

**State of Connecticut  
Department of Environmental Protection**

**State Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee  
Summary of the March 25, 2008 Meeting**



**Changing the Balance**

The eleventh meeting of the CTDEP State Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee was held on March 25, 2008 at the CTDEP headquarters. The purpose of the meeting was to: provide regulatory and legislative updates; provide for an open forum; and hear a presentation on the Scotts Company: An Overview of the Lebanon, Connecticut Manufacturing Facility, and then, breakout to subcommittee work.

**Opening Comments**

Tessa Gutowski convened the meeting, reviewed the agenda and then brought forward a number of current items that would be of interest to the Committee:

- This past week, Mayor Eddie A. Perez, City of Hartford, announced an innovative Hartford Recycling project aimed at dramatically improving residential curbside recycling and increasing residential recycling rates. The City of Hartford is the first community in the nation to benefit from the National Recycling Partnership's grant program. The City will implement a one-year pilot program called "Go Green Use Blue" to demonstrate the positive impact of making recycling more convenient for residents and offering households incentives to recycle. The pilot program will involve using single stream recycling and will serve as case study for other communities throughout the State.
  
- An RFP has been drafted to conduct a State-wide Waste Composition and Characterization Study. The State Solid Waste Management Plan included a strategy (6-7) that required the DEP to conduct a solid waste characterization study for the purpose of better targeting waste diversion efforts and estimating associated costs for managing the waste stream. In addition, the Hearing Officer's Report leading up to the Plan indicated that this type of Study be conducted in the short-term and that a similar study be conducted by the year 2016 to evaluate progress to meeting the State's goals. The RFP is currently undergoing review by internal staff and a formal Process is being established. The RFP is to be published on the DAS website in April and the award of contract is expected to be final by August 2008.
  
- In a weekly newspaper covering Hebron and surrounding towns, there was an article entitled "Saving cash by going Green" and featured volunteer work conducted by Mike Harder, former Bureau Chief of Waste Management and currently a member of the State Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee. In this article, it covered Mike's interest about his hometown's recycling rate and possible approaches that could be undertaken to increase the rates. In attendance for the March meeting, Mike was asked to share some of his findings to date. Mike relayed the following:
  - It is in the town's best interest to reduce the amount hauled away because of the cost per ton of disposal and the expectation that tipping fees would be increasing.
  - Working with the Town Public Works Director, waste collection data for the period July 2006 through June 2007 indicated that those residents who brought

their trash to the transfer station recycled much more than those who hire a hauler (26% rate/16 % rate).

- With an increase of recycling, the town could save thousands in tipping fees.
- Mike and the Town Public Works Director are currently developing a plan, with a focus on educational outreach with a message on budgets and better use of tax dollars, to boost recycling in town. Mike indicated that he is concerned that single stream may not be the best option and that PAYT is being considered. The Town's website is being evaluated and modified. Mike said he will provide updates to the DEP Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee concerning Hebron's efforts.

### **Legislative and Regulatory Updates**

Legislative update: Robert LaFrance, Legislative Program Manager, provided an update on a number of bills currently active and under consideration at the Legislature. All the bills listed below are active but final language has not yet been completed:

▪ **SB357: Expansion Of The Beverage Container Redemption Provisions To Include Water Bottles**

To expand the beverage container redemption provisions to include water bottles, to require dealers to provide certain information to distributors, to require redemption centers established or significantly expanded on or after October 1, 2008, to locate such center near the main entrance of the business, and to create the offense of knowingly tendering for redemption a beverage container for which a deposit has not been paid.

▪ **SB581 Enforcement Authority Of DEP And Motor Bus Idling**

To give the Commissioner of Environmental Protection greater discretion when assessing civil penalties, to make the criminal penalties for failing to maintain or destroying information concerning air, water, solid and hazardous waste violations consistent, to require parties to seek a hearing regarding certain water permits before a final determination has been made, to increase the fee for a structure constructed without the required permit to four times the original application fee, to increase the current penalties for violating the dam safety provisions to twenty-five thousand dollars per offense, and to make the idling of a motor bus an infraction for a first offense and to carry a fine of one hundred to five hundred dollars for a subsequent offense.

▪ **SB 582 Recycling Of Covered Electronic Devices**

To exclude manufacturers that own a trademark or license for covered electronic devices but do not manufacture such devices from recycling requirements, to redefine orphan device to limit such definition to computer-related components, to redefine market share to limit such definition to CED product categories, to distinguish between manufacturers recycling computer-related and television-related components, and to require that every covered electronic device sold in the state be labeled with the manufacturer's name and address.

▪ **SB 585 Underground Storage Tanks, Demonstration Projects, Beneficial Use Of Solid Waste, Aquaculture Structures, Sand Removal, Tipping Fees, The Solid Waste Account And The Coastal Management Act**

To require newly installed or modified underground storage tank systems to have upgraded containment systems with electronic detection monitors, to create a demonstration project license for new methods for managing solid waste in lieu of a permit, to repeal the exemption for certain aquaculture structures from the coastal structures, dredging and fill permit program, to allow the commissioner to waive the required royalty payment for removal of state-owned sand and

gravel, to expand the solid waste tipping fee to include all solid wastes, to allow the solid waste account funds to be used for the promotion of state and municipal recycling, and to repeal the annual reporting requirement under the Coastal Management Act.

- **SB 636 Resources Recovery Facility Contracts**  
To require the Department of Public Utility Control to regulate resources recovery facility tipping fees and to include resources recovery facilities and facilities that dispose or recycle ash residue from resources recovery facilities in the definition of utility and public service company as used throughout the general statutes.
- **HB 5138 Private, Municipal And State Recycling**  
To encourage private, municipal and state recycling.
- **HB 5145 Environmentally Stressed And Environmental Justice Communities**  
To provide relief for environmentally stressed and environmental justice communities.
- **HB 5601 Banning Children's Products Containing Lead, Phthalates Or Bisphenol-A.**  
To expand the list of hazardous substances that toys and other children's products may not contain, to require the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to compile a list of chemicals of concern, and to create an Innovation Institute at The University of Connecticut.
- **HB5717 Banning Retail Use Of Plastic Bags**  
To prohibit the retail use of non-biodegradable plastic bags after January 1, 2010.
- **HB5805 Toxic Substances**  
To phase out the class of chemicals known as alkylphenol ethoxylates, and certain toxic flame retardants, and to allow the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to ban additional flame retardants once a safer alternative exists.

Regulatory update: Robert Isner, Director/Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance, indicated that there were no updates but would be available at the close of the meeting if anyone had any questions on the draft beneficial use permits.

#### Open Forum

Lois Hager, a member of the State Solid Waste Management Committee, requested to make some comments to the Committee. The following is a summary of her comments:

- She attended the 20th Anniversary of the Northeast Recycling Council last week. As CT's Recycling Coordinator, she was one of NERC's original board members. The event caused her to reflect on the status of solid waste management in CT now compared with 20 years ago.
- She indicated serious concerns in that she believed CT is potentially in a worse situation now than we were 20 years ago when the RRFs were being completed, the landfills were closing and recycling was made mandatory. She expressed strong concern that with privatization of the RRFs, CT municipalities may lose guaranteed access RRF disposal for the portion of MSW that requires disposal, and indicated that she was very distressed that the legislature does not appear to realize that CT already has very extensive recycling laws. CT was the second state in the country to have mandatory recycling.
- The problems she sees are as follows: (1) At least some of the RRFs are being privatized because the bonds are now or are about to be paid off. Private operators say their tipping fees will be less than with public facilities because there will be no debt service. But when capacity becomes a regional problem, it will go to the highest bidders, and that may not be Connecticut

municipalities, or if it is, those municipalities will have to outbid NY and MA municipalities. (2) The legislature is addressing recycling as if it is something new that needs to be tested. Based on the bits of debate she has heard, many of the legislators are unaware of the extensive laws and regulations we have in place already and think what is needed is a technical fix rather than significant municipal and state funding for enforcement and education.

- This situation is very different from 1987 when the state had in fact committed itself to and made provision for recycling and RRF disposal. Lois indicated that we could end up with a solid waste system that is servicing primarily out-of-state MSW with CT MSW being shipped out of state until those landfills reach capacity. Lois indicated that as ownership of the RRF shifts, there needs to be a commitment to in-state municipalities.

Other Comments: Another Committee member raised the issue concerning public to private ownership and indicated that in other parts of the country, the tipping fees charged were competitive and, at times, lower they were under public ownership.

**Guest Lecture: *The Scotts Company- An Overview of the Lebanon, Connecticut Manufacturing Facility, Mark Cooper Plant Manager.***

Mark Cooper provided an overview of: How Scotts is Organized, the Lebanon Facility, and Current Marketing Strategies.

- How Scotts is Organized: There are a number of divisions: – lawns, gardens, ortho/roundup, international, bird food, Scotts Lawn Service, grass seed, Smith & Hawken, and growing media. The focus on the presentation is on the growing media which consists of topsoil, peat and cow manure. This is the largest division (\$500 million) of the Company and has seen 56% growth since 2002.
- Lebanon Facility: It is the largest growing media facility in the US (there are 26 facilities nationwide); employs between 50 to 100 people (seasonality); produces over 10 million bags of product each year; consumes over 4,000 truckloads of leaves and brush; consumes over 4 million cubic feet of Sphagnum Peat Moss; and ships an average of 130 trucks per day during season. Mark described the field layout and field operations – grinding leaves, grinding brush, monitoring windrow temperatures, combining windrows, and inventory management. Next described was preparing the material for blending and mixing and blending.
- Current Marketing Strategies for 2008: The Company is producing new commercials and is encouraging “It’s Gro Time”. The Company is addressing water as an issue and produced a new turf builder with Water Smart™ which allows lawns to use water more efficiently. The Company is reaching new customers in organic products and has seen an annual growth of 200% in each of the past three years. Projecting ahead, age groups 55+ will experience the largest growth over the next decade, an age group that is expected to be investing in lawns and gardens.

The full Committee meeting ended and members attended the subcommittees.

**The next meeting is scheduled for: April 22, 2008, 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 March 28, 2008