

INTRODUCTION

To be successful in your community, your integrated waste management planning process will need the support and participation of your community members and leaders. People are more likely to support a plan if they help create it.

Workbook One focuses on getting community members involved in your planning process so they can provide their input throughout the entire process. Community participation is an essential part of your planning process because your community members will help you identify problems your community is facing with disposing of solid waste, create a community vision, and set goals and objectives for your community with respect to managing solid waste in your community.

This workbook outlines a variety of techniques that may be used to get community participation as you proceed through your integrated waste management planning process. It will also guide you through a process you can use to help your community create a vision for itself and set community goals and objectives. Look through the ideas and use the ones that make the most sense for your community or situation. Your methods for public involvement need to be flexible. If one method for getting people involved isn't working, then change to something else that better meets your needs.

Section One **ORGANIZING TO PLAN**

There are several actions, which need to be undertaken to prepare the pathway for your integrated waste management planning process. This phase of the creation of an integrated waste management plan can be described as “pre-planning” and results in the creation of a solid waste management work plan. The work plan sets the stage for the actual integrated waste management planning process and addresses the following questions:

1. How do you organize your planning process?
2. What are the general goals of your planning effort?
3. What is the integrated waste management plan development schedule?
4. What will your planning process cost and how is it paid for?

1. How do you organize your planning process?

By creating an integrated waste management planning process work plan, your community creates its own customized planning process – one designed to meet local needs and requirements. A solid waste planning team leader needs to be appointed, the integrated waste management planning work group established, a review of planning needs a process to direct your planning effort created, and a budget created and funded before the actual planning begins.

EXAMPLE: GOALS FOR AN INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following is a list of primary planning goals:

- To coordinate and put to best use the existing capabilities of the community's waste management programs.
- To identify needs for improvement and then make plans to improve.
- To initiate a community process for cooperative planning and management.
- To establish a framework for making good decisions about the community's waste management and practices.

2. What are the general goals of your planning effort?

General goals, in this case, are not those within the integrated waste management plan, but rather those that describe what you wish to accomplish through your overall planning effort. They should be general and may include over-riding constraints on waste management and assumptions to be applied by your planning work group.

Once developed, the solid waste planning work group’s goals should be reviewed with the city or tribal council. This will ensure that everyone is kept current on activities related to your planning process.

3. What is your integrated waste management planning process schedule?

An overall schedule for your planning process should be developed. The initial schedule is created by:

- Developing an outline of the planning process, which has been agreed upon by the integrated waste management planning work group.
- Assigning approximate time frames to each element of the plan.
- Identifying plan elements that can be conducted concurrently.
- Building a time line that represents the best initial estimate of the project’s schedule.

Work Plan Schedule		
Task Name	Start	End
Scoping	10/2/03	10/30/03
Vision Statement	10/15/03	12/11/03
Issues and Concerns	10/14/03	12/30/03
Goals and Objectives	10/14/03	01/15/04
Waste Stream Assessment	11/17/03	06/15/04
Alternative Development	02/17/04	07/01/04
Selection of Preferred Alternative	07/02/04	07/31/04
Draft Plan	02/18/04	08/31/04
Comment Period	09/02/04	10/01/04
Revision and Correction	10/04/04	10/31/04
Submitted to Council for approval	10/30/04	12/01/04
Published and Implemented	12/01/04	12/31/04

Based on the past planning experiences of your community, times for the various components of the planning process may vary greatly from those shown.

Although the schedule needs to be flexible, failure to keep your planning work group focused and moving ahead can have serious repercussions on your planning process. It is the responsibility of each member of your solid waste planning work group to keep the planning process on schedule.

4. What will an integrated waste management plan cost and how is it to be paid for?

As the preplanning process comes to an end, your integrated waste management planning work group should develop a budget estimate for your community's solid waste planning effort even though all the costs are not known at this time. To make the budget estimate realistic it is created after most of the solid waste work plan has been accomplished, especially with regards to staff assignments. As your budget is refined, your community leaders should identify how your planning effort is to be funded.

The cost of developing an integrated waste management plan can be significant and total costs will vary greatly, depending on:

- The extensiveness of your planning effort.
- The complexity of your solid waste management problems and related community needs.
- The range of management activities being considered.
- The need to hire outside technical experts and/or consultants.

The primary categories of planning costs are:

- *Staff Salaries and Travel:* Do you need to hire staff to help prepare a solid waste plan for your community? Are community or local agency staff available who have the necessary knowledge or could be trained? Would they have enough time to help prepare your plan? If local people are available who have the necessary knowledge and abilities to complete your plan, this will help keep money in your community. Salary and travel expenses will probably be the largest item in your planning budget. Your community may choose to charge salaries against normal program and project activities, but it should still be included in the overall planning budget.
- *Information Collection, Analyses, and Management.* The preplanning process will have identified the information (maps, waste stream studies, statistics) that is needed for your planning effort. Collecting, organizing, and managing this information have a cost related to personnel and supplies. Will you want or need outside

ADEQUATE FUNDING

It is your community's responsibility to fund your integrated waste management plan, and it is critical that community leaders support your planning process by assuring adequate funding. Your budget creation process should provide a general estimate of your planning costs. Failure to properly fund your planning process can lead to failure of your community's planning effort. If the schedule indicates your planning effort will extend into a second year, your community must make plans to fund the second year at the start of your planning effort.

If adequate funding is not available to meet your initial budget estimate, it may be necessary to adjust your budget or planning process to fit into the amount of funding that is available to complete your integrated waste management plan. Ways to reduce your costs include:

- ▶ Reviewing your budget to identify unnecessary costs.
- ▶ Extending your planning schedule to include an additional fiscal year so you can spread costs out over a longer period of time.
- ▶ Seeking funding from other sources.
- ▶ Reducing the scope of your planning process to save money.
- ▶ Reducing the amount of studies and data collection that you do for your planning process.

help from agencies or consultants? When and what for? Is help available over the phone or the Internet or through the mail? Will you want consultants to come to your meetings? If complicated engineering studies or data collection methods are needed, costs can be significant.

- *Materials and Equipment.* Most likely you will need supplies to complete your plan, such as a scale for weighing waste or special containers for sorting waste. One thing to consider is asking local businesses or agencies to donate any materials you might need for completing your planning process. If you can't get donations, how will you pay for what you need?
- *Public Involvement Costs.* Once you have developed your public involvement plan, costs for implementing it can be estimated. This should include costs to print publish education information. Community meeting costs such as food, door prizes, and published handouts require funding, and there may be other costs associated with hosting meetings such as rent for meeting facilities.
- *Publication and Distribution Costs.* The will be at least two times when your integrated waste management plan will be printed and distributed.
 - ▶ The draft plan will be printed for distribution during the review and comment phase of your planning process.
 - ▶ The final plan will be printed for distribution after it has been revised and adopted by your community.

Each round of publishing has a cost. Costs for printing your plan can vary greatly and are dependent on your document's format and binding, type of reproduction you use, and the quantity to be printed. Costs for distributing your plan should also be included.

- *Training.* Training requirements are determined during the staff assignment phase of your preplanning process. Training courses for individuals may

GROUND RULES FOR PREPLANNING

- ❖ The community's integrated waste management planning process must have a champion to lead the planning effort to its conclusion, ideally a community leader.
- ❖ Planning team members should be selected based on their knowledge and skills, not their position in the community. Using the best people available will create the best plan.
- ❖ Establish a community member and public involvement plan and use a variety of techniques suitable to your community's circumstances.
- ❖ Be as flexible and imaginative as possible.
- ❖ Educated assumptions should be used and documented in cases where there is inadequate information.
- ❖ Involve top leaders and decision makers in your preplanning effort.
- ❖ Have an approved budget and funding plan.
- ❖ Get commitments by all partners involved in your planning effort. Commitments should be in writing in the form of contracts or memorandums of understanding.
- ❖ Be sure your integrated waste management plan is presented to your city and/or tribal council for review and acceptance.
- ❖ Gather and review all existing documents on your community's solid waste management situation.
- ❖ Be sure to set a timeline for developing your plan, and identify important milestones. Remember, you may need to revise your timeline several times throughout your planning process, but it will still provide some guidance for your work.

Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

include out-of-town travel, whereas training for your entire planning team may include the costs of bringing trainers into your community.

- *Outside consultant Fees and Travel.* Costs for consultants and staff from other organizations should be identified in your planning budget. Federal and state agencies do not normally for time they provide to your community and its planning process.

Regardless of where your planning funds come from, adequate funds need to be identified at the beginning of your planning process. Any outside funding sources must agree on how much funding they will provide for your planning project. For example, DCED may give your community a grant to an integrated waste management plan. The development of your integrated waste management plan will probably require more than one year to complete so a long-term funding plan should be developed and implemented.

The planning approach your community will use should be defined during the preplanning phase. Once it is completed, the picture of your effort will be clear. Completing a full and comprehensive work plan for your integrated waste management planning effort is critical to the success of your planning effort.

Decisions and recommendations developed during the preplanning phase are formalized and established in a written integrated waste management planning work plan. Your work plan should be presented to your city or tribal council for review and acceptance. Presenting your work plan as a written document and obtaining formal approval serves to insure that your planning effort is on the correct path. It also assures that your planning effort is consistent with your community's desires and expectations, leading to community support during the development of your community's integrated waste management plan.

With preplanning complete, your community is ready to enter into the creation of an integrated waste management plan. The following workbooks will provide you with guidance for completing an integrated waste management planning process.

WORKSHEET Section 1-2

***ARE YOU READY TO PLAN?
RESOURCES NEEDED TO COMPLETE YOUR PLAN***

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES NEEDED

**What types of supplies are needed to complete your plan?
For example: large garbage bags, scales to weigh garbage, office supplies.**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

***Staff Needed
Who and What For?***

<u>Position</u>	<u>Duties</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Other Information:

Use additional sheets if necessary.

WORKSHEET: Section 1 - 3

***ARE YOU READY TO PLAN?
RESOURCES NEEDED TO COMPLETE YOUR PLAN***

PLANNING PROJECT BUDGET

What expenses are associated with completing the plan?

How will the expenses be paid?

Will people be hired to work on the plan?

PROJECT SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Source of Money for Expense</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PERSONNEL COSTS

<u>Position</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Source of Money for Salary</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Use additional sheets if needed.

Section Two
GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED

*The more you educate your community and
the more community input you incorporate into your management plan,
the better your plan will be.*

For an integrated waste management planning process to be successful, everyone in your community should understand the process and be involved in it. Whether your community is considering recycling, organizing a community clean-up campaign, or implementing a solid waste program, public involvement and education will play a significant role in development and implementation of your community's integrated waste management planning process and management plan. Public involvement and education efforts will result in community members being more informed so that they can actively participate in solving your community's solid waste problems.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:
WHEN AND HOW?**

In community planning, public participation is needed during all planning phases. There are many ways to involve your entire community. At a minimum, your planning work group should ask for public comment during each stage of your planning process so you can determine community wants and needs. Your work group should present suggestions, decisions, actions, or alternatives to the public, at which time other members of your community can comment on and perhaps change your working group's decisions.

To be successful in your community, your integrated waste management plan needs the support and participation of your community, and everyone should understand and accept it. You must consider community members' needs and concerns as you plan. Ideally, you should recruit them to work with your planning work group as a team. Public involvement is to your community's benefit; people are more likely to support a plan if they help create it. Every community that has conducted any type of planning effort has found that getting public involvement requires a significant effort on the part of community leaders and the planning committee, team or work group. They have also found that patience and diligence eventually pay dividends as community

Together We Stand

*Together we stand as a community
As one, be one together
It took many cooperating
To get where we are today
And it will take
Cooperation in many to
Progress Further
Many as one will take
Us further than ever before
But as many singles
Alone, will fall
Together we stand, as one
A community together
We stand
A community is what we are.*

-Jeanie C. Szidloski, Delta Junction
Community Strategic Plan Guide and Form
USDA, Rural Development, Alaska



Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

members begin to understand the value of a community plan, the planning process, and the importance placed on the roles they play, the knowledge they have, and the values they hold.

Modern planning approaches incorporate various levels of public involvement. Prior to beginning your actual planning process, your community leaders and planning work group need to make decisions concerning:

- ▶ What will the level of public involvement be?
- ▶ Who will be involved and in what way?
- ▶ How and when will the public involvement be accomplished?

Based upon the answers to these questions, a public involvement/education plan is created to insure that your planning process maximizes community involvement during the various phases of your integrated waste management planning process.

To further define the level of public involvement you will use during your planning process, four questions need to be addressed:

- ▶ What roles will community members play in your planning process?
- ▶ What community members will play which role?
- ▶ What techniques will be used to encourage and generate public involvement?
- ▶ When during your planning process will public involvement be requested?

WHAT ROLES WILL COMMUNITY MEMBERS PLAY?

Different approaches to integrated waste management planning require different types and levels of public involvement. Some approaches include a very high level of public involvement in the planning process while others limit public involvement to initial input, review, and comments. It is up to your planning work group to decide how involved community members should be in the development of an integrated waste management plan for your community. The most successful plans are the ones that community members played an active role in developing and implementing.

Every step of your solid waste planning and management process can have community members involved in some manner. There are five general roles community members can play:

- ▶ **Visionary** – Common to all solid waste planning processes is the role the public plays as *visionary*. A visionary provides input into the development of issues and concerns upon

EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

View public involvement as an educational opportunity. Assume that community members will not be aware of what integrated waste management planning is and may not know the what and why of current management actions. By informing community members about your integrated waste management planning process, your community and its resources, and requesting their help, your community will improve the quality of public participation as well as create a strong planning process and plan. Initial information may describe:

- ◆ The planning process and the intended goals of the process.
- ◆ Descriptions of past and current community resources and waste management practices.
- ◆ The role that the public will play.

Handouts with this information may be prepared for your public meetings, as well as displays showing waste problems or practices.

which your community vision is based. The public, as a visionary, provides their view of what your community should be like in the future.

- ▶ **Reviewer** – Another common role is that of *reviewer*. Reviewers provide input by acting as a sound board for various parts of your planning process. Your “*public involvement plan*” will identify which steps of your planning process will be subject to community review. The two most commonly used methods for community review include: 1) allowing all community members to review and comment on the plan; or 2) using a committee made up of community members that acts a formal review panel by reviewing and providing comments for the community as a whole.
- ▶ **Contributing Team Member** – Much less common is members of your community acting as *contributing team members*. By sitting on your solid waste planning work group or various technical subcommittees involved in your planning process, community members are directly involved with the creation of alternatives and other supporting sections of your integrated waste management plan. Individuals appointed as contributors should have knowledge and expertise that will contribute to the development of your plan.
- ▶ **Implementor** – An *implementor* is a community member involved with the development of future plans or who takes on-the-ground actions that might be subject to the solid waste planning work group’s guidance. Typically an implementor is all of your community members who must comply with regulations, policies, and practices developed within your integrated waste management plan and planning process.
- ▶ **Monitor** – A public *monitor* can be formal or informal. Individual community members may take an interest in monitoring the creation and implementation of your integrated waste management plan on their own (informal). If your community wants formal monitoring of plan implementation, then the solid waste planning work group may appoint an “*oversight committee*.” This committee would be involved in monitoring community plans and activities to insure they comply with your integrated waste management plan.

WHO WILL BE ALLOWED TO PLAY WHICH ROLE?

This is a policy issue that identifies which of your community’s residents will be invited to participate. In other words, this defines how open your planning process will be to community members. Your solid waste planning management work group must decide:

- Will your planning process be open only to local residents?
- Will it be open to both community members and businesses?
- Will your planning process be open to anyone living or doing business in your community?
- Will participation by organized groups, such as your regional health corporation or Village Corporation, be encouraged to participate?
- Will state or federal agencies be encouraged to participate in your planning process?

The answer these questions will have significant effects on your planning effort. The greater the involvement of local residents and businesses, the greater their acceptance of your finished waste management plan will be. However, the more people you involve in your planning process, the longer it may take to complete your plan. These questions may best be answered by your community’s decision makers and leaders.

WHAT TECHNIQUES WILL BE USED TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?

During the early stages of your planning process you should identify which groups in your community that you want to have participate in your planning process. At the same time your solid waste planning work group should develop strategies for communicating with each group. It is important to remember communication approaches may be different for each group. For example, the approaches used to work with elders and school children will be different from those used with other community members. Also remember that different groups may communicate differently because of their cultural heritage or language.

Public notification and provision of information.

Notifying community members of your planning effort and announcing public meetings can be carried out by using a variety of methods. You may want to consider using any of the following methods to ensure that community members know when meetings are going to occur or to distribute information about your planning process:

- ▶ Local radio stations will frequently broadcast public service announcements.
- ▶ Local newspapers have been used by communities to ask for public involvement as well as to publish a summary of a community’s proposed plan for the public to review.
- ▶ Appearance by planning work group members at various local meetings and community events can be used to educate community members about your planning process as well as ask for their assistance.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Sometimes it is difficult to communicate with people from outside your community and vice versa. Outsiders and community members should attempt to understand each other’s cultures and work together to achieve planning goals. When beginning to work on solid waste planning, everyone should keep in mind these guidelines:

- ◆ Each culture has its own way of viewing the world and communicating with others.
- ◆ Don’t assume there is one right way to communicate.
- ◆ Listen. Try to put yourself in the other person’s shoes.
- ◆ Respect others’ choices about whether to engage in communication with you. Honor their opinions about what is going on.
- ◆ Stop, hold off judgment, and try to look at the situation through the other person’s eyes.

Remember that we are all shaped by many factors (family, education, friends, workplace) that are more complicated than any generalization can explain.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION STYLES



Western (Non-Native)

- ◆ Talks a great deal
- ◆ Looks for details
- ◆ Assertive
- ◆ Literal/scientific
- ◆ Public recognition
- ◆ Direct communication
- ◆ Rapid paced speech
- ◆ Dislikes silence

Alaska Native

- ◆ Listens a great deal
- ◆ Looks for large picture
- ◆ Reserved
- ◆ Intuitive
- ◆ Public Restraint
- ◆ Indirect communication
- ◆ Slower paced speech
- ◆ Comfortable with silence



- ▶ A community mail-out is a go way to distribute meeting notices and other information you want community members to read.
- ▶ A monthly newsletter can be used to educate community members about your planning process and solid waste management issues.
- ▶ Making announcements on the CB can be a way to remind people to attend a meeting or community event.

The most important thing to remember is to keep your community informed about meetings, community events, and public participation opportunities.

Collection of information from the public

Collection of information from community members will occur during several of the steps of your planning process. Different techniques for collecting information are used to meet the requirements of each step in your planning process. At a minimum public input should occur during:

- ▶ Identification of issues and concerns and other activities which are used to develop your community's vision statement, goals, and objectives; and.
- ▶ Review of proposed alternatives.

Input to your planning process can be obtained in a number of ways. While developing your public involvement plan, your solid waste planning work

TECHNIQUES FOR GETTING PUBLIC INPUT INTO YOUR PLANNING PROCESS

- **Informal Gatherings.** Meet with groups that already are established in your community (i.e., dance groups, school groups, traditional council; church groups, activity groups, and other community groups). Each group provides an opportunity to collect information. You can then ask questions about what is important to each group in regard to your community's values, visions, problems, needs, and plan. If you use an informal process, be sure to keep a list of the people who attended and write down what was discussed and what the important comments were. This is part of your public process.
- **Surveys.** Surveys can be used to gather input from large numbers of people. They can be conducted by:
 - Show of hand at public meetings. Only simple issues can be addressed and response is limited to those attending the meeting.
 - Distributing and collecting written surveys at public meetings. Response is limited to those attended the meeting.
 - Mailing surveys to all community members. Responses are limited to those people who take the time to complete and return the survey. It can also take a long time for individuals to return their survey forms.
 - Direct interview of community members. The number of people interviewed may be limited by the amount of staff available to conduct the interviews. It can be expensive to administer due to personnel costs and results can take time to collect.
- **Informal Interviews.** You can also gain important information by meeting with people who are viewed as wise about the community such as elders, community leaders, or other people of importance. These people may raise important questions that your community may want to consider. Keep track of whom you speak with, what you ask, what they say, and when the interview took place.
- **Door-to-Door Campaigns.** Door-to-door campaigns are beneficial because planning work group members can talk directly to local residents. These campaigns can be time consuming, but they can be invaluable in reaching people. A door-to-door campaign also lets you hear directly what issues are important to community members and what questions or concerns they have. It also has the added benefit of enabling you to track every individual that you reach so you can gauge the effectiveness of your program.
- **Public Meetings.** Hosting a public meeting is the most common way to gather information. Be sure everyone in your community is invited to the meeting. Keep track of who attends and what they say. Public meetings are an effective way to share information, ask questions, solicit public comments, and encourage people to share their opinions and concerns. Bringing people together makes your planning process stronger and helps create a future that belongs to your entire community.

HOW DO YOU GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS?

Once you have decided to establish a public education program for your community, you want to consider the specific messages that you want to deliver to community members.

Messages are simply the ideas or information you want to communicate. They should be clear, concise statements that can be repeated every time you communicate. You do not want to overwhelm your community with too much information, so you might limit yourself to three or four simple messages, being sure to use the language spoken by most people in your community. To craft effective, messages you might ask yourself the following questions:

- ▶ Why are you interested in educating your community?
- ▶ What does your community need to know?
- ▶ What would you like community members to do?
- ▶ What other information can you provide that might act as an incentive or deterrent that will encourage community members to do what you would like them to do?

Keep in mind that different audiences typically require different messages or approaches; strategies that work for communicating with local business owners normally will not work for school children. Tailor your message so it appeals to different audiences. Effective messages relate to people on their terms, in their own language.

The next step is to determine the best way to get your message to your target audiences. Consider more than one method for getting your information out to community members. Your outreach messages are likely to have more impact if they are heard more than once. For example, you might do a door-to-door campaign with flyers, and then do a newsletter or poster contest a couple of months later.



As you are considering the many options for distributing your message, consider your community's budget, staff availability, and the technical requirements of your methods. When possible, consider ways to use existing community outreach programs and tools to get your messages to your audiences. Many educational resources are available from other tribes, nonprofit organizations, and state and federal agencies (i.e., EPA and ADEC). Often these materials



As you are developing messages, remember that it is to teach community members *why* new laws and new programs are in place and why they need to handle and dispose of their waste in a particular way. When community members understand why certain waste management practices are bad for public health, the environment, and wildlife, for example, they might be more likely to handle their waste differently.

When designing any outreach materials for your public education program, always consider ways to incorporate elements of your culture to help community members feel a connection to your information and program.

group should identify methods that will fulfill the goals of your planning process.

Public meetings are the most common way that input is collected. The structure of public meetings can vary from formal hearings to informal gatherings. The next most common method for gathering information is through the use of a public/community survey. A survey can be used to gather input from large numbers of people in your community. When using surveys, caution must be exercised because each person surveyed is asked the same questions to comment on. Sometimes surveys can be too structured so input from community members can become too focused, the opportunities for creative insights and suggestions is not encouraged.

Information collected from the public is going to vary depending on the collection method used. A written record needs to be maintained of all comments and contributions made by the public. Workshops will produce formal comments and outputs. Surveys provide statistics and comments. Comments from plan reviewers can be written or oral and can be collected through one-on-one interviews, at public meetings, or submission of written comments.

It is important to remember, public education and community involvement are integral parts of your solid waste can be used as-is or changed to fit your needs of your management planning process and program. Well planned education and outreach activities can help generate understanding and support for waste management issues in your community. They can also be used to teach local residents and businesses how to comply with waste management activities designed to minimize waste management problems in your community and protect public health and the environment.

***PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND PUBLIC EDUCATION:
HOW DO YOU INVOLVE AND
EDUCATE COMMUNITY MEMBERS?***

Your integrated waste management planning process should educate community members about solid waste. You should work hard to involve community members in decision-making throughout your integrated waste management planning process. It is especially important that you work with your community in the beginning of your integrated waste management planning process. The terms **public involvement** and **public education** include a broad range of techniques and activities designed to:

- ▶ Help your community participate in making decisions;
- ▶ Convey information to community members;
- ▶ Solicit community members' concerns;
- ▶ Increase public awareness; and
- ▶ Motivate community participation in programs you implement.

To gain local support for your plan:

➔ **KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY INFORMED.**

It is very important that you keep your community informed about your solid waste planning process, as well as encourage everyone in your community to participate in the process. It is critical that you involve community members in your solid waste planning process and educate them about waste management. These actions when combined with ongoing education on how community members can participate, will lead to public support of and participation in your integrated waste management planning process and program.

Implementing new solid waste management practices or programs will require educating and informing people who live and work in your community. This will be especially true for activities or programs where public participation

TOOLS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Public education can take a variety of forms, including:

- ▶ **Written materials:** fact sheets, newsletters, articles, flyers, inserts, pamphlets, questions and answer sheets
- ▶ **Visual Materials:** signs, posters, pictures, charts, Web sites, and videos
- ▶ **Community Events:** public meetings, workshops, community dinners, contests and community programs
- ▶ **Media:** public service announcement on local radio and television, newspaper articles

Signage: Signs placed in strategic locations are a low cost, low-effort way of educating community members about various waste management options or regulations. They are particularly useful for "No Dumping" and "No littering" campaigns. They are also effective when posted at landfills and recycling facilities to clearly explain what types of waste are accepted.



Other Written Materials: Insert: and flyers are another low-cost method of spreading information. By developing a simple message and distributing it to community residents, community leaders can distribute important information about waste management programs. Additionally, putting certain information in writing (e.g., waste accepted for recycling, household waste collection dates) is useful because community members can keep and refer to the information they receive.

Community Events: Another way of getting your information out is through community events and meetings. You might hold a special community meeting to talk about recycling. You can hold an event such as a community clean up, a household hazardous waste collection day, or a children's poster contest, where the winner is public announced and the winning poster is printed and distributed to community members. Events can be fun, interesting, and effective in getting your message out. It might be useful to turn a one-day activity into an annual or monthly event to promote your message.



Media. Another effective method if you have a large community is to use public service announcements on the local radio and television stations. A news article in the local newspaper is another way to share information with many people.

Visual Materials: People will remember things they see. Show a video about recycling at a community event or hang a poster around your community. The more people see information the better they will remember it.

Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

is needed. Opportunities for communicating with and involving people in your community should be established early in your planning process. Communication with community members and promotion of your planning process should be ongoing.

Community meetings, radio announcements, posters and newsletters are all good tools you can use to keep your community members informed. Be sure to announce the formation of your solid waste planning work group and also announce when any meetings are going to be held. As you go through your planning process hold meetings to report on the progress of developing a integrated waste management plan for your community. These meetings can be used as a forum for local residents and businesses to talk about waste concerns, issues, and recommendations.

You can encourage public participation by explaining to your community members

- ▶ How parts of your solid waste plan were decided upon;
- ▶ Who participated in the decision making; and
- ▶ What was taken into consideration.

Your community members also have a right and responsibility to understand the full costs and liabilities associated with management of the waste they generate. This information will:

TIPS FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Education and outreach programs are not complete once materials have been distributed – community education programs are constant and always evolving to meet the needs of your community.

Once you have an outreach program in place, it is important to:

- ▶ Start your community outreach and education plan early.
- ▶ Involve your community in important decisions.
- ▶ Use your community's or village's language and culture to increase the impact of your message.
- ▶ Keep your community involved through public meetings, newsletters, and local announcements.
- ▶ Adjust and maintain your program to meet community needs.
- ▶ Carry out community education activities.

- ▶ Help people living in your community understand the importance of community solid waste management issues;
- ▶ Assist the planning work group in gaining public support for a community-based integrated waste management plan and program; and
- ▶ Help community members understand that they need to take responsibility for the waste they generate.

You need to keep in mind that every community is different so your integrated waste management planning process and plan will be unique to your community. What works in another community for getting people involved in local issues may work in your community, but then again you might have to do something different.

➔ **EDUCATE YOUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.**

The backbone of any integrated waste management planning is public involvement, participation, and cooperation. You can compile data, estimate costs, and put together lists of potential solid waste management options; however, the choices and positive changes must ultimately come from within your community.

Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Community education and outreach is a continuous process that includes a variety of activities, such as distributing newsletters, sponsoring community events, mailing fact sheets, conducting community surveys, and distributing information through work groups and committees, public meetings, interviews, and workshops.

Your goal is to get everyone in the community interested and to teach community members about what your community can do to manage solid waste in your community. Your integrated waste management plan should contain specific steps for public education. Your public education program must begin by introducing people to waste management needs and concepts, explaining clearly how to participate, and then effectively encouraging them to follow good waste management practices. No matter what waste management approaches are chosen, your community must be informed and involved or else your solid waste plan will fail. A successful public education program will need to include education in the schools, as well as general education of people living in your community. Also, it should continue year after year. Good ways to educate your community include:

- ▶ **Workshops.** The planning committee needs to educate itself by attending training workshops such as the landfill operators training sponsored by EPA and the NAU Institute of Tribal Professionals. After attending a workshop or training they should share information all community members at a community meeting or workshop. Workshops are valuable ways to also educate community members about your planning process and to encourage their involvement in the process. These sessions can provide hands-on learning, as well as an opportunity to ask questions or try out new techniques for encouraging community input into your planning process and development of your plan.
- ▶ **Schools.** Be sure to involve children in your community planning process. The easiest way to do this is to invite the school to be part of your process. Teachers can teach students about the environment, pollution prevention and solid waste management. They can also help teach community members by holding special community classes on solid waste management and pollution prevention. Meeting notices can be sent home with students. High school students can help do surveys and informal interviews.

“Teaching young people about solid waste management – about the value of recycling and reducing litter and household hazardous wastes and the need for properly operated waste management facilities – is essential for developing a responsible solid waste ethic among a community’s future residents.”

- “Decision-Makers Guide to Solid Waste Management,” U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Solid Waste and Emergency Response, November 1989.



Some communities focus community involvement activities on schools by teaching children about solid waste, why it is an important issue, and how to safely and effectively manage their waste. These activities are conducted with the hope that children will teach their family

what they learn in school, take personal responsibility for the waste they generate, and continue to manage waste properly as adults. Since children will ultimately be the decision makers for your community, teaching personal responsibility for solid waste early on and involving them in your integrated waste management planning process can only benefit your community in later years.

► **Public Meetings.** The foundation of any public participation process is the public meeting. You might decide to hold special meetings to present information about your planning process or you may make a presentation as part of a regularly scheduled community meeting. Meetings enable your planning work group to talk directly with community members, which promotes two-way communication. Public meetings serve many purposes by:

- Conveying information;
- Reporting results;
- Sharing and developing issues and concerns;
- Giving people a forum to share their views and make comments;
- Helping people make decisions; and
- Helping people feel they are part of and have ownership of your planning process and its decisions.

In order to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to attend public planning meetings, your planning work group should send out an invitation to attend to your entire community. Be sure that people who see things differently are invited. You want to get a broad group of community members, with different opinions to attend and participate in your planning meetings. Bringing different views together makes your plan stronger and helps create a future that belongs to your entire community.

PUBLIC MEETING FORMATS

Public meetings are the most common way that public input is collected. The structure of your public meeting can vary. Public meeting formats include:

- **Straight forward meetings** with “open microphones” that allow individuals to provide oral comments. This type of meeting is best when you do not have to focus on specific issues and wish to give community members an opportunity to speak on anything related to your planning process or management plan.
- **Formal hearings** are appropriate when you are requesting direct input from community members through a public forum as required by law or an agency. Very seldom will small communities need to hold formal public hearings on solid waste management issues. The one exception may be if your focus on a single issue or involve brain-storming community is considering passing property taxes or user fees to pay for your community’s solid waste program or a related project such as a new landfill.
- **Directed meetings** that are providing information, identifying solutions, and giving recommendations to your solid waste work group. These types of meetings can be very productive but usually require that you have someone with facilitation skills guide the meeting so people stay focused on the issue being discussed.
- **Informal Small Group Meetings** are one of the more common ways people talk in rural Alaska is through informal meetings and discussions – at the post office or store, in the council office two days after a formal community meeting...Your planning coordinator should keep a notebook to record comments and concerns gathered in this traditional way. Remember – it can be important for people to be able to comment without having to give their name.

Public meetings are one of the best ways you can involve everyone in your community in your planning process. You should hold public meetings throughout your entire planning process so you can address specific issues or phases of development of your integrated waste management plan. For example, you could hold a public meeting right after you form your planning work group so they can hear what community members think should be addressed in your community's solid waste plan.

Public meetings are a good way to present information to community members and get comments from them. Public meetings should be flexible and held throughout your planning process to address specific issues or phases of planning. For example, hold a public meeting in the beginning to get early input from local residents. Hold additional meetings to develop community goals and objectives, create a community vision, and identify community concerns, issues and needs. Hold one to get input on solid waste management alternatives, and to select a preferred alternative to use as the basis of your integrated waste management plan.

If you live in a village you might want to have a meeting to gather traditional and local knowledge that can be used in your planning process and included in your management plan. For example, village elders could talk about the importance of traditional values and stewardship of the land. Use meetings to talk about how traditional ways can be used to manage solid waste, prevent pollution, reduce health hazards, and improve your community's appearance.

Be sure to hold public meetings to get community input on proposed solid waste management alternatives and to select a preferred alternative.

THE WISDOM OF OUR ELDERS

Traditionally, Native people have looked to their Elders for advice. The village has always relied on their knowledge of the land and its resources. Elders respect the traditional ways of conservation. They are a valuable resource themselves. Elders have a perspective on life that is closely tied to the land. With all of the rapid changes occurring in the villages, this relationship between the people and the land may be lost.

Much meaning is lost when information is communicated using new methods – the shortcomings of radio, audio tape and television are obvious, and even the printed word often can't tell the whole story. Some values are unspoken and are difficult to translate. Our Elders have valuable wisdom to impart about how to use our resources, and we take the time to talk with them face to face to fully understand their knowledge.

The importance of the local traditions and respect for Elders' traditional values cannot be overemphasized. Establishing strong relationship with village Elders at the start of your planning process will greatly enrich your lessons and knowledge needed to complete a plan for your community.



“To me, the wisdom the Elders have to manifest is in teaching people how to live, in harmony and balance with each other and the Earth.”

-Sun Bear, Chippewa, “Pollution Prevention and Cultural Preservation in Native American Communities, Montana State University Extension Service, 1996.

Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

KEYS TO GREAT PUBLIC MEETINGS

- ☞ Consider incentives for attending the meeting (raffle, food, etc). Have a public meeting in conjunction with a community potluck. Make the meeting fun.
- ☞ Advertise for good meeting attendance. Post announcements throughout your community (e.g. post office, store, school, airport, community hall, council offices) inviting everyone to come to the meeting.
- ☞ Develop an agenda for each meeting and make it available to those expected to attend the meeting ahead of time.
- ☞ Personally invite people. Tell them their input is essential and will directly affect the outcome of your community's solid waste plan.
- ☞ Plan meetings for times when nothing else is going on. You may not have many people attending your meeting during fishing season, near holidays, or when other meetings are scheduled. Sites should be neutral, if possible.
- ☞ Reserve a meeting place. Arrange to hold meetings at convenient locations such as the school, community center, or gym. Meetings held at commonly used community facilities would encourage attendance.
- ☞ Don't count a person out if they do not attend the first one or two meetings. Invite everyone to every meeting – some people need more time to feel comfortable about getting involved in a community's planning process.
- ☞ Provide handouts and displays to educate participants and stimulate discussion. Prepare materials such as agendas, well in advance. Copy handouts before the meeting.
- ☞ Provide refreshments and breaks, especially if longer meetings are being conducted.
- ☞ Focus on people and their interests not on their affiliation or position. Stereotypes need to be checked at the door.
- ☞ Provide a facilitator or meeting chairperson. Be sure your meeting leader is a good facilitator and can use various group decision-making and problem-solving techniques.
- ☞ Determine the seating arrangement before the meeting. Make sure it accommodates the meeting plan and that there are enough seats for everyone attending the meeting. Standard row seating does not encourage the sharing of ideas. Arranging chairs in a circle or semi-circle makes it easier for people to be involved in discussions and makes the meetings feel less rigid.
- ☞ Those individuals who are conducting the meeting should arrive early. This will allow time for them to arrange the room before people arrive, and provide an opportunity for talking to people as they arrive.
- ☞ Keep the meeting focused on the task at hand by helping people to stick to the subject being discussed. Write and display important points on a black board or flip chart or use an overhead projector or PowerPoint presentation.
- ☞ Have a secretary or note taker record the discussions and provide notes to interested participants.
- ☞ Establish ground rules for conduct at meetings to insure that meetings are non-threatening in nature and that people can express their opinions without fear of conflict.

- 1. Listen with respect.**
- 2. All ideas count.**
- 3. No personal attacks.**
- 4. Wiggle space – a person doesn't need to answer a question if they feel uncomfortable.**
- 5. Everyone gets the same amount of time or opportunity to speak and share their ideas.**
- 6. One person speaks at a time.**
- 7. Freedom to establish additional rules, if necessary.**

The invitation to participate in public meetings needs to go out to your entire community. Before you hold your community meetings be sure that all community members are invited to the meeting. You want to have as many community members as possible attend your meeting. The more people you have attend your meeting, the more different viewpoints you will get. Bringing different views together will make your planning process stronger and helps create a plan that belongs to your entire community.

SAMPLE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

INVITATION TO PLAN FOR OUR COMMUNITY' S FUTURE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT NEEDS

EXPRESS OUR VALUES—CREATE OUR VISION—DEFINE OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS

We are preparing an integrated waste management plan for our community. Come and help. The plan will be based on our community needs. It will guide us in “managing waste in our community.” Our integrated waste management plan will ensure that we have a clean and healthy community and environment for future generations.

This meeting will be a community effort to identify actions our community can take to better manage and dispose of garbage and other forms of waste in our community. We want to hear about your ideas and concerns for our community so we can create a community based integrated waste management plan and program. We will use your ideas to guide us in our solid waste planning process. Your input into our planning efforts is very important to us.

PLEASE COME!

***Share your thoughts – Listen to your neighbors - Bring a friend
Help make our community a cleaner and safer place***

Time: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

After the meeting we will have a community potluck, so please bring a dish to share with your friends and neighbors. Members of our community's Solid Waste Planning Work Group will be at the meeting and potluck to answer any questions you may have about what we are doing to deal with waste in our community. We look forward to seeing you at the community meeting and potluck.



➔ KEEP A RECORD OF YOUR PUBLIC PROCESS AND MEETINGS.

In solid waste planning, public participation is needed during all planning phases. As part of your planning process, it is important document who participates in the process. This is accomplished by keeping a record of your public process. For each meeting, record the date, place, names of people who attended, the topic of the meeting, and key outcomes. Be sure to do this for any meeting you hold that is associated with your solid waste planning process.

Although meetings are the most common method used to involve community members in any planning process, there are many other ways to involve your entire community. It is important to also keep a record of who is involved in any other method you utilize to encourage public participation. For example, if you formally interview elders and other community member be sure to keep a listed of who was interviewed and what questions were asked and the person's answers. For any community surveys you conduct, you should keep a copy of the survey. Also keep track of the number of people who were surveyed, how they were selected, as well as prepare a written summary of your survey results.

The more information you can record about your public process and community involvement, the easier it will to refer to suggestions and opinions expressed during any meeting or other planning activities. At a minimum, your solid waste planning work group should ask for public comment during each state of your planning process to determine community wants and needs. Your planning work group should present suggestions, decisions, actions, or alternatives to the community at-large. This will provide an opportunity for any community member to comment

on and offer suggestions on changes that should be considered by the work group.

“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that has.”

- Margaret Meade



It is especially important to keep a record of any comments and suggestions that community members make during a meeting held solely for the purpose of gathering public input and comments.

➔ ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.

Building a successful public participation program is integral to the success of your planning process. It is important that you explain to community members how the parts of your solid waste plan will be decided upon; who will participate in the decision making; and what will be taken into consideration when decisions are made. This information will help your community members understand the importance of your planning process and why their input into the process is needed if your planning process is to be successful.

Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

As part of your publication participation process invite work group members and people living in your community to ask one another questions and share their ideas. Let people know their ideas are valued and won't be attacked. It is important for people to understand that there are no "wrong" ideas, and there will be time later in your planning process to select the ideas that sound the best. Always thank people for coming to meetings and for speaking up, and be sure to invite them to continue to stay involved. It is important to encourage interested people to be involved with your planning work group or to help the work group by doing research and presenting useful information to the work group and community members.

Informal gatherings, community meetings, public hearings, and interviews and surveys of community members are the most common methods for involving community members in a solid waste planning process.

Community participation will accomplish the following:

- Build community ownership in your planning process.
- Identify community concerns about waste in your community.
- Generate ideas for managing waste generated by your community.
- Solicit community input to determine what approaches to solid waste management are preferred by people in your community.

Information collected from your community members is going to vary depending on the method you use to obtain their input. Workshops will produce formal knowledge and structured comments. Surveys provide statistics and comments. Comments from people who review your integrated waste management plan can be written or oral. They can be collected through one-on-one interviews, at formal public meetings or hearings, and by submission of written comments. Remember that public involvement needs to be flexible. If one method for getting people involved isn't working for your work group, then change to something else that better meets your group's needs.

Remember in any planning process, public participation is needed during all phases of plan development. There are many ways to involve your entire community. At a minimum, your

**WHAT TOOLS CAN BE USED
TO PROMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
AND PUBLIC EDUCATION?**

Techniques for Working with People

- Brainstorming Sessions
- Visioning Sessions
- Structured Problem Solving Sessions
- Intensive Interviewing
- Large Group Exercises
- Visual Presentations
- Meeting Facilitation
- "Scorecard" for Choosing Alternatives
- Small Group Discussions



Community Outreach Methods

- Public Meetings
- Informal Meetings and Gatherings
- Community Surveys
- Posters and Signs
- Inserts/Flyers/Newsletters
- Door-to-Door Campaigns
- Public Presentations
- In-school Education Programs
- Community Events
- Workshops/Training
- Community/School Contests
- Media Coverage (newspaper articles, radio interviews, and public service announcements)
- Community Education Programs



solid waste planning work group should ask for public comment during each stage of your planning process to determine community needs and wants. Your work group should present suggestions, decisions, actions, or alternatives to community members, at which time they can comment on and perhaps change the work group's decisions.

**OUTREACH TIPS
FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES**

***KEEP IT SIMPLE AND
INCORPORATE CULTURE***

- ▶ Identify your target audience (children, elders, business owners, etc.)
- ▶ Create a clear and simple message to which community members can relate.

KEEP IT CLEAN!



NO DUMPING!

- ▶ Be creative and explore a variety of outreach methods.
- ▶ Obtain community and tribal leader support for your program.
- ▶ Perform outreach activities to build partnerships.
- ▶ Use partnerships to increase the success of your outreach efforts.
- ▶ Take advantage of high-profile events (school programs, corporation annual meetings).
- ▶ Incorporate culture whenever possible.



Community leaders and your solid waste planning work group should keep in mind that your community's integrated waste management plan is unique to your community, and what constitutes a successful public education and involvement program in a nearby community may not be what is needed in your community. It is critical that your planning work group involve community members throughout your waste management planning process and that they keep the community informed of the full costs and liabilities of managing the waste they generate. This, combined with broad and ongoing education on how to participate, will lead to public support of and participation in your community's waste management program and projects.

Instituting Your Community Education Program

Many solid waste management programs are long term and require sustained education and training. In addition, community members will likely have questions about new programs and policies that may not be completely addressed through your initial outreach efforts. Most community solid waste programs need to go through an adjustment process before they run smoothly, and education will be needed to help guide community members through the changes.

When developing your public education program, it is important to anticipate questions that community members will have so that they can be addressed early on (e.g., hours of operation for the landfill, what waste

will be accepted for recycling). But it is usually impossible to anticipate every question or complaint people will have about a new program or policy.

You might need to develop additional educational materials after you have started your public education program to address unanswered concerns and questions. You might also have to use other forms of outreach to improve communication. One option, is to select an individual to be available to answer questions and help people understand your new program. Community members will become more informed and better equipped to follow waste management rules and practices when they have someone to turn to with their questions. Ultimately, by answering questions and modifying your waste management program in response to complaints, your

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM IS WORKING?

Measurement is important because it can help you to get to the root of persistent problems.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether your community's outreach and public education program is working. To determine the effectiveness of community education efforts, you can carry out measurement activities. First, consider what would be helpful to measure. For example, your community might want to measure:

- ▶ Have incidents of illegal gone down?
- ▶ Are more community members using collection containers?
- ▶ How much trash, by weight and volume, is your community collecting now?
- ▶ What do community members think and say about your community's education program?

By measuring the effects of your community's waste management program, you will be better able to decide whether you need to carry out more education efforts or change your approach.

community will help make sure that your waste management plan and program is as successful as it can be.

Adjusting and Maintaining Your Public Education Program

It is important to note that both your solid waste management program and your public education program might go through adjustments as they are implemented. For example, you might find that procedures for sorting recyclables need to change to make your program more efficient, or that you need to move collection containers so they are more accessible. As changes like these are made to your program, additional communication with your community members will be necessary.

You also might find your public education program and outreach activities need fine-tuning. Sometimes people do not get the message or the message does not achieve the desired results. Similarly, a particular outreach method, like a brochure, might turn out to be ineffective in reaching community members. In these cases, you will need to look at can be done to improve your outreach and ensure that community members are getting the message you wish to convey.

🔑 RECRUIT A PLANNING TEAM AND FORM A SOLID WASTE WORK GROUP

A strong and open planning process often begins with a few committed people. These people can become your solid waste planning team. They are the backbone of your planning process. Once you have decided your community is ready to do an integrated waste management plan, you need to establish a planning team to help prepare your solid waste plan and make decisions. Your planning team will include your solid waste planning work group, community and tribal leaders, and any staff working on your integrated waste management plan.

The most important part of your planning team will be your ***solid waste planning work group***. Ideally, your planning work group will include a variety of people, as well as representatives from all aspects of leadership in your community. Your work group members will play a very important role in keeping your planning process going. They will set up and guide your planning meetings, conduct a community survey, fill out planning forms, and connect with

WHEN DO YOU FORM A WORK GROUP?

A strong solid waste planning process begins with a few committed people. They are the backbone of your planning process. Once there is support for a community work group, present the idea at the next village or community meeting. Ask your city or village council to officially form a "Solid Waste Work Group".

Workbook One: GETTING READY TO PLAN – ORGANIZING TO PLAN, GETTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVOLVED & CREATING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

agencies for resources as your planning process develops. Although everyone should be encouraged to attend planning meetings, it is usually the planning work group along with local leaders that ultimately leads the planning process.

Your solid waste planning work group will provide the organizational framework for community participation and plan implementation. Management of solid waste requires flexibility; for this reason it will be helpful to maintain your solid waste planning work group even after completing your planning process. Your work group can provide feedback on the options your community chooses and make recommendations about changes and additions to your integrated waste management plan and program. Your workgroup will play an important role in keeping your planning process going.

Getting community leaders involved as well as a variety of people from your community will mean more complete community input into your planning process. Remember to include the wisdom of elders and the concern of youth. Involving children in solid waste planning is not only educational, but also better ensures that integrated waste management planning will continue with future generations.

Once your community is ready to undertake the integrated waste management planning process, you should form your solid waste work group to coordinate your community planning process and ensure that your integrated waste management plan is completed. Although everyone in your community should be encouraged to attend planning meetings, your work group will lead the planning process and the development of your community's integrated waste management plan.

Forming a solid waste work group is the first step you will need to complete in your solid waste planning process. Your work group should be made up of members of the community who are interested in being part of your solid waste planning process and want to invest their time and energy in developing an integrated waste management plan for your community. Membership on the work group should be representative of your community at large. Ideally, it will have a representative from all aspects of leadership in your community.

To identify possible work group members, ask individuals, hold home meetings, or hold a community meeting to find out who is interested in your community's solid waste issues. Make sure everybody knows you are setting up a solid waste work group for your community. When you meet with people about joining the work group, be sure to explain the work group's responsibilities and the integrated waste management planning process.

It is very important that your community form some sort of work group or solid waste committee. One person alone cannot do your community's integrated waste management

“Some kind of community group should lead the planning process. It might be called a “planning work group” or a “citizen advisory group” or an “advisory council.” What is most important is that the group should represent everybody who has a “stake” in the plan...Although everyone should be encouraged to attend meetings, it is usually the small work group or council that ultimately leads the planning process.”

-Sanitation Planning Guide for Small Communities, State of Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development, June 1999.

planning. Your planning process will be most successful if you get a group of people together to look at your community's solid waste concerns and needs. A workplan can help staff and your planning coordinator get more done and strengthen your actions. A group of people working together to solve a problem will do a much better job of planning than just one person working alone. Your solid waste work group will:

- Help the whole community learn about local solid waste management issues.
- Help your community organize its solid waste planning efforts.
- Gather many different viewpoints and opinions on solid waste management.
- Develop strong support for adoption of an integrated waste management plan.
- Promote communication among government agencies, business, local groups, and community members who are involved in your solid waste planning process.

WHAT IS A STAKEHOLDER?

A *stakeholder* is any individual or organization that may be affected in some way by the plan's implementation.

To determine who should be involved in your planning process or "who has a stake" in your process, invite everyone who may be:

- Interested in the outcome of the group's efforts.
- Affected either directly or indirectly by the planned action.
- Knowledgeable about the planned action.

There is no single way to form a workgroup. What is most important is that your work group should represent everybody who has a "stake" in your community's integrated waste management plan. Your work group will gain community and agency support if every potential stakeholder is invited. If essential participants are missing, problems are likely to occur later. At the first meeting, people important to the planning effort should be determined, a list with contact information should be drafted, and the next meeting should be scheduled.

HOW DO YOU FORM A WORK GROUP?

To be successful in your community, your integrated waste management plan needs the support and participation of your community. Whose consent, acceptance, and support is needed? Consult with community members; consider their needs and concerns

as you plan. One of the best methods for getting community participation is to form a solid waste planning work group and recruit group members from your community. The keys to form an effective work group include:

- ➔ **BECOME INFORMED.** Learn about solid waste issues in your community and statewide.
- ➔ **EDUCATE YOUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY.** Once you have decided to undertake integrated waste management planning for your community you need to let your entire community know what you are going to do. Most communities know how to spread news and information. Use methods that work best for getting the word out in your community. Speak to family, friends, and neighbors to see what they know about any solid waste problems your community may be facing.

8→ **GET PEOPLE INTERESTED IN YOUR SOLID WASTE WORK GROUP.** The next step is to organize support for creating a community-based solid waste planning work group. It is important that people with respect and power in your community support the work group. Speak to them to see if they are aware of solid waste problems and issues. These people will be key members of your planning team and will be responsible for implementing your community's integrated waste management plan once it is completed and approved by your community. Be sure to speak to people about the work group and your solid waste planning process including local government officials (i.e. mayor, IRA or village council president, tribal chief or chairman,) and other community board members or committee chairpersons.

8→ **ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO BE PART OF YOUR WORK GROUP.** You might be able to encourage key people to be in your work group by pointing out the benefits resulting from their involvement in the community's planning process. Although you will be asking them to volunteer their time, they will have the satisfaction of being directly involved in creating your community's solid waste plan. Ultimately they will be making a contribution that will make your community a better place to live.

8→ **SELECT MEMBERS FOR YOUR SOLID WASTE WORK GROUP.** It's important that you get the help from people that are already working on solid waste issues and projects or related issues for your community. To determine who should be involved in your planning work group, hold pre-planning meeting. Invite everyone "who has a stake" or may be interested in your plan or planning process. These are people who may be:

- Interested in your work group's efforts.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

POTENTIAL WORK GROUP MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Everyone in your community that is interested in your planning process should be involved. Agencies and consultants can make a good plan, but the plan must be followed by your community. **Local residents** know what will work for them best. This means the most important people you should involve in your planning efforts are the people who live, work, and conduct business in your community.

Community Residents and Organizations

- Local Residents
- City, IRA or tribal council members
- Maintenance workers
- Mayor or City Manager
- Allotment owners
- Tribal or City Council members
- Elders and youth
- Americorps volunteers
- Commercial business owners (store, cannery, village corporation, lodges, commercial fisherman)
- Village Public Safety Officer
- Local utility operator and workers
- School (principal, teachers and teacher aides)
- Community groups
- Health Clinic (health aides)
- City or Tribal Council staff (accountant, bookkeeper, environmental planner, tribal planner, tribal administrator)

Agencies and Outside Organizations (optional)

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (village safe water, environmental health, solid waste management)
- Regional non-profit association for your area (e.g. Association of Village Council Presidents, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Chugachmiut, etc.)
- Regional health corporation for your area (e.g. Bristol Bay Health Corporation, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, etc.)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (solid waste program or IGAP staff)
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Division of Environmental Health & Engineering
- Alaska Native Health Board
- Any other organization your community may wish to include in its planning process

- Involved in solid waste management in your community.
- Affected by new solid waste management practices and policies.
- Knowledgeable about solid waste management and planning.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING YOUR SOLID WASTE WORK GROUP

SIZE. Your work group needs to be a manageable size. Too small a work group might be unbalanced, and too large a work group is hard to manage. An ideal size for your work group might be five to nine members. Experienced planners suggest limiting work group size to no more than ten (10) members. The more members in your work group, the more difficult it will be to reach consensus among your members.



DIVERSITY. Recruit work group members with different backgrounds, who have different pieces of the puzzle including local residents, local business owners and other people knowledgeable about solid waste and public health and environmental concerns. What is important is that each work group member has an open mind with the ability to see other individuals' points of view.

REPRESENTATION. Avoid "political" solutions that delay or remove the problem without solving it. Remember to include the wisdom of elders and the concern of youth. Involving young people in solid waste planning is not only educational, but also better ensures that integrated waste management planning will continue with future generations. Appoint someone to represent those who own property or live near your dump or landfill.

COORDINATION. Teamwork is essential. Coordinate your work group meetings and activities with affected parties. Meet periodically with the tribal and /or city council to exchange ideas and evaluate common goals. Appoint a work group member to appear before your community's governing body when necessary to explain or promote recommendations. Invite elected officials or other government officials to meetings to share information.

EDUCATION. Encourage work group members to take tours to see what other communities are doing and to attend meetings, conferences and training on solid waste management techniques or laws. Have them tell the work group about what they learned. Take time to orient new work group members to the job.

➔ **HOLD AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING FOR YOUR WORK GROUP AFTER IT IS FORMED.** Your solid waste work group's goal primary task will be to look at solid waste issues in your community and develop a integrated waste management plan which will guide your community in solving its solid waste problems. Work group members have special responsibilities. At this meeting you should explain to your work group the planning process and their responsibilities as a planning work group.

By establishing a dedicated staff and solid planning work group within your community, decision-making is made at the community level and local knowledge and experience build the time. *Building local expertise* is very important waste management goal. Many local decision makers are unfamiliar with the details of various waste management alternatives, even though the problems may not be technical or complex in nature. As a result, rural communities often rely on outside experts or consultants as sources of information on what are essentially local problems. As your planning work group works through a integrated waste management planning process it can develop the expertise needed to make decisions about waste management at the community level. Building expertise will better prepare your community to implement larger programs and will lower the risk of making costly mistakes.

Innovative waste management alternatives will be unfamiliar to many of your work group and community members. In many cases, the costs and benefits will not be fully understood. Your work group and community leaders should serve as advocates for new solid waste management programs in your community. Once a level of expertise is established, your community and planning work group will be in a position to promote new programs and waste management practices to your community members.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PLANNING WORK GROUP?

Work group have special responsibilities. They must:

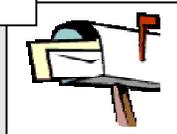
- Represent their interests by voicing the knowledge and opinions of those they represent at work group meetings.
- Take information, decisions, and questions from the work group back, to those they represent.
- Actively attend work group meetings and complete special projects, as necessary.
- Represent the work group by listening to and answering questions outside of work group meetings. For example, if stopped at the store by a community member, a work group member should be willing to listen and respond to that person's questions or comments.

GUIDE SHEET No. 1

GENERAL TIPS FOR GENERATING MORE AND BETTER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SOLID WASTE PLANNING.....

➤ **Involve stakeholders**

- Local residents
- Community groups
- Utilities
- Commercial businesses (store, cannery)
- Health clinic
- Federal and State Agencies
- Schools



➤ **Provide adequate, timely notice for meetings**

- Make sure the purpose of the meeting is clear
- Always prepare and follow an agenda
- Distribute meeting notice to mail box holders
- Display meeting notice in public places
- Use radio, tv, cy newspapers, school bulletins

➤ **Consider using surveys**

- In-person, by city or tribal officials, students, or Americorps volunteers
- In the mail with utility bills
- On the phone, by city or tribal officials, students, or Americorps volunteers
- Regardless of the survey format, “*Keep it simple and keep it short.*”



Other points to consider

- Schedule work sessions that are less formal, less intimidating (but keep a record of discussion!)
- Be organized. Frame options to prompt, not control, discussion.
- Facilitate discussion so everyone has a chance to speak.
- Don’t take criticism personally, don’t get defensive. You want them back for the next session.

Source: “Taking Charge...Sanitation Strategies for Rural Communities – A Resource For Effective Local Planning.” Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development, 1999.

WORKSHEET: Section 2 – 1

KEEP A PUBLIC PROCESS RECORD

Who Participated in Your Integrated waste management planning Process?

Provide a record of your public process below. Use one of these forms for every meeting, interview or survey you complete. Attach additional pages if necessary.

TYPE OF PUBLIC PROCESS: MEETING INTERVIEW SURVEY

DATE:

LOCATION:

TOPIC:

PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE:

- For ***meeting***, attach a sheet with the names of all people attending the meeting. It is useful to have a sign-in sheet at the door when people come in for a meeting.
- For ***interviews***, record the name of the person of the person interviewed here.
Name of person interviewed: _____
- For ***surveys***, write the number of people surveyed here.
Number of people surveyed: _____

SUMMARY OF MEETING/INTERVIEW/SURVEY:

- For ***meeting***, include a brief summary of the key outcomes of your meetings below.
- For ***interviews***, include the questions asked along with the main answers below.
- For ***surveys***, attach a copy of the survey and results. Summarize your findings below.

WORKSHEET: Section 2 - 3

FORM A WORK GROUP - RECRUIT A TEAM
Clarify Roles and Responsibilities Of Your Work Group

Whether it consists of one person, or a group of people, your planning work group needs to understand its purpose and responsibilities. The following questions will help your work group establish ground rules and procedures for itself.

1. Will the work group be an advisory committee that reports to your city or tribal council or an authorized board that acts independently of your local government?
2. Will membership on the work group be voluntary, elected by the community or appointed by your city or tribal council?
3. Once the work group completes your community's solid waste plan, who must adopt the plan for it to be official?
4. Assign and explain the following responsibilities:
 - Who will educate the team about its responsibilities?
 - Who will lead the meetings?
 - Who will record the team's decisions and write the solid waste management plan?
 - How often will the team meet?
 - How long will the meetings be?
5. When will people who are not on the work group be allowed to speak and participate in your planning process?

Section Three
CREATING A PUBLIC PROCESS

“It is commonly accepted that the greater the level of public involvement, the better the plan will represent the values and vision of the tribe and will, therefore, have a better chance of being accepted and supported.”

- Don Hall, Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Trust Responsibility,
“Guidelines for Integrated Resource Management Planning in Indian Country”

It is commonly accepted that the greater the level of public involvement, the better your plan will represent the values and vision of your community and will, therefore have a better chance of being accepted and supported. Your solid waste work group needs to establish a public process to ensure that community members have a chance to be heard and participate in your solid waste planning process. The work group must decide if they want a very high level of public activity in the planning process or want to limit public involvement to initial input, selection of a preferred solid waste management alternative, and review of the draft plan.

➔ **CREATE A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

The answers to the questions related to the “who, what, when, where, and how” of public involvement should be formalized into a **public involvement plan**. The plan should be tied to the various stages of your planning effort (it is actually a component of your overall planning schedule) and should describe the techniques that will be used. A typical public involvement plan will have public meetings to solicit input for your plan

**COMMONLY USED
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
TECHNIQUES**

- ▶ *City Council* – Committee meetings and hearings
- ▶ *Tribal Council* – Committee meetings and hearings
- ▶ *“Town Hall” or community meetings*
- ▶ *Community surveys*
- ▶ *Information dissemination* (e.g. newsletters)
- ▶ *Media* (e.g. television and radio)

with special meetings focusing on community elders, businesses, and youth. Most public involvement plans include conducting a survey, community events, various types of meetings, and distributing information to local residents and businesses.

Successful public participation and education programs are the result of careful planning. By developing a realistic education and involvement plan, your solid waste planning work group can assess your community’s situation and know where to direct their time, efforts and resources. Each part of your community has different concerns so you need to include them in your education and planning efforts. Involving all interested and affected parties in your integrated waste management planning process is critical to its success. Public participation is needed at all

stages of the planning process. Everyone affected by your integrated waste management plan should have an opportunity to be heard so they can express their concerns or support.

SAMPLE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Jan. 31, Feb. 6 & 13	Notification of Initial Public Meeting in local newspaper	
Feb. 5	Public Service Announcements on cb and local radio station announcing Initial Public Meeting	
Feb. 15	Initial Meeting – Describe process and role of public. Ask for volunteers to sit on various technical sub-committees and other groups related to integrated waste management planning process. Distribute schedule of Issues Meetings.	
Feb. 15 – Mar. 22	Print Notification of Issues Meetings in local newspaper and distribute flyers announcing meeting date and place.	
Feb. 15 – Mar. 22	Public Service Announcements on radio concerning Initial Meetings.	
Feb. 19	Send out letters inviting each person who attended Initial Meeting to attend the Issues Meetings	
Feb. 25 – Mar. 22	Issues Meetings – Collect issues and concerns. Discuss items for inclusion in community vision. Ask for volunteers to sit on technical sub-committees and support groups. Meetings will be held at monthly intervals.	
Mar. 21 and 28	Youth Vision Workshops – one high school age and one elementary school age	
Mar 22 – Mar. 27	Interviews of local residents by high school students and Americorps volunteers	
1 st of each month	Community newsletter distributed describing progress and educating community members with regards to solid waste management issues.	
To Be Determined	Written invitation to those who attended Issues Meetings and notification in paper and via radio prior to Follow-Up meetings.	
To Be Determined	Follow-Up Meetings – Review consolidated issues, concerns, and draft community vision for comments.	
To Be Determined	Distribution of Draft Plan – via mail, placement in council office, school library, and other convenient locations.	
Upon Council Adoption	Distribute Final Plan to interested parties with notification via newspaper and community flyer	

As you are developing your public involvement work plan, you may want to consider using some of the following community involvement and education methods.

▶ **Workshops.** Host workshops with community members to teach them about your integrated waste management planning process. At the workshop you can discuss community objectives and the benefits of preparing an integrated waste management plan for your community. Workshops are a good time to invite people from other communities to share their experiences with your solid waste work group and community members. These people can share what has worked for their community and give you ideas for what you might do in your community. You can invite agency representatives to talk to your community about what they can do to assist your community during your planning process. They can also provide technical information about different solid waste management approaches your community might want to consider for handling waste in your community. Workshops are good way to bring community members together with people from outside your community.

▶ **Public Survey.** A survey can be used to determine public opinion or gather information and data. It is also a useful tool for getting public input during a planning process. People who may never attend a public meeting can be reached by a survey. Surveys can include multiple-choice questions or open-ended questions. Open-ended questions allow people to say or write what they want, but they are harder to analyze.

If your community is small enough, you might consider surveying every adult or household so you get your entire community's views. That way everyone will feel like they have been heard. If your community is too large to survey everyone, a representative group ("sample") of people can be questioned. Sometimes the people who respond to surveys do not adequately represent the community, so be sure you survey a variety of people in your community.

Surveys can be used to reach a broad cross-section of people living in your

THE PUBLIC SURVEY PROCESS GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A SURVEY IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Stage 1:* Determine what information you need and whether a survey is the best way to get that information.
- Stage 2:* Prepare a time line and budget for doing your survey
- Stage 3:* Determine what is already known about your community's attitudes and views on issues.
- Stage 4:* Determine how many people you need to question to get an accurate representation of your community.
- Stage 5:* Design your survey by writing well-thought-out questions.
- Stage 6:* Test your survey on several people to determine whether or not it is easily understood.
- Stage 7:* Select and train interviewers if your survey is done face to face or over the phone.
- Stage 8:* Conduct interviews and complete the survey.
- Stage 9:* Compile your survey results.
- Stage 10:* Analyze your survey data and report your findings to your community and work group.

community and can be conducted in a number of ways including:

- *By a show of hands at public meetings.* Only simple issues can be addressed, responses are limited to those attending meeting; it is low cost; and gets the survey done quickly.
- *Through the mail.* Responses come from only those people who take the time to complete and return the survey; it is fairly low cost; but response time can be slow and you may not get many surveys back.
- *Via direct interview.* Number of people surveyed may be limited by availability of staff to conduct the survey; costs are higher if you pay people to conduct the survey; and results can take time to collect. A personal interview is one of the best information gathering tools you can use. It provides individuals an opportunity to fully explain their views. Personal interviews also provide a personal touch because people talk on a one-to-one basis.

Voluntary surveys do not put people “on the spot” and may be a good way for you to get an idea of general attitudes outside of public meetings. Consider hiring someone locally (high school students are a good choice for helping conduct community surveys) from your community to administer the surveys or conduct the interviews. People are generally more receptive, and you will usually get better, more complete information if someone from your community conducts the survey.

A sample survey that you can use to get input from community members on their priorities and attitudes about solid waste management is provided in the Appendices.

- ▶ **Intensive Interviews.** Unlike conducting a community survey, where many people are asked a series of questions to determine the opinions of the community as a whole, “intensive” interviewing involves talking to key people who are very knowledgeable about your community or who have a special knowledge about an issue, event or process. Elders or long-time community leaders may have traditional or local knowledge that may be important to your planning process. This can be a helpful way to gather data from people who may be unable or unwilling to attend public meetings or respond to written survey questionnaires.

Special considerations must be taken when interviewing people in your community. Your interviewers may want to start with small talk, thanking the person for taking the time to answer questions, before moving on to business. The interviewer should ask simple, factual questions in the beginning and move towards more complex ones as the interview progresses. Open-ended questions usually work best in interviews. For example you might ask the following questions:

- What is our community’s biggest solid waste problem?
- What ideas do you have for solving our solid waste problems?
- What is the most important aspect of our community that we should consider when dealing with solid waste problems in the community?

All the questions should be prepared beforehand and should be simple, short and clear. The interviewer should be a good note-taker or use a tape recorder if the person being interviewed is comfortable with it.

**METHODS FOR DELIVERING PUBLIC
EDUCATION AND
INFORMATION MESSAGES
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES**

- Public service announcements (PSA's) in newspapers, newsletters, and on the cb, rad and television;
- News releases and news articles;
- Guest spots on local radio stations;
- Church and community bulletin boards at the school, stores, community hall, health clinic, council offices, and village corporation office;
- Presentations at community gatherings, dances, and dinners;
- Posters, brochures, flyers, and fact sheets;
- Public displays, speeches and slide shows;
- Poster contests and community clean-up campaigns;
- Educational materials in schools to help children develop an awareness of solid waste and pollution prevention issues;
- Community education programs on special topics (e.g. village elders can speak about th importance of traditional values and use of community land and resources).

Be sure to tailor your materials to the different groups you are trying to reach and always deliver a positive message.

► **Informal Gatherings.** One way to get public participation is to use groups that already meet regularly in your community such as the traditional council, school groups and others. Go to their meetings and ask people questions such as “What do you think are solid waste problems in our community or what do you recommend we do to get rid of garbage in our community?” If you use an informal process, be sure to keep a list of the people who were at the meeting and write down what they said so their input can be considered as you develop your community’s integrated waste management plan.

► **Informal Interviews.** You can often obtain important information by meeting with people who are viewed as being wise about the community such as elders or elected officials. It is important to meet with them

and learn their points of view and listen to their thoughts. These people may raise important questions that you may want your community to consider or have ideas that can be included in your integrated waste management plan. Again, keep track of who you speak with, what you ask, and what they say. These types of interviews are also part of your public planning process.

Remember to develop a plan the outlines how and when you include your community in your integrated waste management planning process. For your planning process to be effective, you must

Consider your community’s perceptions and values concerning protecting public health and the environment. Continuous, consistent, and direct public participation is needed to keep the expectations of your planning process realistic. Public participation helps to integrate the use of sound solid waste management practices in planning and decision-

making that may have an impact on your community. Public participation activities will allow community members to communicate their values, needs and wants so that your planning work group may establish appropriate goals and objectives for resolving solid waste problems in your community.

WORKSHEET: Section 3 -1

***THE PUBLIC PROCESS
Keep Your Community Involved and
Incorporate Their Ideas and Comments Into Your Plan***

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Outline here how you will inform, educate, and encourage community participation in your planning process and implementation of your integrated waste management plan.

WORKSHEET 1-3a

ARE YOU READY TO MOVE ON?

- Are community leaders behind doing a solid waste management plan?**
- Have you considered the timing of starting an integrated waste management plan now?**
- Are solid waste issues important and a high community priority?**
- Have you identified a planning coordinator?**
- Are residents aware that your community is doing a solid waste management plan and interested in it?**
- Will community residents and groups be able to work together and agree on important decisions?**
- Have you formed a solid waste planning work group?**
- Have you establish a process for involving community members in your solid waste planning activities and development of your integrated waste management plan? For example, will you hold community meetings, conduct a community survey, or hold a community workshop?**
- Has your solid waste planning group discussed your community's ability to implement a integrated waste management plan or project?**

If you answered yes to these questions, you are ready to move on and begin developing an integrated waste management plan for your community.

If you answered no to any of the questions, go back and try to complete the step. You should take whatever action is needed to complete that step. However, if you cannot complete the step, do not stop your planning process. You can still go on and begin collecting information you will need for developing your plan.