

Staff Recommendations

The options: “The proposal by the NSWMA” and “Discontinue Counties’ Obligation to the Service Agreement and Processing in July 2007,” do nothing more to move the Counties toward the Solid Waste Master Plan goals, and, therefore, should not be further considered.

While the option to “Implement Public Collection” provides the best solution to meet the goals, it also causes major collection system changes and hence has much opposition. This will cause implementation problems. The option to “Restructure Financing and Regulation,” while not addressing the goals as well as Public Collection, has fewer implementation problems and rates better overall, as noted in the evaluation criteria.

General Recommendations:

Ramsey and Washington Counties should:

- Make decisions that improve the current system in the long-term, with that being defined as beyond July 2007.
- Make system changes to create market incentives for source reduction, recycling, organics composting, especially among commercial generators.
- Create a forum for Counties and the waste industry to communicate and work together in public/private partnership to implement changes and realign the system toward the environmental, health and safety goals.

Specific Recommendations:

Ramsey and Washington Counties should:

- Develop and implement a hauler-collected waste management service charge, and move some or all of the service charge from the property tax statement to that new financing tool.
- Enter into long-term contracts with the waste industry to assure delivery of the optimum amount of waste to the Resource Recovery Facility at a tipping fee appropriate to the market, and to create opportunities for the composting of source separated organic wastes.
- Work with municipalities, as appropriate, to incorporate service standards that support the Counties goals into municipal policies and contracts.
- Take advantage of increased public awareness that resulted from this study, and mailing lists of interested citizens that the Counties and haulers have developed, by using joint education efforts between private and public sector on the implementation of the new system, including promotion of waste and toxicity reduction and recycling.

- Create and fund partnerships with municipalities and haulers to provide increased opportunities for disposal of difficult materials, such as bulky items and brush, in order to reduce illegal dumping and burning. Specific examples of opportunities to develop or test in pilot projects include:
 - Expanded frequency of municipal clean-up events;
 - Curbside collection of bulky items; and/or
 - Vouchers for residents to use local transfer stations at a reduced cost.
- Work with haulers and municipalities to identify violators of local mandatory collection ordinances, in order to assure that waste is being properly managed (and not illegally dumped or burned).
- Create and fund increased opportunities for households and small businesses to legally dispose of special wastes and hazardous wastes.

If these recommendations are implemented and good faith efforts in a public/private partnership result in progress toward the environmental goals, the Counties should not implement public collection at this time.

However, if the Counties cannot substantially achieve these recommendations, and a public/private partnership does not materialize and move the system toward the goals using these methods, public collection should then be implemented.