

Montana Solid Waste Management and Resource Recovery Plan 2012 Update and Revision

Background

Passed in 1991, the Montana Integrated Waste Management Act; Title 75, chapter 10, part 8, MCA; established integrated waste management as the policy for the state for the purpose of managing municipal solid waste with the least adverse impact on human health and the environment. In addition to defining integrated waste management as “the coordinated use of a priority of waste management methods,” the Act established priorities for waste management; set a solid waste reduction target; required state government to implement source reduction/recycling programs and procure recycled supplies and materials; and required development and implementation of a solid waste management plan.

Integrated Waste Management Hierarchy/Priorities

The integrated solid waste management policy is based on a hierarchy of prioritized approaches to managing waste, § 7510-804 MCA. These approaches, in order of priority, are:

1. **Source Reduction** (also Waste Reduction): Preventing waste in the first place.
2. **Reuse:** Giving a second life to a used product or material.
3. **Recycling:** Introducing one or more waste materials or products into a manufacturing process to produce a new product.
4. **Composting:** The controlled decomposition of organic materials by microorganisms.
5. **Landfill and Incineration:** The final destinations for most waste in United States.

Diversion Target Goals

The Act set the goal to reduce—through the hierarchy—the amount of solid waste generated in the state and established recycling and composting reduction targets. Building on the work of the 1991 Legislature, the 2005 Legislature updated these target goals to better reflect the ability of DEQ to calculate waste diversion rates based on materials recycled and composted, § 75-10-803 MCA. Currently, permitted facilities report these amounts on renewal submissions, and a voluntary survey is sent to all recycling facilities that are not required to hold a permit. Because this survey is voluntary, some facilities choose not to submit recycling data. Therefore, it is likely that Montana waste diversion rates are higher than DEQ’s calculated percentages.

The 2006 Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) and § 75-10-803, MCA; adopted the updated target goals for recycling and composting:

- 17% of the state's solid waste by 2008,
- 19% of the state's solid waste by 2011, and
- 22% of the state's solid waste) by 2015.

Assessment of Target Goals to Performance

To date, Montana has met diversion target goals. Individual reports can be found at http://deq.mt.gov/Recycle/recycling_statistics_Page.mcpX, a summary of diversion rates achieved since 2006 follows.

- 2006 – 18.6%
- 2007 – 18.3%
- 2008 – 19.6%
- 2009 – 19.1%
- 2010 – 19.7%

The Plan

The draft document is available on DEQ's website at <http://deq.mt.gov/Recycle/intewastemanag.mcpX>

Next Steps

Task Force Meeting scheduled for August 30, 2012 to gain input for Implementation Strategy Section of the plan

Finalization of Draft – anticipating September 28, 2012 - public comment period begins

Plan Finalized December 2012