

WasteCon 2000: SWANA's River of Memories and Ideas

Those of you who have been to WasteCon in the past know how valuable an industry resource the annual event is. More than just a trade exposition and program of speakers and classes, WasteCon offers unparalleled opportunities for attendees to meet informally with your peers, renew old acquaintances, and match ideas with solid waste professionals not only from the US, Canada, and Mexico, but indeed from around the world.

As usual, SWANA's several technical divisions (Collection and Transfer; Landfill Management; Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting; Planning and Management; Landfill Gas; Communication, Education, and Marketing; Waste-to-Energy; and Special Waste) will meet to discuss issues of concern to their specific areas, but this year's agenda achieves an added dimension in the inclusion of a track especially designed for solid waste board members. Stop for a moment and think about just what an opportunity this is for you as either a board member or waste manager. If you're a board member, the chances are you came to the task with little in the way of formal experience, yet you're responsible for overseeing the budget and activities of a highly complex, costly, and politically sensitive activity. The situation is no less daunting to those of you who depend on the support and guidance of these elected or appointed representatives of the community, so here's a golden opportunity for both groups to narrow the gap.

Having served for several years as a member of our local transit district board--a post I took up with high regard for my qualifications only to find I didn't know diddly-squat--I can promise you that the most valuable several days of my tenure were those spent at board member sessions put on by SWANA's counterpart in the transit industry, the American Public Transit Association. There I became acquainted not only with other transit board members from around the nation, but how they approached their responsibilities.

If I could choose one piece of advice that others would heed, it would be to for waste boards to require its members to go to at least one WasteCon, attend Board Members 101, rub elbows with their counterparts, and get a wonderful overview of the entire field.

WasteCon 2000 takes place October 23-26, 2000 in Cincinnati, OH, a location so central that nearly half the population of the US lives within a day's drive...a situation that begs the question, "What's stopping you from going?"

MSW Management Peer Review Program

For several years we've talked about the prospect of presenting a limited number of peer-reviewed articles but for a variety of reasons we haven't managed to pull the trigger on the idea. That's about to change and we hope to present our first peer reviewed article in the Spring of 2001, but for if we're to meet such an ambitious schedule we need your help in getting potential articles into the pipeline. Candidate topics include:

- Management (financing, planning, human resources, public and political influences, operations, legislation, regulations)
- Collection (planning, funding, rates/fees, public/private interface, franchising, contracting, residential, commercial, industrial, equipment, design, low emissions/low noise vehicles, fleet purchasing/maintenance/leasing)
- Transfer (siting, applications, equipment, see collection above, inter/multi-modal, rail haul)
- Recycling (technologies, systems, markets, processing, costs, public/private interface, etc.)
- Landfills (siting, design, materials selection, operations, regulations/legislation, leachate, LFG, etc.)
- Transformation/Combustion (some of the same as for landfills)

Former SWANA Executive Director, Lanny Hickman has offered to serve as Peer Review Editor, responsible for all facets of the program including development of program specifics, selection of the manuscripts, appointment of peer review panels, and preparation of manuscripts for publication. While we don't expect--or intend--refereed articles to make up more than a small fraction of our regular fare, it will allow us to provide a service to authors to whom peer review is important. Moreover it will give us access to authors who for lack of such a program have not considered us as an outlet for their work. In any event program specifics are available on our website at www.mswmanagement.com so we invite you to surf through and pick up the details.

Bioreactor Landfill Information Needed

The Department of Food, Agriculture and Biological Engineering at The Ohio State University's Bioreactor Landfill Lab has developed a questionnaire in an effort to compile information on bioreactor landfill technology and the management of leachate in landfills. The long term goal is to determine if this technology can be applied to old landfills (pre-RCRA Subtitle D facilities). Collection of this information can play a vital role in filling in the blanks and overcoming barriers to the development of technologies, techniques, and practices necessary to the success of bioreactor initiatives. If you have information to share and would like to receive a questionnaire, please contact me by e-mail at editor@forester.net or phone (805) 681-1300.