

**Public Works and Utilities Division
SPOKANE REGIONAL SOLID WASTE SYSTEM**

STRATEGIC PLAN

June 15, 2007

Mission Statement: To provide all the residents within Spokane County with recycling and disposal services that continue to put this area in the leadership position with respect to programming, planning, and results. These integrated services should be cost effective, efficient, and environmentally justifiable. It continues to be the goal of the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System to manage more than 50% of the waste stream through waste reduction and recycling.

Key Customers: Spokane County Citizens

Definition of Product/Services:

1. Administer county-wide solid waste planning activities and programs and manage operations at System facilities.
2. Manage the solid waste and recyclable materials that are generated in Spokane County.
3. Maintain and operate the Waste to Energy facility with the best environmental technology, efficiencies and equipment innovation.
4. Generate over 178,000 MWh electricity.
5. Offer convenient disposal of solid waste, recyclables, yard waste and household hazardous waste at the Valley and North County Transfer Stations and the WTE facility.
6. Maintain the Northside landfill for use as the only permitted facility for disposal of municipal solid waste in Spokane County.
7. Support the Moderate Risk Waste programs to provide education, household hazardous waste facilities, business technical assistance and refrigerant recovery.
8. Administer county-wide waste reduction, reuse and recycling planning and education programs for residents, schools, and businesses.
9. Maintain county wide composting programs to divert the organic fraction of the waste stream from disposal.
10. Fund the Regional Litter Control activities.

Strategic Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT):

Strengths:

1. Integrated System allowing for a full range of services, efficiencies of scale and consistency throughout the region.
2. Highly experienced and knowledgeable staff devoted to economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable management of solid waste.
3. Efficient administration of county-wide solid waste planning goals and issues.
4. Renewable electrical energy produced from solid waste.
5. WTE Facility that uses state-of-the-art technology to control emissions and protect the environment, while lessening the effects of greenhouse gasses.
6. Source reduction/reuse program that delivers common messages county-wide to residents, institutions and businesses.
7. Collaborate on education and implementation of programs with other partners (government agencies and/or jurisdictions, private sector)
8. Three disposal facilities offer convenient, comprehensive solid waste services.
9. Strong recycling rate
10. Have only permitted MSW landfill in Spokane County

Weaknesses

1. Poor relationships with some interlocal stakeholders.
2. Infrastructure 15 years old and in need of upgrades.
3. Ash from WTE landfilled versus being recycled.
4. Services not as convenient for citizens in outlying areas of Spokane County.
5. Reduction of waste is difficult to measure
6. The apparent lack of manufacturer, retailer, consumer, and government commitment to considering full environmental impacts of products.
7. Education messages are expensive to market and compete with other advertising.
8. Not all of the recyclables are diverted from the waste stream.

Opportunities

1. Continue to develop supportive relationships with interlocal stakeholders, businesses, and residents through open communications.
2. Continue to support City administrators with information and actions that demonstrate the value of a regional solid waste system.
3. Continue to pursue ash recycling and reuse.
4. Develop outreach programs that include incentives that will encourage citizens and businesses to reduce the amount of waste they generate.
5. Promote product stewardship.
6. Create government-led procurement policy; implement environmental performance into purchasing and contract award decisions.
7. Promote private waste exchanges.

8. Expand efforts to assist rural citizens with solid waste services.
9. Increase public outreach on the benefits of recycling and how to do it in Spokane County. Look for potential improvements that will increase diversion at the lowest cost with the highest effectiveness.
10. Evaluate front-end process of waste to improve recovery of material prior to processing in WTE.
11. Increase public education and product awareness concerning HHW.
12. Increase in-county disposal capacity by expanding NSLF cell.

Threats

1. Lack of System support from Spokane County Government.
2. Lack of System support from Spokane County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC).
3. Private disposal contractors and haulers, and other businesses not adhering to County flow control.
4. Possibility of not being allowed to expand NSLF cell.
5. Increasing regulatory compliance requirements.
6. Public perception that the Waste to Energy Facility could be an environmental threat and is too expensive.
7. General public consumerism culture of “needing” newer, better, bigger items.
8. Procurement of recycled-content materials initially can be of higher cost, without understanding the value and is not supported by current governmental low-bid policies.
9. Business efforts to emphasize cost of disposal over benefits of recycling.

Key Success Factors (KSF):

1. Provide the community with user-friendly, single-site disposal services.
2. Manage and maintain an integrated environmentally responsible System that offers the best value for the services provided.
3. Continue the commitment that was made by this community in the development of the Regional System that Spokane will take care of its solid waste within its own jurisdiction.
4. Remember that this is a Regional System that is operated and maintained for the benefit of all the residents of Spokane County.

Goals and Strategies:

GOAL #1 Maintain integrated system allowing for full range of services, efficiencies of scale and consistency throughout the region.
(Mayor’s Priority for Quality of Life)

Strategy

Continue to support City administrators and other interlocal stakeholders with information and actions that demonstrate the value of a regional solid waste system. Staff visits have been made to the County and all regional municipalities. Make follow-up visits to these jurisdictions as requested. Give

presentations to City Council, Board of County Commissioners and Liaison Board on post-bod-repayment issues. (By fall 2007)

GOAL #2 Complete Spokane County Solid Waste Management Plan

(Mayor's Priority for Quality of Life)

Strategy

Continue to work with regional partners, key stakeholders, businesses and citizens to gain concurrence on an adoptable solid waste management plan for the Spokane region. 30-day Public Review (By 6/07); Preliminary Draft Plan (PDP) to Ecology (By 8/07); Revise PDP (By 11/07); Begin Local Adoption Process (Fall 2007); Final Ecology approval (By Spring 2008).

GOAL #3 Increase recycling and diversion rate (Mayor's Priority for Quality of Life)

Strategy

- Continue to identify recyclable materials that can be taken by local processors and add to what is accepted through the curbside recycling and/or System Transfer Station Recycling Area programs. (Ongoing)
- Work with local public and private recyclers, processors, haulers, collectors, and citizen groups to evaluate existing recycling programs, including long and short term considerations of resource conservation (including disposal capacity and transportation impacts), public demand, and local economic development impacts and effects on public funding. (Ongoing)
- Continue to pursue ash recycling and reuse. Have met Ecology's criteria to reduce regulatory requirements and designation of combined ash generated from the Waste to Energy facility from "special incinerator ash" to an ash considered as a solid waste under Chapter 70.95 RCW. Staff is negotiating with the current disposal facility for a reduced price per ton for disposal into the MSW Subtitle D landfill. Staff has met with a vendor who brokers incinerator ash for recycling by end users and will be considering implementation of a possible pilot program for 2008)
- Develop outreach programs that include incentives to encourage waste reduction and increase public outreach on the benefits of recycling and how to do it. Using the results of the survey conducted by Strategic Research Associates in May 2007 that explored behaviors toward and perceptions about recycling, design advertising campaigns and educational programs that provide messages that will maximize recycling participation throughout Spokane County.
- Promote private waste exchanges and continue to refer local waste producers to private waste exchanges through the Waste Reduction Assessment Program. Expand referral opportunities. (By end of 2007)