.

Q: Will the study distinguish between the commercial and public sectors? For instance, long-term hauler contracts do not apply to the commercial sector.

A: No, the study will not focus on contractual arrangements and which facilities are taking whose waste, but rather focus on overall capacity.

Q: What definition of "transfer station" will the study use? There are both municipal and privately-run transfer stations in Massachusetts.

A: MSW Consultants is aware of many small municipal transfer stations that serve residents only. Those locations typically deliver material to waste-to-energy sites or landfills, so they would not be considered to provide additional capacity.

C: In the future, MassDEP should use metrics from the latest possible calendar year for the next Master Plan, i.e. 2017 or 2018 data instead of 2016 for 2020 plan.

R: MassDEP will use the most recent data we have available when we develop Master Plan recommendations.