

Notes
WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON RECYCLING

Thursday, July 21, 2020
 Via conference call/Skype

<p>Council Members Present: Jarrod Holter, David Keeling, David Pellitteri, Mark Walter, Barb Worcester, Heidi Woelfel, Jeff Zillich DNR: Jennifer Semrau, Kate Strom Hiorns, Brad Wolbert Public: Marty Oxman, Alter Metal; Tom Thompson, UW Health; Pam Busko, Aspirus; Scott DeFife, Glass Packaging Institute; Meleesa Johnson, Marathon County/AROW President; Tim Harden, Alliant Energy; Charlene Wegner; City of La Crosse. Note- due to the call-in/Skype nature of the meeting, some participants may not be identified above; omission is not intentional.</p>	
Call to Order	Meeting called to order at 9:01 a.m.
Introductions and Announcements	Council members and guests introduced themselves.
Approval of Minutes (April 23, 2020)	Motion made by Mark Walter and seconded by Jarrod Holter to approve the minutes of April 23, 2020. Motion carried (7-0).
DNR/Legislative/PFAS Updates	<p>Jennifer Semrau, DNR informed the council of various announcements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Materials, Inc, (WI glass recycler) is back in operation after the March fire. • The WI Integrated Resource Management Conference (WIRMC) will be virtual next year (Feb. 2021). • The Recycling Partnership released a Guide to Community Material Recovery Facility (MRF) Contracts with best management practices for contracts between local recycling programs and MRFs. • The EPA's Small Business Innovation Research Program is seeking applications for its 2021 Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase 1 Solicitation. The goal of the funding is to help small businesses develop technologies in several areas, including sustainable materials management. The deadline to apply is August 28, 2020. • More Recycling and partners created the Recycling Market Development Platform to connect businesses, institutions and individuals with resources related to waste reduction. • The US Senate Committee on Environment and Public works held a hearing entitled, "Responding to the Challenges Facing Recycling in the United States" on June 17, 2020. The hearing focused on how to advance recycling, reduce plastic waste and producer responsibility. <p>J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various DNR staffing updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A hiring freeze remains in effect; no new hires or departures. • Ariana Mankerian, Recycling and Solid Waste Reporting Specialist, has returned from leave on a part-time basis. • DNR, and other state agencies, have been called upon to assist the Department of Workforce Development with unemployment claims. • DNR staff have also been asked to volunteer at popular state parks during busy weekends.

J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of the State of Wisconsin/DNR Bounce Back plan:

- DNR entered Bounce Back Phase 1 on 6/19. Almost all staff continued to work from home, but DNR staff were able to start doing field inspections with proper PPE, training and contacting all sites in advance. Some inspections have resumed in field.
- DNR entered Bounce Back Phase 2 on 7/13. Still nearly all staff will continue to work from home. DNR continued doing limited field inspections with proper PPE, training and contacting all sites in advance.
- Primary difference is groups were limited to a maximum of 10 in Phase 1; Phase 2 allows groups up to 50. Maintaining six-foot social distancing is expected in any group or setting with more than one person.
- Virtual meetings are highly recommended and the department standard.
- Effective 7/13, all employees who are approved to work in a DNR facility will be required to wear a face mask at all times while indoors at any state facility. This includes shops, garages, and even in your office with the door shut. Exceptions are to eat or drink or communicate with a person who is hard of hearing or deaf.
- Staff have been provided with disinfecting supplies for workspaces and state-owned vehicles, masks and other necessary PPE and supplies.

J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various WMM program updates:

- Waste characterization study plans still in the works but contracting has been delayed. Landfills may need to respond quickly to consultant. Contract close to final; expect work to start in September and final report by end of March 2021.
- No update on Legislative Audit Bureau program evaluation of state recycling program.
- Staff are working on spread for Natural Resources magazine fall edition on the 30-year anniversary of recycling law and 10-year anniversary of E-cycle.
- Staff will soon launch the annual Recycling Excellence Awards; nominations will be due 9/15.
- The launch of the DNR website pushed back; date unknown.
- Staff have had more inquiries from communities on recycling Responsible Unit (RU) requirements and ability to leave county or multi-member RUs; may see more RUs in 2021.
- Staff are planning for fall MRF Stakeholder meeting and transitioning to a virtual only event.
- A future educational focus has been identified for the FY21 fiscal year: food waste reduction.

J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various legislative/rulemaking updates:

- Legislature not currently in session.
- E-Cycle rule - Staff working internally on drafting the various sections. According to the timeline, we anticipate having a public comment period on the economic impact statement in March 2021

	<p>and having a public hearing and comment period on the draft rules in June 2021. Staff hope to gather some informal feedback from stakeholders on various aspects of the rule this fall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighting Foam emergency and permanent rules required by 2019 Wis. Act 101 - Public meeting on emergency rule draft 7/15; public comments accepted through 7/16. ‘Green sheet’ package including background memo, fiscal estimate and more due 7/22. Natural Resources Board to consider at its August 11-12 meeting. Emergency rules are to be enacted by 9/1 per Act. <p>J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various PFAS updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 6/26 DNR mailed posters titled <i>Firefighting Foam & PFAS in Wisconsin</i> to Wisconsin fire departments offering an easy-to-follow overview of 2019 Wis. Act 101. The Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association (WSFCA) and DNR worked together to create this poster as a quick and general clarification of the new state law related to PFAS-containing firefighting foam. Fire departments with multiple stations can contact the DNR by email at DNRFireFightingFoamStudy@Wisconsin.gov if additional copies are needed. • DNR has added a ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ tab to its PFAS firefighting foam webpage.
<p>Introduction of New Waste Management Bureau Director</p>	<p>Brad Wolbert, DNR introduced himself to the council and asked council members to introduce themselves and affiliation. B. Wolbert provided background information and invited the council to call anytime.</p>
<p>Tracking/Reporting Violations of Recycling Law</p>	<p>David Pellitteri, Pellitteri Waste Systems shared that as commodity values of recyclables have decreased, the cost to recycle is the same as, or more expensive than, landfilling. Could the council take a hard look at how recycling stays strong in a poor market. When the value of recyclables is \$0, there is less incentive to recycle correctly. Some municipalities are questioning ‘do we have to recycle?’ Haulers could landfill recycling if its cheaper (to save money). Can the council look at policy changes at DNR or Governor’s Office? Also, when there is an issue, how does the public find out? How can the council make sure recycling is done following the law? What would stop a private business or a hauler from violating the recycling laws?</p> <p>David Keeling, Council Chair, asked when material goes out of state, what tools do we have? Municipalities are trying to reduce costs. Jarrod Holter, City of Onalaska, said that as a municipality, it is true that budget pressure is real. Onalaska is looking at eliminating positions as a cost saving measure. They are looking at all options. Mark Walter, Brown County, said the state needs to move away from the misnomer that recycling makes money. It’s important for the environmental ethic, but that is a tougher sell for municipalities with strapped budgets. D. Pellitteri said that haulers are in-between the municipalities and the MRFs. J. Semrau said there are statutory/code requirements for municipalities (Responsible Units), MRFs and haulers. D. Pellitteri asked if haulers have been required to provide documentation (of delivery of recyclables to appropriate locations). J. Semrau said not on a holistic basis (case by case, if there are suspected violations), but perhaps this could be a future focus. D. Pellitteri. suggested</p>

	<p>that perhaps the council should advocate for this as there are holes in the system. D. Keeling said if it was randomized not all haulers would need to be checked as there would be equal risk to all (of getting caught if violating).</p> <p>Scott DeFife, Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), said not all states ban the landfilling of glass. GPI is trying to provide more clarity on glass pricing. National price websites are not currently accurate. GPI is also trying to get more regional data. There is also a significant difference between mixed, broken glass (from single stream) versus source separated. GPI may expand glass categories.</p> <p>D. Keeling said it is true that glass and other markets have changed. M. Walter said while economics of recycling have changed, one should still look at avoided disposal costs. Barb Worcester, Governor’s Office said this is a very important discussion to have. Industry has done a great job of educating about recycling. However, recycling is a critical juncture. It is important to emphasize avoided landfill cost and saving landfill space. How do we keep excitement/interest in recycling? How do we remind municipalities of the benefits of recycling during tough economic times?</p> <p>D. Keeling asked that this topic be a standing agenda item and for J. Semrau to provide an overview of requirements for haulers at the next meeting.</p>
<p>Tri-County Recycling Program Update</p>	<p>Mark Walter, Brown County updated the council on the Tri-County recycling and solid waste program. The BOW (Brown Outagamie Winnebago Counties) had an original 25-year solid waste agreement, which they are renegotiating for the future. The BOW also has a 15-year recycling agreement and jointly own the MRF in Appleton (single stream since 2009). In the solid waste agreement, Winnebago operated its landfill first, then Outagamie and finally Brown. The large regional program has low landfill tip fees (which is good and bad). MRF had the same equipment since 2009 so last year the PETE optical and eddy current were replaced at a cost of \$1.2Million. The project was paid for by cash reserves. Outgoing material needs to be as clean as possible. Aluminum bales have been docked (pricing) due to contamination. The MRF receives 400-600 tons/day and Brown County is approximately 35-40%. Since June, the MRF has been able to staff both shifts at 100% (previously it had been 60-80%). Markets have been down- aluminum and natural HDPE are about equal. Glass is used as alternative daily cover or sent to a sandblast market. The MRF sells to 4-5 mills in the paper valley; their paper pricing is always above posted market prices. The expansion at Green Bay Packaging will add more capacity. Since COVID, there has been a marked change in composition. Commercial had been approximately 60%; now commercial is 30%. Overall BOW has seen residential tonnages increase and commercial decrease. The past three months the tonnage has been ~2800/month (highest ever). But overall, the MRF is on par at 2,000 tons/week. The MRF residual rate is 8-9%. Outagamie has new Administrator, Alex Nett; Joanne Gorske retired in February. Education is done jointly. In 2019, BOW sent 350,000 recycling brochures to all households. For 2020, BOW is working on a public relations plan. People want to recycle.</p>
<p>Market Updates/ COVID-19 Impacts</p>	<p>D. Keeling, Council Chair said M. Walter’s report mirrors what the council has heard at past meetings. Jeff Zillich, Advanced Disposal, echoed the sentiment of M. Walter as well- residential tonnage is up and commercial</p>

	<p>tonnage is down. This stresses the system. OCC spiked, but then pricing came back down. D. Pellitteri also has seen tonnage going from commercial to residential. Municipalities are looking at weekly trash and recycling (versus bi-weekly recycling). The cart is not big enough to hold the volume of every other week recycling and some recycling ends up in the trash. Charlene Wegner, City of La Crosse said citizens are requesting more recycling carts. D. Pellitteri said it's a 'catch 22' - a budget crunch, yet more recycling. D. Keeling said program could look at other diversion, outside of traditional recycling hauling, such as textiles or food waste. M. Walter said in June they experienced a record volume of trash (highest in 20 years); maybe some of it was recycling? There was a marked increase in drop-offs (garage clean outs, etc.).</p>
Public Comment	None.
Other Business	<p>D. Keeling, Council Chair shared that the National Recycling Coalition (NRC) submitted comments to US EPA on procurement guidelines. NRC's market development focus cannot be conducted in-person due to COVID. Instead NRC held a virtual market workshop with ~1,000 attendees. A future workshop will focus on 'buy recycled.' As a reminder, past NRC webinars are on the NRC website. In addition, recycling professionals are invited to upload educational samples, PowerPoints, reports, etc. to the NRC resource library. NRC is also looking at ways to improve diversity. The board has asked for recommendations from the minority recycling council. Finally, the National Zero Waste Conference will be virtual this year (12/1-12/3).</p>
Next Meeting Date/ Location	Next meeting will be in late September/early October via conference call/Skype. J. Semrau will send out a Doodle.
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am; motioned by David Pellitteri and seconded by Mark Walter. Motion carried (7-0).