

RESOURCES RECOVERY TASK FORCE

Summary of Recommendations

RESOURCES RECOVERY TASK FORCE

Public Act 13-285, An Act Concerning Recycling and Jobs, established a task force to study the operations, financial stability, and business models of resource recovery facilities operating in Connecticut. The Act specifically required the Task Force to review statutes and regulations concerning renewable energy certificates for waste to energy facilities, explore whether resource recovery facilities should be defined as electric municipal utilities, analyze the potential for new forms of bilateral contacts.

RESOURCES RECOVERY TASK FORCE

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Glenn Lockhart	Wheelabrator
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Jeff K. Bridges	Town Manager, Wethersfield
Doreen Zaback	Town of Wallingford
Mark Bobman	Bristol RRF Operating Committee
Mark Lyon	First Selectman, Washington

RESOURCES RECOVERY TASK FORCE

- Task Force held eight meetings September-December 2013.
- Public listening session held Nov. 19, 2013.
- Final report sent to Governor and legislators on Dec. 13, 2013.
- Most recommendations were adopted unanimously by the Task Force.
- Full report and all supporting documents are posted at www.ct.gov/deep/rrtf.

TASK FORCE FINDS WtE SHUTDOWNS WOULD INCREASE LANDFILLING

“The closure of either of the state’s two largest waste-to-energy plants, Bridgeport Resources Recovery Project and Hartford’s Mid-Connecticut Project, has potential to create a surplus of waste that could not be accommodated by the remaining plants, which are operating near capacity. This is would lead to an increase in the disposal of waste in out-of-state landfills, and could create a non-competitive environment with increased costs for municipalities.”

-Resources Recovery Task Force Final Report

TASK FORCE CALLS FOR NEW EMPHASIS ON RECYCLING, DIVERSION

“Given the uncertain sustainability of the state’s waste-to-energy infrastructure, the state should accelerate diversion, product stewardship, and create the infrastructure and regulatory environment necessary to reduce the state's dependence on waste-to-energy. These steps should be taken while seeking to minimize adverse impacts on municipal budgets.”

-Resources Recovery Task Force Final Report

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS REC II CHANGE

“The state should consider restructuring the Class II RECs to more fully account for the value of the greenhouse gas reduction and environmental benefits of WTE facilities relative to landfills. In its analysis, the state should consider REC structures in other states, as well as measurements of the net lifecycle greenhouse gas mitigation achieved by waste-to-energy technology.”

-Resources Recovery Task Force Final Report

OTHER FINDINGS

- “Dual-commodity” contracting model could benefit municipalities and RRFs.
- The state should extend the solid waste assessment fee to all MSW and C&D waste regardless of disposal method, use to fund recycling education and other programs.
- The views of those who oppose WtE should be taken into account if forming solutions to market challenges.

NEXT STEPS

- Policymakers are looking at combination of short and long-term solutions to manage the transition away from sole reliance on WtE.
- State is considering options to incentivize the creation of 21st century diversion infrastructure.
- Legislation expected this session.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Task	Key Finding(s)	Recommended Action(s)
Study the operations, financial stability, and business models of RRFs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The waste-to-energy market as a whole is challenged by declining electricity prices, a reduction in available waste, out of state competition, and the inequitable solid waste assessment fee Closure of the state’s largest RRFs would likely lead to an increase in out-of-state disposal and higher costs for municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerate development of infrastructure for increased diversion to decrease reliance on WtE Consider market interventions to support WtE that phase out as diversion targets are reached
Study RECS for RRFs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential greenhouse gas mitigation provided by RRFs benefit the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class II RECS should be restructured to capture the value of the greenhouse gas reduction relative to landfilling. The state should consider structures in place in other states, as well as measurements of the net lifecycle greenhouse gas mitigation achieved by RRFs
Explore application of Electrical Municipal Utility to RRFs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The change would enable the state to more easily enter into direct purchase agreements with RRFs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Study Bilateral Contracting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No statutory barriers were identified to the concept of bilateral (dual-commodity) contracting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipalities and RRFs are encouraged to explore whether dual-commodity contracting may offer a value
Make any other recommendations deemed necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state’s solid waste assessment, applied only to in-state RRFs, provides a competitive advantage to out-of-state disposal options, contrary to present policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the solid waste assessment equally to all forms of waste disposal. Apply additional funds generated to programs aimed at meeting state’s diversion targets