

T-3.1

SWANA TECHNICAL POLICY

RESOURCE RECOVERY AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

I. BACKGROUND

Throughout North America the management of municipal solid waste continues to represent one of our major urban problems. The mid-1980's finds many large urban centers as well as smaller jurisdictions are at a critical junction in managing their solid waste.

Federal, state and local policies are seeking to establish options that allow for comprehensive approaches to managing municipal solid waste. These options include waste reduction, recycling, composting, energy recovery, landfill gas recovery, and sanitary landfilling. This policy paper addresses the implementation of waste reduction, recycling and composting initiatives as part of a comprehensive solid waste management approach.

Waste reduction, recycling, and composting activities are not new. They have been a part of solid waste management systems for years. While much has been accomplished in this area, more can and needs to be done.

There is a growing appreciation that waste reduction and recycling are part of a comprehensive approach to solid waste management.

State-of-the-art energy recovery facilities with strict environmental controls are part of a comprehensive approach.

Consequently, public support and understanding needs to be developed to support not only materials recovery but a comprehensive approach which selects the best solid waste management options to assure maximum recovery of economically marketable materials, utilization of the energy value of solid waste and a reduction in the amount of solid wastes that must go to sanitary landfills.

Local government and their citizens must establish the opportunity for all approaches to be used where they make economic and environmental sense. The problem is big enough to need more than one approach and all approaches should be supported. The public must be encouraged to accept a comprehensive and economic approach because no one option will successfully manage all solid wastes generated in a community.

II. POLICY POSITION

SWANA as an organization of solid waste management professionals supports the following position relative to resource recovery as an integral part of a comprehensive solid waste management system:

- Use the term Resource Recovery to mean both materials, landfill gas and energy recovery.
- Support local, state (province) and federal legislation initiatives that provide economic incentives for materials recovery.
- Support the development of materials and energy recovery technologies that facilitate or improve the viability of resource recovery options and reduce the amount of solid wastes that must go to sanitary landfills.
- Develop solid waste management training programs and seminars that encourage a balanced approach to managing municipal solid waste.
- Develop a standard for establishing and evaluating the full avoided cost for resource recovery, plus known avoided environmental costs for resource recovery.

1987. Approved by the Executive Committee on April 7,

Durwood S. Curling
International Secretary

Dated June 13, 1994