

Executive Summary

Clark County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

Overview

The Clark County Solid Waste Management Plan was developed to provide decision-makers with goals and policies for implementing, evaluating and modifying existing and future solid waste management programs. The Plan is divided into chapters which discuss the different components of the solid waste system. The chapters have an assessment of existing conditions and recommended actions. The Plan contains a five-year implementation schedule that lists all of the recommended actions and timeframes for implementation. The Plan also contains a new chapter, Sustainability. Recommendations from this chapter emphasize reducing the County's environmental footprint. This Plan coordinates the County's solid waste system and programs with the State of Washington's *Beyond Waste Plan*.

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with requirements and intent of RCW 70.95. Clark County is incorporating into this Plan priorities for solid waste handling which place energy recovery at a higher hierarchy level than the state. The County will continue to emphasize "Reduce, Reuse & Recycle" in its programs and messages. This hierarchy adopted in the Plan is as follows:

1. waste reduction;
2. reuse;
3. recycling, with source separation of recyclable materials as the preferred method;
4. energy recovery of separated waste;
5. incineration and landfilling of separated wastes;
6. energy recovery of mixed waste;
7. incineration and landfilling of mixed wastes.

Public Review

Staff has worked on various drafts since 2006. Drafts were presented at a series of meetings with the Board of County Commissioners, city councils and staffs. The Clark County Public Health Department and the City of Vancouver were active participants

throughout the entire process. The Clark County Solid Waste Advisory Commission (SWAC) reviewed each chapter along with staff during their monthly public meetings. SWAC completed its detail review at the beginning of 2008. The Plan has been reviewed by the Washington Department of Ecology and the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. On the basis of their comments, revisions were made to the Plan.

Following a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review, a Determination of Non-significance was issued with this Plan. This review evaluated the environmental impacts associated with implementing the programs and recommendations of this Plan. A public comment period was associated with the SEPA review. During the month of November 2008, the Plan was also available for public review and comment. An open house was held during November to share information and answer questions about the Plan.

The Plan will be adopted by the County, cities and town of Yacolt. After adoption, the Plan must be approved by the Department of Ecology.

Background

The purpose of the solid waste management activities in Clark County is to protect and preserve human health, environmental quality and natural resources through efficient, cost-effective programs and services. The following evaluation criteria was used to determine if a recommendation should be implemented:

- A commitment to sustainability that ensures resources and options for future generations
- Balance among public convenience, public expenses, public health, and the environment. Recommendations should look at solid waste management practices in the context of attempting to balance cost and convenience with natural resource conservation and environmental health values.
- Flexibility to anticipate future changes and needs. Recommendations should support long term goals and allow for changing circumstances.
- Commitment to waste prevention, reduction and recycling. Recommendations should support the prevention and reduction of toxicity and solid waste as well as encourage recycling and other waste diversion opportunities.
- Increased local control of solid waste management. Solid waste services should be regulated by the level of government as close to the citizens as appropriate. The County and Cities should have the management tools to achieve the goals of the Plan while fostering competition among service providers.
- Integrity of waste stream measurement and monitoring. Recommendations should allow the County to measure, compare and report our past and present efforts in a way that allows us to plan for the future and evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and the resources that we devote to them.
- Encouragement of cooperative and coordinated efforts among government agencies, citizens, and the private sector for managing solid wastes. The County should maintain its commitment to collaborative management of solid

waste by informing and involving citizens, other agencies, and the private sector.

System waste management activities are organized around two Plans: the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) and the Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan (MRW Plan). The MRW Plan covers household hazardous waste as well as hazardous waste generated in small quantities by businesses. This comprehensive Plan consolidates those two into one planning document.

Objectives and Goals

Established with this Plan Update, the overall objectives of the regional solid waste management system is:

- Reduce the amount of materials generated and landfill disposal from Clark County and its cities;
- Increase the recycling rate to 50 percent; and
- Reduce toxicity.

To achieve these objectives, the following targets have been established:

- Increase recovery of basic recycling by 50,000 tons by 2011;
- Recover an additional 10,000 tons of organics by 2011;
- Recover an additional 10,000 tons of construction and demolition materials by 2011;
- Recover an additional 500 tons of hazardous waste materials by 2011; and
- Reduce per person per day waste generated by 5% by 2011. A 5% reduction of 7.4 lbs./person/day to 7.0 lbs./person/day.

Summary of New Recommendations

The *Implementation Schedule* (Chapter 18) is a summary of the recommendations for the policies, programs and projects. Many of the recommendations are on-going and are currently in place. The new recommendations are summarized in the following categories: 1) new policies, programs and projects to implement; 2) policies, programs or projects for which further review is recommended prior to implementation; and 3) operating improvement recommendations. The proposed implementation dates for each recommendation are shown on the Implementation Schedule. The new recommendations are listed below.

New Policies, Programs and Projects - Implementation Recommended

- ✓ All Solid Waste policies and programs will foster a Sustainable Clark County; participate in national and state programs to reduce our ecological footprint; calculate and track footprint (Chapter 3 – *Sustainable Choices*)
- ✓ Develop a program for registering commercial recycling haulers (Chapter 6 & 7 – *Waste Diversion and Waste Collection*)
- ✓ Expand program for unsecured loads of transported waste (Chapter 7 – *Waste Collection*)
- ✓ Prohibit new landfills in the County – MSW, C&D or Special Waste Landfills (Chapter 10 – *Landfill Disposal*; Chapter 12 – *Construction & Demolition Wastes*; Chapter 14 – *Special Wastes*)
- ✓ Prohibit landfill disposal of all moderate risk waste (Chapter 11 – *Moderate Risk Waste Plan*)

New Policies, Programs and Projects – Further Review Recommended

- ✓ Conduct a feasibility study for a north county transfer facility; evaluate CTR traffic concerns (Chapter 8 – *Waste Transfer and Material Recovery System*)
- ✓ The County should investigate whether to establish a biomass incineration plant to meet its special waste management needs. The County should also conduct further research on the technology and feasibility of using the municipal waste stream for energy recovery. (Chapter 9 – *Energy Recovery and Incineration*)
- ✓ Prohibit on site burial of wastes on residential, commercial, and agricultural property (Chapter 12 – *Construction and Demolition Wastes*; Chapter 14 – *Special Wastes*)
- ✓ Evaluate changes for CREAM program (Chapter 11 – *Moderate Risk Waste Plan*)
- ✓ Develop rate structures that encourage waste reduction and recycling (Chapter 4 – *Waste Prevention and Reduction*; Chapter 6 – *Waste Diversion*)
- ✓ Update County ordinance to reflect current flow control legislation - directing waste to our solid waste management system (Chapter 16 – *Enforcement*)
- ✓ Evaluate long-term regional approach to County's solid waste management system (Chapter 10 – *Landfill Disposal*)

Existing Policies, Programs and Projects – Improvements Recommended

- ✓ Continue with Environmental Management System (EMS) program implementation (Chapter 2 – *Administration*; Chapter 3 – *Sustainable Choices*; Chapter 5 – *Education and Promotion*)
- ✓ Promote commercial waste reduction (Chapter 4 – *Waste Prevention and Reduction*)

- ✓ Develop a Green Schools Program (Chapter 5 – *Education and Promotion*)
- ✓ Promote green building opportunities (Chapter 3 – *Sustainable Choices*; Chapter 12 – *Construction & Demolition Wastes*)
- ✓ Expand food waste recovery (Chapter 13 – *Organic Wastes*)
- ✓ Facilitate recovery of construction and demolition materials (Chapter 12 – *Construction & Demolition Wastes*)
- ✓ Promote less use of plastic and paper bags (Chapter 4 – *Waste Prevention and Reduction*)
- ✓ Improvements to recycling collection and processing facility (Chapter 6 – *Waste Diversion*)
- ✓ Report annual progress towards meeting sustainability goals (Chapter 3 – *Sustainable Choices*)
- ✓ Construct household hazardous waste collection facility at the Washougal Transfer Station (Chapter 11 – *Moderate Risk Waste Plan*)
- ✓ Increase educational efforts for rural and multi-family residences; coincide with any changes in the collection system; evaluate social marketing and incentive approaches (Chapter 5 – *Education and Promotion*)
- ✓ Enhance the Solid Waste web site to be more comprehensive and interactive (Chapter 5 – *Education and Promotion*)
- ✓ Facilitate recovery of Special Wastes (Chapter 14 – *Special Wastes*)
- ✓ Implement a Regional Solid Waste System Steering Committee - Public Works Directors (Chapter 2 – *Administration*)
- ✓ Develop guidelines for fund uses (Chapter 17 – *Funding and Financing*)
- ✓ Work with federal and state agencies to develop an operating plan for handling disaster debris (Chapter 13 – *Organic Wastes*; Chapter 14 – *Special Wastes*)