

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS & COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The Solid Waste Environmental Management System (EMS) Program has been in existence five years and it has seen a steady growth in participation, now boasting 11 participants. In addition to the six original EMS “pilots,” three additional participants achieved “Tier 2” status in October 2013 by successfully undergoing External Audits and submitting Annual Reports by September 1.

In the EMS program, participants utilize a management framework that is based on established procedures that emphasize continual improvement in six environmental “component” areas including:

- Yard Waste Management
- Hazardous Household Waste Collection
- Water Quality Improvement
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- Recycling Services
- Environmental Education

The program participants set program objectives (goals) and report on the methods used to accomplish those goals. Participants collect results on whether or not targets were achieved, then reevaluate goals and set new ones on a regular basis.

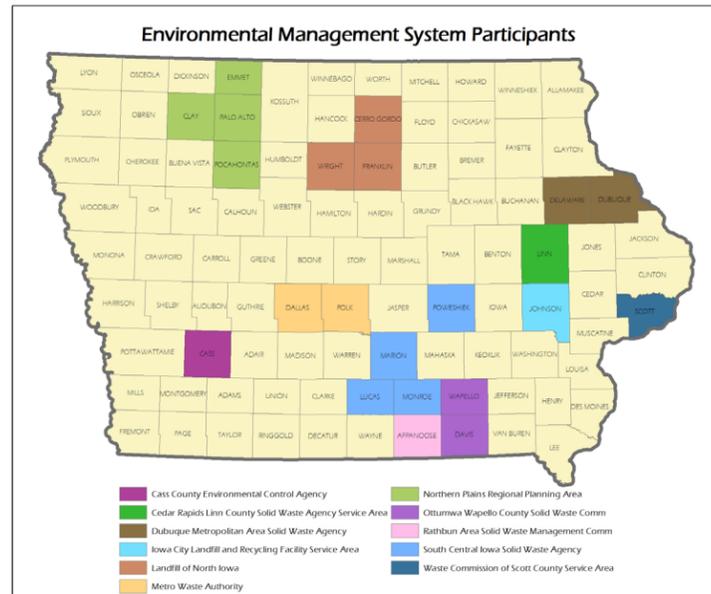
EMS program participants receive a number of incentives and benefits to assist them in their quest for continuous improvement:

- Potential reduced landfill tonnage fees paid to DNR
- Eligible to apply for special EMS Grant Funds
- Potential reduced Comprehensive Planning reporting requirements
- Special training and workshops with EMS consultants
- Other benefits such as improved organizational communications

The EMS program is a voluntary alternative to Comprehensive Planning. The program is open to Solid Waste Planning Areas and Permitted Facility Service Areas. **Applications for the next round of Tier 1 participants are due February 15.**



Above: Metro Waste Authority developed an Adopt-A-Stream program to facilitate annual clean-ups throughout the MWA service area.



TIER 2 PARTICIPANTS:

- Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center (Landfill Service Area)
- Northern Plains Regional Planning Area
- South Central Iowa Solid Waste Agency
- Cass County Environmental Control Agency*
- Cedar Rapids Linn-County Solid Waste Agency (Landfill Service Area)*
- Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency*
- Metro Waste Authority (Landfill Service Area)*
- Rathbun Area Solid Waste Management Commission*
- Waste Commission of Scott County (Landfill Service Area)*

*Pilot

TIER 1 PARTICIPANTS:

- Landfill of North Iowa
- Ottumwa Wapello County Solid Waste Commission

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about EMS and Comprehensive Planning, go to www.iowadnr.gov/FABA

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2013 EMS SUCCESS

A SAMPLING OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM THE SIX EMS COMPONENT AREAS

- **Green House Gas Reduction** - Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency (DMASWA) Goal: Reduce the carbon footprint at DMASWA facilities by 50% from the 2009 baseline. They instituted a landfill “Vehicle Idling Policy” that went into effect January 1, 2012. Notices were placed on all facility vehicles and fuel usage was documented.
- **Yard Waste** - Cedar Rapids-Linn County Solid Waste Agency (CRLCSWA) Goal: To direct food waste and other organics away from the landfill and to the local compost facility. CRLCSWA provides a composting incentive to interested parties by covering the costs of transportation/hauling for the first 3 months. Mount Mercy University, Green RU and CRLCSWA completed a pilot project over a three-month period and the result of the project was nearly 14 tons of organic waste collected and diverted from the landfill, along with additional data and information collection.
- **Recycling** - Waste Commission of Scott County (WCSC) Goal: Divert recyclable materials from the trash at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds. WCSC officials worked with leaders from the Fairgrounds to establish parameters and apply for DNR Solid Waste Alternatives Program (SWAP) grant funding to help cover the costs of the implementing recycling. When the fairgrounds secured grant funds from SWAP, the WCSC collaborated with the fairgrounds to provide educational materials, branding and press releases for the new recycling initiative. WCSC staff also created a guide and training materials for the program and staff at the fairgrounds. So far 6,724 pounds of material have been diverted from the landfill.
- **Water Quality** - Metro Waste Authority (MWA) Goal: To develop an Adopt-A-Stream program to facilitate annual stream clean-ups throughout the MWA service area. MWA engaged an engineering firm to map Polk County streams and a website was developed <http://www.goadoptastream.com/> for the project. Positive television coverage on two stream cleanup projects helped MWA publicize the project and several groups have signed up to work with MWA to adopt streams.
- **Environmental Education** - Cass County Environmental Control Agency (Cass) Goal: Prepare Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) disposal information brochures and place them at area lumberyards and other points of sale. In spring 2013, brochures and holders were delivered to vendors in Cass County to educate residents on the proper management & disposal of HHW. During the summer, staff then visited each of the sites to follow up on

the success and usage of the brochures. Cass has found this to be an effective means of providing educational material to the public.

- **Household Hazardous Materials** - Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center Goal: Promote responsible Electronic Waste management. Iowa City created a baseline of data, working with the landfill compactor operators to log information about hazardous electronics that are being delivered to the working face of the landfill. A new load inspection form was created and implemented and promotional material offering information about safe disposal options was sent to commercial haulers.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

What’s the plan? Iowa Code requires that cities and counties file a plan detailing how they are implementing a comprehensive solid waste program. Round Seven of the Comprehensive Plan Update calendar kicked off September 1, 2013. Iowa’s 44 Solid Waste Planning Areas are scheduled to submit Comprehensive Plan Updates to DNR now through May 2016.

Plan updates contain information about tons being landfilled, recycling, household hazardous waste and environmental education programs. During the plan update process, residents have a chance to weigh in on planning area goals and accomplishments. Cities are responsible for updating information about their solid waste and recycling services, and this information is entered into a database.

The planning areas handle Comprehensive Plan updates in several different ways. Some complete them in-house with staff writing the narrative and doing the online work; others utilize consultants or Council of Governments staff. Contact DNR staff for examples of completed Comprehensive Plan Updates or with questions.

To find out when your planning area’s Comprehensive Plan update is due, check out the DNR Comprehensive Planning web page: <http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/RegulatoryLand/SolidWaste/ComprehensivePlanning.aspx> Look under “Quick Links” for the Seventh Round Due Dates PDF.

Planning area contacts will receive a letter from the DNR regarding online Municipal Surveys one year prior to the plan due date. The letter will provide more information about this process.

The web page also contains information about what should be included in the plan update; look under “Quick Links,” Plan Update Outline PDF.

DNR staff is available year-round to provide information and assistance to planning areas and individual cities and counties with recycling and waste diversion activities. For more information contact Leslie Goldsmith at leslie.goldsmith@dnr.iowa.gov or (515) 281-8499, or go to www.iowadnr.gov/swems.