



2012 Policy Platform

SWAA Membership Approved

9.9.2011

Solid Waste Management Tax

SWAA supports the use of Solid Waste Management Tax (SWMT) revenues to fund solid waste related programs, incentives, and infrastructure. Priority should be given to use SWMT revenues to increase funding for SCORE, solid waste processing credits, waste-related educational and incentive-based programs, special waste collection events (tires, oil, organics), infrastructure improvements, and bonding/guarantees to leverage additional CAP funding.

Solid Waste Processing Credit

SWAA Supports the use of the SWMT revenues to fund the permanent reinstatement of the solid waste processing credit. The processing credit was a \$5/ton credit applied for by counties for utilization of an approved waste processing facility. A permanent processing credit would create incentive to sustain or expand processing capacity throughout the state.

SCORE Funding

SWAA supports the dedication of a portion of the Solid Waste Management Tax (SWMT) to funding SCORE-related programs similar to the Landfill Abatement Fund. SCORE is currently funded at \$14 million dollars annually, out of the Environmental Funds' portion of the SWMT revenues. The SCORE funding should have a base-funding of \$14 million dollars and receive all growth from the SWMT from the environmental fund above the budgeted SWMT revenue projected in Fiscal Year 2009.

E-Waste

SWAA supports efforts to make improvements that would maximize the e-waste recycling program, and the use of any manufacturer payments in lieu of covered electronic device (CED) recycling be used by the state to help reimburse LGU collectors not receiving service. The intent of the e-waste recycling law was to establish a comprehensive state-wide approach to e-waste recycling under the product stewardship principles (manufacturer responsibility model). Where if a manufacturer(s) has chosen not to participate in the program, they are required to make payment to the state for their portion of uncollected e-waste. The state should utilize these funds for the reimbursement of LGU collectors that provided e-waste collection/recycling service without an agreement with a manufacturer. This would create a safety net for LGU's to provide services in those areas. The reimbursement should be used to cover reasonable costs for collection, consolidation, transportation, and recycling for residential CED's collected.

Burn Barrels

SWAA supports a state initiative to ‘close the loophole’ that allows for the continuation of on-site Municipal Solid Waste(MSW) burning activities. This initiative should be implemented at the state level, and not left to each county to decide. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) studies have continually indicated that burn barrels are a major source of harmful and hazardous air pollutants such as mercury and dioxins.

Waste Pesticide Program

SWAA supports a fully funded state-wide collection of all waste pesticides (both agricultural and residential) for which the state has collected the waste pesticide tax on its sale in Minnesota. The waste pesticide account was established to pay for such a program, and all costs of said collection program should be eligible for reimbursement through that account.

Former Solid Waste Programs

SWAA supports the reinstatement of state run solid waste programs which have since been defunded, assets reallocated, or otherwise discontinued. Such programs include, but are not limited to: waste oil/oil filter, waste tires, salvage yards, etc. Due to limited funds, such programs could be re-implemented on a rotating basis (every 3 years), on a matching funds grant, contracting for services, etc. Reinstatement of these programs would ensure that county needs in this area are met.

New Solid Waste Programs

SWAA opposes any new legislation which does not provide for full, long-term funding for the implementation, administration, and execution of said program. SWAA realizes that each year there is pressure to create new programs to address issues that arise, however adequate funding must be allocated in order to implement said programs.

Processing/ Waste-to-Energy Facilities

SWAA supports increased communication with, and incentives by, the state for the permitting of new or expansion of existing solid waste processing/waste-to-energy (WTE) facilities. Solid waste processing and disposal infrastructure is aging and limited. Demand for reliable sources of renewable energy is needed to meet state energy initiatives and goals. Solid waste processing and WTE facilities have a role in meeting these needs. To meet the increased demand for energy from renewable resources, including those facilities which utilize solid waste as a fuel source, significant planning and financial resources are needed.

Landfill Capacity

SWAA supports efforts to increase communication with the PCA to discuss landfill capacity, certificate of need, environmental review, and landfill siting.

Product Stewardship

SWAA supports legislation to require manufacturers to incorporate product stewardship principles into the management of their products, specifically those products whose energy requirements to process virgin materials are either extremely high, emit high levels of greenhouse gases, or pose a threat to the environment. Product stewardship incorporates the management of a product from ‘cradle to grave,’ placing the burden for final disposition upon the product manufacturer, or creation of incentives to the consumer to reuse or recycle the materials and avoid wasting limited natural resources via disposal.

Solid Waste Rule Revisions

SWAA supports the revision of state statute, rules, and policy related to solid waste to address discrepancies between the waste management act, existing policy/rules and current practices/trends in the waste industry. The Waste Management Act (WMA) was based upon standard waste practices and technologies available/utilized in the 1980's. Waste streams have over time been changed or modified, and piecemeal rules and policies were made as needed to address these issues. However, these discrepancies have led to a disjointed overall state policy which does not accurately reflect the waste management hierarchy. Examples of new/modified waste streams include: demolition, construction, and industrial wastes. Examples of WMA hierarchy discrepancies include the trend of waste being disposed of at landfills rather than at WTE facilities or composted.

Waste Reduction Initiatives

SWAA supports new manufacturer incentives to reduce the amount of waste packaging associated with their products. Packaging materials account for a significant portion of the waste stream. Incentives to reduce packaging, encourage the use of recycled materials for essential packaging, and using materials which are easily reused/recycled is essential in reducing waste associated with each manufacturer's products.

Solid Waste as Renewable Resource

SWAA encourages state support/incentives for the energy industry to utilize solid waste facilities as a part of their sustainable, renewable energy resource programs.

Waste Assurance

SWAA supports efforts to streamline, modify, or simplify requirements and/or barriers to utilizing waste assurance tools and recent supreme court decisions. In light of the Oneida-Herkimer Supreme Court decision, steps must be taken to utilize waste designation ordinances. Clarification of state roles and state support for utilizing this waste assurance tool is required (state legal assistance, statute/rule changes, technical assistance, etc.).

Inverse Condemnation

SWAA opposes any legislation which would further restrict, hinder, or impair a local unit of government's ability to organize waste collection services, or which would require a Local Unit of Government (LGU) to compensate a private waste hauler for claimed lost business due to LGU's decision to organize waste collection. LGU's were given the authority to organize waste collection services and the responsibility to provide for waste management programs within their regions under MS115A and MS145A, in order to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens and to protect the environment.

Innovative Technologies

SWAA supports state leadership in creating incentives and educational opportunities to promote new or alternative methods of waste reduction, reuse, recycling, beneficial reuse, processing, and disposal. Disseminating these new or alternative methods of waste management is a core function of state agencies. Providing incentives, both financial and technical, to implement and maintain these programs state-wide is essential to advancing the comprehensive state waste management program and its policies.

Legislative Solid Waste Committee

SWAA supports the establishment of a bi-partisan, bi-cameral committee to address solid waste related issues. Similar bi-partisan committees composed of legislator of the house and senate have previously been established (Example: Legislative Committee on Waste Management (LCWM)). These previous committees proved highly effective in creating unified approaches to addressing solid waste related issues.

Many of these modified or new policies are based on (1) changes in legislation, (2) conversations with state agencies/legislators, (3) changes in court decisions, (4) issues previously identified by SWA's, or (5) input from various AMC environmental sub-groups. At this time, only SWAA has approved of this language – AMC has not adopted their official platform related to Solid Waste or the Environment.