



Fact Sheet

Solid Waste Initiatives (Incinerator & Landfill Issues)

- This document was updated on September 1, 2009 -

- Charleston County's Waste to Energy contract with Montenay Charleston Resource Recovery Inc. will expire January 1, 2010.
- **Council Activity to Date:**
 - **September 1, 2009** – County Council Meeting – Council approved the following motion:
In order to continue advancing development of Charleston County's Green for Green Solid Waste Management program, and whereas the County has previously adopted a 40% recycling goal and has a long-term objective to provide the premier solid waste program in the southeastern United States, staff requests Council to consider the following actions:
 1. Authorize staff to:
 - a. Negotiate a contract for short-term solid waste transfer and disposal of municipal solid waste
 - b. Negotiate a contract for recyclable materials processing and/or marketing services
 - c. Provide a short list of companies interested in providing emerging waste conversion technologies that meet the County's needs
 2. Fully utilize the existing composting facility at the Bees Ferry Landfill so that all yard waste is composted, resulting in a significant increase in the County's recyclable rate. Investigate the potential to compost commercial food waste and other organic feed stocks.
 3. Implement a staff and operational department-wide efficiency and accountability program.
 4. Identify and explore public-private partnerships for all appropriate County solid waste operations.
 5. Identify the percentage of recyclable materials currently being disposed of that will provide necessary base-line data for planning and designing all collection, processing, marketing, and disposal systems.
 6. Manage the transitional process and closure of Montenay incinerator.
 7. Prepare ordinance(s) to implement a construction and demolition debris recycling program that may include, but not limited to, licensing or franchise fees, and sets a recycling requirement.
 8. Provide Council periodic updates regarding the status of activities and accomplishments.
 9. Continue seeking opportunities for regional solutions.
 - **June 2, 2009** – County Council Meeting - Council directed staff to proceed with the following:
 1. Proceed with the development of programs achieving the 40% recycling goal.
 2. Aggressively develop public/private partnerships for recycling and disposal.
 3. Discontinue negotiations with Montenay regarding the use of the incinerator.
 4. Continue to utilize Bees Ferry Landfill at this time and explore public/private partnerships.
 5. Report back to Council within 90 days with strategies for Charleston County's Environmental Management Program.
 - **March 25, 2009** – Special Finance Committee Meeting - Council voted to accept the consultant's recommendation to increase the recycling goal to 40 percent (currently, 10 percent of the waste stream is being diverted from the incinerator and landfill due to recycling). Council also directed staff and the consultant to incorporate this into the county's Solid Waste Management Plan and the Green for Green Plan.
 - **March 23, 2009** -- AT&T granted Montenay an extension on their purchase option agreement, from the original date of April 1, 2009, to May 31, 2009. This information was communicated to Charleston County Council on March 25, 2009.
 - **March 17, 2009** – County Council recognized staff for receiving the 2008 Most Outstanding County Waste Reduction/Recycling Program Award for a county with a population greater than 150,000 (see below for more details on the County's achievements).
 - **March 12, 2009**

- Finance Committee Meeting - Kessler Consulting provided Council a presentation with results of a system audit, landfill life and view study, technology review, modeling scenarios and a recommendation that Charleston County, based on cost, does not need incineration and should adopt a program that results in 40 percent recycling.
 - The Green Ribbon Committee, as directed by Council, was provided the same presentation by Kessler Consulting the morning of March 12. The committee provided Council a recommendation to no longer utilize incineration for solid waste disposal.
 - o **February 3, 2009**-County Council Public Hearing - Council received citizen comments concerning a rezoning and comprehensive plan amendment request for 8754 Savannah Highway proposed to be utilized as a private C & D landfill. During the public hearing, several Council members requested that the contract scope for the Solid Waste Management Study with Kessler Consulting, Inc. be amended to include an analysis of Highway 17 South, and a professional opinion be given as to the use of Highway 17 South in Charleston County's long-range Solid Waste Management Plan.
 - o **February 17, 2009** - County Council amended scope of services to include analysis of 17 S and requested the Green Ribbon Committee be given the same solid waste management study presentation on March 12 and provide a recommendation to Council.
 - o **January 22, 2008**, Council authorized staff to decline the current offer from Montenay for continued use of the Resource Recovery Facility and discontinue accepting C&D from private haulers and contractors after June 30, 2008. Montenay has since provided a counter offer which includes a transfer purchase option of the facility currently owned by AT&T. On April 1, 2009, the purchase option of the facility expires.
 - o **January 29, 2009** Finance Committee, Kessler Consulting gave an update on the Solid Waste Management Study (see info. on the County's Web page below – the presentation is online for the public to see).
- **Solid Waste Management Study Scope Details:**
 - o The Solid Waste Management study has a contractual timeframe of 300 days comprised of Phase I and Phase II.
 - o At the 120 day point of Phase I (March 12, 2009), the consultant will provide the Finance Committee with a comprehensive and detailed professional opinion as to whether viable Solid Waste Management methodologies, systems, or practices exist, including but not limited to increased recycling, that will likely reduce or divert the County's solid waste stream enough to alleviate the need for incineration in Charleston County.
 - o Phase II includes revising Charleston County's Solid Waste Management Plan and working with the Council appointed Green Ribbon Committee who currently serve as a board of advisors to review and evaluate existing County and municipal environmental policies, practices and procedures, act as a liaison between municipalities and Charleston County Government for shared environmental and sustainability concerns, and will gather input from the public and work with the consulting firm in drafting the Charleston County Green for Green Plan.
- **Green Ribbon Committee Details:**
 - Charleston County Council voted in May of 2008 to establish a 15-member Green Ribbon Committee to develop a comprehensive solid waste and environmental sustainability plan.
 - In August of 2008, Council voted to task the Green Ribbon Committee:
 1. to convene for a period of one year.
 2. to review and evaluate existing county and municipal environmental policies, practices, and procedures.
 3. to serve as a board of advisors to the consulting firm charged with drafting the Charleston County Green for Green Plan, which plan will focus on sustainability addressing the areas of solid waste management and energy uses and analyzing the cost-effective nature.
 4. to gather input from the public regarding the Charleston County Green for Green Plan.
 5. to act as a municipal and county liaison for shared environmental and sustainability concerns between the municipalities and the County.
 6. to act as an advocate for sustainability.
 7. to work with the consulting firm in the drafting of the Charleston County Green for Green Plan.
 - The members were appointed on October 7, 2008.
- **2008 Most Outstanding County Waste Reduction/Recycling Program Award Details:**

- Charleston County's amount of recyclable materials collected increased approximately 10 percent, from about 19,000 tons in 2007 to nearly 21,000 tons in 2008.
- Charleston County Government provided curbside collection of recyclables to 130,000 homes in 2008, as well as any commercial establishment along its routes.
- Charleston County operates seven drop-off sites where traditional recyclables, along with household hazardous materials and electronics, are collected for recycling seven days a week. There are an additional 32 drop-off sites for cardboard collection.
- Charleston County targeted 39 new neighborhoods in 2008 and continued the effort to increase recycling rates in participating neighborhoods. Recycling bins were provided and educational materials were distributed to the residents. As a result of these efforts, over 100 neighborhoods have been surveyed and more than 4,200 households began curbside recycling.
- Charleston County collects cardboard, paper, glass and plastic from 82 of the 87 public schools in the county as well as 33 private schools.
- Charleston County implemented a multi-family recycling program at nine apartment complexes in 2008.
- This is the third time that Charleston County has won the award as the most Outstanding County Waste Reduction/Recycling Program. Charleston County won the first year the award program was initiated in 1995, and won again in 1999 and 2009.