

REGIONAL SOLID WASTE GRANTS PROGRAM

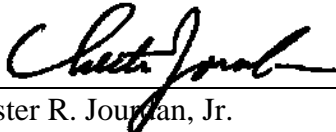
SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**VOLUME I:
REGIONAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

CERTIFICATION

The attached Regional Solid Waste Management Plan was presented at a public meeting held on November 6th, 2003 to provide the citizens of Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange counties an opportunity to comment. However, no comments were received, either written or verbal.

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission's Executive Committee passed and approved this document (as amended) in April, 2005.



Chester R. Jordan, Jr.
Executive Director
South East Texas Regional Planning Commission

April 24, 2006

Date

A. REGIONAL GOALS

GOAL 1: Waste Diversion, Combustion, Reduction/Minimization, Composting, Reuse, and Recycling. Reduce the region's volume of municipal solid waste disposed of at landfills through waste diversion, combustion, source reduction, waste minimization, composting, reuse, and recycling.

Short-Term Objectives

- Objective 1.1:** The successful program of incinerating significant portions of the region's large amount of green wastes should be encouraged.
- Objective 1.2:** Continue and promote source separation and diversion of yard wastes so they can be more effectively incinerated or used beneficially for chipping, mulching, and composting.
- Objective 1.3:** Promote recycling programs and procurement efforts by schools and local governments, and inventory the extent of these activities.
- Objective 1.4:** Encourage an integrated approach to solid waste management in the operation of facilities and programs.

Mid-Term Objectives

- Objective 1.5:** Existing waste minimization and source reduction programs should be continued and expanded as necessary and feasible, with emphasis on achieving the greatest possible benefits.
- Objective 1.6:** Local governments should cooperatively support regional educational efforts aimed at waste minimization and source reduction.
- Objective 1.7:** SETRPC should use education and outreach programs to promote positive and lasting changes in attitudes about source reduction, waste minimization, diversion, reuse, incineration, HHW management, composting, and recycling.
- Objective 1.8:** Maximize the reduction and beneficial reuse of the region's special wastes.
- Objective 1.9:** Promote land application, use as landfill daily cover, and the composting of municipal wastewater treatment plant sludge.
- Objective 1.10:** Landfills in the region should accept source-separated recyclables at little or no cost to residents.
- Objective 1.11:** Promote source reduction in the building industry by educating builders regarding waste minimization and source separation options at construction sites.

Long-Term Objectives

- Objective 1.12:** New waste minimization and source reduction programs should be developed and implemented to the extent they are technologically and economically feasible.
- Objective 1.13** SETRPC should provide technical assistance to local governments, businesses, and institutions in identifying and implementing source reduction, composting, and recycling/reuse opportunities.
- Objective 1.14:** Promote cost-effective and innovative technologies designed to reduce waste and increase solid waste management efficiencies.
- Objective 1.15:** Promote the development of a regional electronics-recycling contract.
- Objective 1.16:** SETRPC should help identify sustainable markets for recyclables.

GOAL 2: Illegal Dumping and Littering. Control illegal dumping and littering in the region.

Short-Term Objectives

- Objective 2.1:** Focus on using existing law enforcement agencies to control illegal dumping and littering.
- Objective 2.2:** Provide training and educational opportunities regarding litter laws for law enforcement personnel, prosecutors and judges.
- Objective 2.3** Enforce existing state and local laws that address littering and illegal dumping.
- Objective 2.4:** As necessary, continue and expand the use of existing grant-funded programs to control illegal dumping and littering such as sponsoring household hazardous waste collection events, community clean-ups, scrap tire collections events, and other special wastes.

Mid-Term Objectives

- Objective 2.6:** SETRPC should develop and implement programs to educate the public on how to reduce illegal dumping habits and occurrences.

Long-Term Objectives

- Objective 2.7:** Expand opportunities for lawful waste disposal to help control illegal dumping.

GOAL 3: Municipal Solid Waste Disposal. Identify, promote, and develop cost-effective and efficient solid waste disposal options, and ensure sufficient disposal capacity in the region for at least 15 years.

Mid-Term Objectives

- Objective 3.1:** Local governments should continue to pursue contracts for long-term disposal capacity in the region.
- Objective 3.2:** Provide sound, cost-effective, and efficient collection, storage, transfer, and transport systems to disposal facilities for municipal solid waste generated in the region.
- Objective 3.3:** Develop a disaster plan to address what to do with debris resulting from major catastrophes such as flooding or hurricanes.
- Objective 3.4:** Manage household and farm hazardous waste in a cost-effective, efficient and environmentally sound manner throughout the region.
- Objective 3.5:** Support efforts for effectively managing the region's special wastes.

Long-Term Objectives

- Objective 3.6:** Continually evaluate and review new and proven technologies for the disposal of waste within the region.

GOAL 4: Closed Landfill Inventory. Ensure that the region's closed landfills, as listed in the Closed Landfill Inventory, do not pose risks to the region's citizens.

Short-Term Objectives

- Objective 4.1:** Make the initial risk assessment included in this amended plan readily available to government entities and interested citizens.

Mid-Term Objectives

- Objective 4.2:** Consider seeking funding for more in-depth research or conduct an in-house review into those closed landfill sites identified in the plan with a potential "Risk Rank" of 1.

GOAL 5: Facility Siting. Review and comment on all permit and registration applications for MSW management facilities in the region.

Short-Term Objectives

- Objective 5.1:** Implement and consistently apply a set of streamlined factors and procedures for review of MSW permit and registration applications for conformance with plan goals and objectives and general land use compatibility.
- Objective 5.2:** Encourage the expansion and further development of existing disposal facilities over the siting of new facilities.
- Objective 5.3:** Protect water and other environmental resources from the potential adverse impacts of siting MSW landfills and other disposal facilities.

Objective 5.4: Facility design and operating plans should consider the impact on the residents in close proximity to the facility and take appropriate measures to minimize the impact.

GOAL 6: Coordination and Cooperation within the Southeast Texas Region. SETRPC and all entities involved with solid waste management in the region must communicate and cooperate to implement the programs of this plan effectively and efficiently.

Short-Term Objectives

Objective 6.1: A cooperative relationship between public and private sectors must be continued and improved.

Objective 6.2: Pursue balanced and cooperative public/private programs for solid waste management in the region.

Objective 6.3: Encourage private waste management entities, and local governments with privatized waste management systems, to participate more in regional waste management issues and SWAC meetings.

GOAL 7: Funding Sources and Grants for the Southeast Texas Region. Funding sources and grant opportunities should be identified for implementation in the Southeast Texas region that are consistent with the solid waste management programs and efforts identified and recommended in this plan.

Short-Term Objectives

Objective 7.1: The application, review, and approval of pass-through grant funding will closely track the goals, objectives, and actions of this plan, with emphasis placed on addressing critical needs in the region.

Objective 7.2: Applicants for regional and pass-through grant funding will be directed to the goals and objectives identified in this plan.

Objective 7.3: Continue the current selection process for grant funding for regional and local programs and projects.

Objective 7.4: The SWAC and SETRPC staff will make every effort to effectively expend all grant resources available to it in a cost-effective, democratic, plan-reflective manner.

GOAL 8: Support from State/Federal Officials. State and federal support for the development, refinement, and implementation of existing and new, innovative municipal solid waste management projects and programs are to be encouraged.

Mid-Term Objectives

Objective 8.1: With the clear understanding that SETRPC cannot “lobby” legislators in Austin, it may nevertheless seek the support of state and federal officials with regards to the costs and the relative environmental impacts that the

various waste reduction and disposal legislation will have on the communities of the region.

GOAL 9: Plan Updates. The region's MSW plan should be maintained as appropriate to best serve the needs of the region and meet the requirements of state law.

Short-Term Objectives

Objective 9.1: SETRPC should make minor revisions to the plan on an annual basis.

Objective 9.2: SETRPC should develop regional plan implementation status reports at least on a biennial basis, and provide these reports to TCEQ.

Objective 9.3: SETRPC should maintain a current database of all public and private solid waste management facilities, program, and service providers serving the region.

Mid-Term Objectives

Objective 9.4: SETRPC should conduct a major review of the plan on a four-year basis, consistent with state strategic plan guidelines.

B. WASTE MINIMIZATION, WASTE REUSE, RECYCLING & EDUCATION

Generally speaking, the three-county region of Hardin, Jefferson and Orange enjoys ample coverage of solid waste collection services. Even though there are still a few municipally-operated solid waste services, most of the region's waste is collected, transported and disposed of by private collection services.

The three largest components of the region's waste stream remain residential waste, commercial waste and construction/demolition debris. However, due to high annual rainfall, the region also produces a large amount of green waste, up to 25% of the waste stream. Consequently, to minimize its impact on landfill disposal capacity, the diversion of green waste from the waste stream has always been one of the region's top priorities. Currently, much of the green waste is collected separately and either chipped, mulched, composted, and/or incinerated. All municipally-sponsored curbside recycling programs in the region have been discontinued due to poor participation, relatively high costs, and the lack of reliable markets for recyclables. However, as there are still opportunities to recycle other than curbside recycling - and with the private sector doing a good job of handling commercially generated recyclables such as cardboard, aluminum, and paper, SETRPC will make every effort to establish a recycling rate goal appropriate to the region as well as encourage waste minimization programs which attempt to realize that goal.

While there are no permanent household hazardous waste collection facilities, SETRPC generally sponsors at least one HHW/scrap tire collection event per year. Along with the TCEQ - sponsored Texas Country Clean-up events that periodically are held in the region, current efforts to provide disposal opportunities for HHW appear adequate. All medical waste is transported out of the region and there is one liquid waste processing facility that serves the region for sludge and grease/grit traps. All wastewater treatment sludge is currently disposed of in local landfills.

Even though there are some rural areas where waste is either burned, disposed of on-site or are illegally dumped, there are several programs throughout the region that address littering and/or illegal dumping. In fact, several cities within the region have adopted additional ordinances that not only pertain to littering/illegal dumping, but focus on dilapidated structures, unsightly property conditions, weedy lots and abandoned or junked vehicles. SETRPC's solid waste program has, and continues, to provide educational outreach programs either directly or through implementation grants as part of this effort.

In summation, current efforts in the region to minimize solid waste, sludge, and to reuse and recycle waste appears to be sufficient.

C. MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE FACILITIES

While the amount of solid waste generated in Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties continues to increase, the five existing landfills currently serving the region appear to be capable of handling current and future levels for many years to come. And, due to the convenient locations of these landfills, there is probably little or no need for transfer stations. Although the waste is accepted at all of the local landfills, there are currently no permitted construction/demolition debris landfills in the region.

If and when it becomes necessary, SETRPC will encourage cooperative efforts between local governments in the siting of landfills for the disposal of solid waste within the region. Additionally, SETRPC will continually assess the need for new waste disposal capacity. As the flow of municipal solid waste, both inside the region and out, continues to become more complex, SETRPC will also continue to assess the local needs whether they be disposal or transportation in nature.

SETRPC has completed an inventory of closed municipal solid waste landfill units and commits to maintaining and updating it as needed. In addition, the agency has developed a guidance document to review municipal solid waste registration and permit applications to determine conformance as outlined in its *Volume II: Regional Solid Waste Management Plan Implementation Guidelines*.