

POLICY GUIDANCE: EVERY OTHER WEEK COLLECTION OF RECYCLABLES UNDER THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECYCLE RULES.

Approved by: PMT

Date: November 5, 2004

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy guidance is to address the question: "If a city or county is collecting Principal Recyclable Materials (PRM) on an every-other-week schedule (EOW) or collecting yard debris on alternate weeks and meeting their recovery rate goal are they still in compliance with ORS459A?"

II. BACKGROUND

The Oregon Opportunity to Recycle law requires that each of the 35 wastesheds develop a waste recovery program to reach pre-established recovery goals for 2005 and 2009. The rules set out nine elements which cities and counties can choose from to design a program. Cities with a population of over 4,000 must pick three elements and cities with a population of over 10,000 must pick four or five elements. Cities and counties may choose to apply for DEQ approval of an alternative method that complies with the rules. The alternative method must be reviewed and approved by the Department according to criteria set out in OAR 340-90-080.

At its October 15, 2003 meeting, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) discussed a request sponsored by Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA) and Rogue Waste Systems to review this rule. Several cities in the state with commingled programs have gone to every other week collection of recyclables or a system of alternating weekly collection of recyclables and yard debris. According to Solid Waste rules if a city with a population over 4,000 but less than 10,000 chooses to drop the on-route weekly collection element (or any element) and they have fewer than 3 program elements they need to add another element or apply for an alternative program. Similarly, if a city with a population over 10,000 chooses to drop the on-route weekly collection element (or any element) and they have fewer than five program elements, they need to add another element or apply for an alternative program.

The Department's policy on EOW recycling was discussed by the Solid Waste Program Management Team (PMT) on September 9, 2003 and October 15, 2003 (immediately following SWAC). At its October 15 meeting, the PMT directed Mary Sue Gilliland and Marti Roberts-Pillon to review the EOW recycling and alternative program option with TAs and bring a recommendation back to the PMT. Marti Roberts-Pillon discussed EOW recycling and alternative program options with the TAs, who recommended that the alternative program application form be kept unchanged and noted that it does not create too much work for them to review the occasional application for alternative programs. Marti and Mary Sue then prepared a draft policy guidance, which was reviewed and approved by the PMT at its November 5, 2004 meeting.

III. DISCUSSION

Discussion among SWAC and DEQ staff focused on the following points:

If wastesheds are meeting the recovery goal further expansion of the program is unnecessary and cities and counties should be allowed to provide every-other-week collection without adding a new element or applying for an alternative program.

The Department looked at the recovery rate and surveyed several recycling collection companies to determine if commingling had resulted in an increase in tonnage and participation. The data was limited but indicated an increase in recovery tonnage when every-other-week recycling was combined with the provision of commingling and roll carts (and in some instances, the addition of new materials), at least in the short term. However, staff was unable to separate out just the impact of EOW from the impact of other changes, including commingling, roll-carts and enhanced outreach and education.

The requirement is unnecessarily burdensome on jurisdictions. Some SWAC members felt that there could be an increased cost to local governments to add additional program elements. Further they felt that there were environmental benefits to running collection truck less frequently.

While the 2005 recovery goal will be reached, the 2009 goal presents a greater challenge and any deviation at this time could jeopardize Oregon's ability to achieve its statutory recovery goal.

The statute should be amended to allow for every other week collection as a program element option.

Any change to this program would require a legislative amendment to Chapter 459A. There is not clear indication that the regulation is overly burdensome and could justify a lengthy statute and rule amendment process.

IV. POLICY DETERMINATION

DEQ believes that enough flexibility currently exists in statute and rule and has chosen to not recommend changing rule or statute. Therefore, if a city drops on-route weekly collection (or any other element) and they have fewer than three elements, for cities between 4,000 and 10,000 or five elements for cities over 10,000, they must add another program element or apply for an alternative method that complies with rule.

Lead Staff: Martine Roberts-Pillon

Supporting Documents:

1. Discussion Paper: Every-other-week (EOW) Recycling Collection
Presented to SWAC October 15, 2003
Author: Marti Roberts-Pillon
2. Email: Every-other-week Collection and Greenhouse Gases
For: Technical Subcommittee on Materials and Waste, Governor's Advisory Group on Global Warming
Author: David Allaway, Subcommittee Member
Date: September 9, 2004

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