

CHAPTER THREE - WASTE PREVENTION AND REUSE

Introduction:

Oregon Law establishes a hierarchy for the management of solid waste. The first objective of this hierarchy is to prevent the generation of the waste. If that is not possible, reuse is established as the next best option, followed by recycling, composting, and energy recovery. Safe disposal is the last option, if none of the others are feasible.

Prevention and reuse deal with solid waste before it enters the solid waste system. Therefore, there is no physical quantity to “manage”, and the management methods discussed are less tangible than the traditional solid waste activities of collection, handling and disposal, or for similar activities associated with recycling. Taken together, prevention and reuse should be an integral part of contemporary solid waste management.

On a commercial level, and from a practical viewpoint, the generation of waste represents a waste of resources which points to an economic inefficiency and the performance of an activity at an unnecessarily high material cost. Although some waste will always be associated with the production of products and services, waste should be reduced as far as possible.

Individual choices, as the result of education and promotion efforts, can influence production of waste-reducing products and services on the household level. Individual efforts at waste prevention and reuse lessen the need for frequent trash pickup, and reduce the need for increased landfill space.

Regulatory Requirements:

Morrow County is required by the State of Oregon to recover/recycle 18 percent of its solid waste wasteshed starting in 2005. The new goal is 20 percent for 2009.

Oregon Administrative Rule 340-090-0045

allows Morrow County to receive a recovery rate credit for waste prevention and reuse. It is a three part credit the County can use to design a program to meet or exceed the County's recovery rate goals. The County could receive up to a 6 percent credit on its wasteshed recovery/recycling rate goal.

Wasteshed Programs for Two Percent Recovery Rate Credits:

A wasteshed (in this case - Morrow County) may implement one or more of the following programs. For each program implemented, the wasteshed receives a two percent credit on the wasteshed's recovery rate, pursuant to OAR 340-090-0060(3).

(1) Waste Prevention Program. This program shall include:

(a) A wasteshed-wide program to provide general educational materials to residents about waste prevention and examples of things residents can do to prevent generation of waste; and

(b) Two of the following:

- (A) Reduce the wasteshed annual per capita waste generation by two percent each year;
- (B) Conduct a waste prevention media promotion campaign targeted at residential generators;
- (C) Expand the education program in primary and secondary schools to include waste prevention and reuse;
- (D) Implement a household hazardous waste prevention education program;
- (E) Local governments will conduct waste prevention assessments of their operations, or provide waste prevention assessments for businesses and institutions and document any waste prevention measures implemented;

- (F) Conduct a material-specific waste prevention campaign for businesses throughout the wasteshed; or
- (G) Implement a Resource Efficiency Model City program.

(2) Reuse Program. This program shall include:

(a) A promotion and education campaign on the benefits and opportunities for reuse available to the public in the wasteshed; and

(b) Two of the following:

- (A) Operate construction and demolition debris salvage programs with [recycling] depots;
- (B) Promote reuse programs offered by local resale businesses, thrift stores and equipment vendors, such as computer and photocopier refurbishers, to the public and businesses;
- (C) Identify and promote local businesses that will take back white goods (appliances) for refurbishing and resale to the public;
- (D) Develop and promote use of waste exchange programs for the public and private sectors;
- (E) Site accommodation for recovery of reusable material at transfer stations and landfills; or
- (F) Establish sidewalk pickup or community fair programs in cities over 4,000 population in the wasteshed.

(3) Residential Composting Program. This program shall include:

(a) Promotion of the residential composting program through public information and demonstration site or sites; and

(b) Two of the following:

- (A) A program to encourage leaving grass clippings generated by lawn mowing on-site rather than bagging the clippings for disposal or composting;
- (B) A composting program for local schools;
- (C) An increase in availability of compost bins for residents; or
- (D) Another program increasing a household's ability to manage yard trimmings or food wastes.

Current Solid Waste Prevention Activities in Morrow County:

Waste prevention and reuse are a part of the solid waste management spectrum Morrow County could use to meet its wasteshed recovery goal. Suitable waste prevention and reuse programs in Morrow County would help meet state solid waste management goals, protect environmental and natural resources, and extend the life of disposal facilities.

Morrow County has no policy or directive to reduce the volume of waste in its own offices through reuse, repair or purchasing practices. There is no system in place to reduce wasteful practices. There is no policy requiring departments to buy reusable, recyclable or repairable products and supplies.

The County has produced an informational brochure which is a guide to recycling opportunities in Morrow County. The Public Works Department has provided recycling information for south-County residents through use of the local utility company's billing process. Otherwise, none of the cities or municipalities in Morrow County have a consistent history of taking responsibility for education and promotion regarding waste reduction and reuse. In addition, no city or municipality has a budget or plan to produce or distribute

waste reduction information.

Morrow County does not have a policy, ordinance or directive supporting waste reduction. The City of Irrigon does require their solid waste franchisee to develop and implement an opportunity to recycle program that meets mandated state recycling requirements.

One solid waste collector lists locations of recycling drop boxes on account statements and offers curbside recycling of cardboard for commercial accounts.

There is no concerted effort, public or private, to inform Morrow County businesses of waste reduction benefits and methods. The Department of Environmental Quality develops educational materials on waste reduction, but local agencies must request and distribute them.

Waste reduction and reuse seldom, if ever, get coverage in regional media, including radio, television and newspapers. Advertisements for one local hauler in the local newspaper does list recycling information and locations.

Opportunities for Waste Prevention and Reuse for Morrow County:

Waste minimization by Morrow County Departments

The County could provide leadership in the area of waste prevention and reuse undertaking the following initiatives:

- Create policies to reduce the volume of waste in County offices through reuse, repair or purchasing practices;
- Use the budget and department management in purchasing and maintenance decisions that result in prolonging the useful life of equipment and prevents the waste of supplies; and
- Establish policies to require departments to buy reusable, recyclable or repairable products

and supplies, including, paper products, oil and other products.

Rate Incentives

Charging customers on the basis of container size, number and setout frequency can encourage customers to adopt better conservation strategies, such as recycling and waste reduction. People may be willing to utilize reuse and waste prevention strategies if they pay less for their garbage service.

Private Waste Reduction/Reuse activities

Private sector businesses and nonprofit agencies in Morrow County provide a variety of waste reduction/reuse services, including:

- Garage sales and flea markets;
- Drop-boxes and drop-off of reuseables by church and charitable groups; and
- Scrap metal dealers.

There has been little publicity, encouragement or recognition offered to these entities for their significant contributions to waste reduction in the County.

General Public Education Program Options

Rural and urban waste reduction programs often rely most heavily on education and information programs. These education and information efforts also increase general awareness of other waste disposal and resource depletion issues. Waste reduction can, therefore, contribute to recycling and other solid waste management programs and help each agency, business, and household to improve the efficient and cost-effective operation of the system.

Education and media campaigns are key elements in promoting voluntary waste prevention. Without an awareness of the need and rationale for reducing waste, prevention efforts are unlikely to be successful. Both producers and consumers must be educated about the importance of

waste reduction.

These programs can focus on opportunities for waste prevention associated with buying durable goods, buying commodities in bulk, choosing products that are not excessively packaged, and selecting less hazardous household products.

School Programs and Possible Expansions

Educating school age children about responsible solid waste management, including waste reduction, can be an effective education tool. Formal education activities may include:

- Studying the advantages, economic and environmental, from waste prevention;
- Field trips to local industries or agencies that practice waste prevention;
- School awards programs; and
- Working with students to help them design waste reduction plans for their own households.

Field trips to the local disposal site can help emphasize the benefits of, and need for, waste prevention. The schools can also implement waste prevention practices that the students can learn from such as implementing a “food choice” program in the school cafeterias.

State law requires a recycling and waste reduction component in the Oregon schools’ curriculum. The Department of Environmental Quality has developed a curriculum which is available for use by Morrow County schools.

Focus on Business and Industry

Commercial and industrial waste contributes more than half of the volume in local waste streams in Oregon, according to Department of Environmental Quality studies. These businesses depend on cost containment to sustain their enterprises and build their profits. Recycling and waste reduction can strengthen their economic performance and contribute to meeting the County’s state-mandated recovery goal.

The Port of Morrow has the authority and ability to encourage the industries on Port property to practice responsible solid waste management. To help convince the local industries the Port, in conjunction with the County, could develop and circulate waste reduction guidelines. The Port could also take internal action to reduce the amount of waste generated within the Port’s jurisdiction.

Franchised collectors, Chambers of Commerce, water and/or electricity utilities could also combine efforts to offer education about waste prevention. “Demonstration projects” at specific businesses would illustrate to the wider business community the financial and environmental benefits of using resources more efficiently.

County and City Coordination

Many programs will yield best results if they are implemented in a coordinated manner by the County and cities. The County and the cities can accomplish more if they share information, policy and costs. Cooperative agreements could take the following forms:

- Public education;
- Policy;
- School programs;
- Public sector waste minimization;
- Rate incentives; and
- Commercial initiatives.

Unified action and knowledge among the cities could help accomplish County objectives. Cities could be asked to include in their own service level agreements any elements instituted by the County regarding collection company provision of promotion/education.

Reporting

Accurate reporting of activities dealing with waste prevention and reuse could significantly improve the ease of which the County can claim Recovery Rate Credits.

Potential County Waste Prevention

Program:

1. Develop and distribute educational and promotional materials about waste-reducing products and purchasing behaviors, and about their environmental and economic benefits. County staff could provide resources and coordination to accomplish these objectives.
2. Initiate waste prevention activities that combine County and non-County resources should be given top consideration.
3. Ensure that collection companies provide information four times yearly to all customers with increased focus on waste reduction.
4. Present informational materials at fairs and community events in conjunction with State and commercial interests.
5. Insure that waste prevention activities selected are suitable for a rural community.
6. Create and publicize a resolution by the County Court, endorsed by city councils, if possible, that urges all citizens and businesses to undertake efforts to reduce waste. Involve businesses about the benefits of waste reduction and offer fact sheets at public offices and print in local newspapers.
7. Help businesses reduce their waste by enlisting the leadership of the Port of Morrow to:
 - a. Provide informational materials to the Port industries;
 - b. Recognize business efforts and successes through some type of commendation;
 - c. Inform Port businesses about how they can save by reducing collection frequency and volume. Require haulers to inform customers of potential savings; and
 - d. Offer seminars to Port businesses with the help of regional experts and associations.
8. Create government policy and directives to minimize waste within County departments by:
 - a. Providing information to all departments on how this can be done;
 - b. Having all departments set goals and methods for reducing waste;
 - c. Measuring and recognizing successes and acknowledging problems; and
 - d. Reviewing procurement policies and practices, changing as needed.
9. Encourage and support school use of resource conservation curricula:
 - a. Enlist cities, the Port of Morrow, civic groups and corporate businesses in making presentations, guiding field trips, and acquiring curriculum materials;
 - b. Support school efforts with curricula and teacher training sessions by the

Department of
Environmental Quality.

10. Explore incentives with collectors for supporting volume and frequency based reductions in waste generation.

Recommendations:

1. Identify and secure funding for a Morrow County Solid Waste
3. Utilize the State's Recovery Rate Credit Program as part of the Solid Waste Program. This should include education programs in schools and businesses, and at community events, such as the County Fair.
4. Target at least one community or media event per year to promote waste prevention, reuse, recycling and composting, although not every media event needs to promote all of those activities.
5. Encourage business and industry to offer demonstration projects for waste reduction and reuse.
6. Encourage accurate and complete reporting of waste prevention, reuse, recycling and composting by the haulers, Finley Buttes Landfill, businesses, institutions and local government.

Program. The program would need to be on-going and cover part-time, dedicated staff.

2. Develop and implement a Morrow County Solid Waste Program which combines the waste prevention, reuse, recycling and composting programs described in this Chapter and in Chapter Four.