

**State of Connecticut  
Department of Environmental Protection**

**State Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee  
Summary of the October 23, 2007 Meeting**



**Changing the Balance**

The seventh meeting of the CTDEP State Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee was held on October 23, 2007 at the CTDEP headquarters. The purpose of the meeting was to: present the concept of total cost accounting for solid waste and recycling with a follow-up open forum discussion; provide regulatory and legislative updates; and then, breakout to subcommittee work.

**Guest Lecture: “Total Cost Accounting for Solid Waste and Recycling”**

Kristen Brown, Waste Solutions and a DEP Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee member, made a presentation on “Total cost accounting for solid waste and Recycling” or “Re-defining the way residents value Trash”. This presentation has been placed on the CTDEP website. The presentation defined “pay-as-you-throw”, summarized local, regional and global efforts underway, and outlined benefits that could be realized in Connecticut under this type of program:

- PAYT is defined as: a system based upon a unit based charge; equitable; and “financially incentivizes people to make the right choice”.
- Local, regional and global efforts. Information was presented showing each of the fifty states and the per capita residential disposal rates, and the percentage of PAYT programs utilized per state. The US average residential per capita solid waste disposed totaled 1,135 pounds; Connecticut’s disposal rate was reported as 965 pounds. The information presented indicated that those states having comprehensive PAYT programs had the lowest per capita residential disposal rates. Four states are 100% PAYT – Minnesota, Washington, Oregon and Iowa. Massachusetts has approximately one-third of their municipalities utilizing PAYT programs; of these municipalities, the residential per capita disposal averaged 512 pounds. Information was presented on programs being implemented in Switzerland, New Zealand, South Korea, and Canada. In each example presented, there were significant reductions gained in the amount of solid waste being diverted from disposal.
- Benefits that could result from implementing a PAYT program in Connecticut: a significant amount of waste (780,000 tons) could be diverted from disposal; savings could result from tipping fees not having to be assessed for the waste that has been diverted, as well savings related to solid waste management transportation and labor costs; an increase in recycling rates; a reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions; and greater acceptance and implementation of producer responsibility.

After the presentation, a panel discussion ensued.

**Panel Discussion: “Total Cost Accounting for Solid Waste and Recycling”**

Diane Duva, Assistant Director -BMMCA, was the moderator. Panel discussion participants were: Kristen Brown, Waste Solutions; John Phetteplace, Recycling Coordinator from the Town of Stonington; and Charles Sisitsky, Director of Public Works from the Town of Natick, Massachusetts.

- Charles Sisitsky summarized the Town of Natick’s experiences with PAYT. The town’s population numbers 32,000; the DPWs budget totals approximately \$2

million. Approximately half the budget covers tip fee, the other half covers fixed costs. Beginning in 2001/2002, the town went to a PAYT system based on financial reasons. The town considers PAYT a great program, resulting in increased recycling rates, reduction in the overall tipping fees, and labor costs. Illegal disposal has not been an issue; Natick has a bulky waste pick-up system, designed to accommodate town residents. The town will be moving to single stream collection with the expectation that recycling rates will continue to increase. The key factors in making Natick's PAYT a successful program would include having a long lead time to implement the program, good educational outreach and communication, and making it simple to use.

- John Phetteplace summarized the Town of Stonington's PAYT program. The program has been in place since 1992 as a result of the closing of the town landfill and the decision of using a resources recovery facility to dispose of their solid waste. The town did hold a referendum to decide whether or not the town would continue with this system. The town residents voted 2:1 to keep the program; at the public hearing, the public spoke in favor of the program, noting that the streets were cleaner, more recycling was being done, and illegal dumping was not an issue. Stonington's PAYT program was based on the premise of user costs; it was never intended to cover the cost of operating the transfer station, and did not include bulky waste pick-ups.
- Questions and Comments from Committee members included:
  - Public versus private waste hauling: how can a PAYT system work if residents use private haulers. *Each town has the authority to enact ordinances.*
  - PAYT could be viewed as a regressive tax. *It is not a regressive tax, but rather be viewed as an option not to generate waste.*
  - Is PAYT based on per bag disposal rate or based on weight: *Natick does not have a weight limit but is based on the volume of the bag; Stonington has a weight limit.*
  - The role of the public with regard to recycling and PAYT. *The public needs to understand that recycling is mandate. There needs to be a combination of both enforcement and education with regard to recycling. The public needs to recognize the incentives for PAYT systems. The public needs to understand the true cost of their disposing of solid waste.*
  - If PAYT is instituted, the public may look to other methods to dispose of their waste, such as using garbage disposal to dispose of their organics resulting in problems in another media – water. *Alternatives need to be provided that allows for residents to use other methods to manage their wastes; in this case, encouraging home composting or curbside pick-up(such as being used in Toronto).*
  - *The CTDEP has a website that covers PAYT and can be accessed for more information.*

### **Legislative and Regulatory Updates**

Diane Duva, Assistant Director/Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance, reported that the comment period for the Municipal Transfer Stations and Recycling General Permit closed as of October 22<sup>nd</sup> and that the DEP will consider the comments that were submitted. It is expected that a final General Permit will be issued shortly and a statewide publication of Notice of Issuance will be done.

### **Open Forum**

C.J. May, President of the Connecticut Recyclers Coalition, announced to the Committee members that the Annual Meeting of the CRC is to be held Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at the CRRRA Visitors Center at 211 Murphy Road in Hartford, CT. The major topic at this meeting will be Single Stream Recycling. Anyone interested in attending should refer to the CRC website at: [www.ctrecyclers.org](http://www.ctrecyclers.org)

### **Suggested Agenda Items for the November 27th Advisory Committee Meeting**

Upcoming agenda items include a report out for each of the five subcommittees and a review and discussion of the 2008 Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee meetings/activities.

The full Committee Meeting ended, and the Sub-Committees subsequently met.

**The next meeting is scheduled for: November 27th – 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; CTDEP Headquarters, 79 Elm Street/5<sup>th</sup> Floor Phoenix Auditorium, Hartford, CT 06106.**

### **Adjourned**

Summary of minutes dated October 29, 2007.