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2019 Legislative Platform

Opportunity to Recycle: 5th Recyclable

The MNCC supports changes to 115A.552 that add source separated organic material as a 5th recyclable materials type to be collected in the Metropolitan Area and in cities with populations of 40,000 or greater (Moorhead, Duluth, St. Cloud, Mankato, and Rochester).

Plastic Bag and Food Service Labeling

The proposed amendment to 325.046 expands the requirement that any plastic sold in MN, for either film or food service ware, be labeled compostable only if it meets the ASTM D6400 for film or food service ware and ASTM D6868 for plastic coated paper food service ware.

PFAS Ban

MNCC supports banning sale, distribution, or use of Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) chemicals in food packaging. The ban should be implemented after the appropriate state agencies identify and approve safer alternatives.

Shall Use Compost Mandate

Political subdivisions, educational institutions, and other public agencies shall procure compost as part of their soil amendment purchases unless it is determined that the compost material does not meet the specifications required by the project.

Collection & Transportation of Recyclable Materials

Statute makes Counties responsible for assuring that source separate recyclable materials are actually delivered to a recycling processing center. As a recyclable material, source separated organics are given protection in statute. Clarification in 115A.553 is needed to specify that SSOM must be delivered to a compost facility.

Education

Consistent and continued education is necessary for organics recycling programs to succeed. Over the years, State supported waste reduction and diversion educational efforts have declined, yet recycling and organics recovery goals have statutorily increased. State statutes 115a.552 and 115a.072 should be amended to reflect increased educational needs and funding should be allocated for the MPCA and Counties to meet the requirements identified in the statutes.

Program Funding: SCORE

SCORE funding given to Counties, who are responsible for meeting the State diversion goals, has been siphoned away from its intended purpose to the State's General Fund, while new diversion programs and educational needs have increased to meet State diversion goals. All SCORE funding should be used for its intended purpose to support waste reduction and diversion programs.

Yard Waste: Extending Metro law Statewide

Extending statewide the requirement that yard waste be placed in a compostable bag meeting ASTM D6400 or D6868 or being debagged at a transfer site is critical in reducing plastic film contaminants in finished compost.

The Minnesota Composting Council is a 501c, 3 dedicated to the development, expansion and promotion of the composting industry based upon sound science, principles of sustainability and economic viability.



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2019 Policy Positions

Fund Infrastructure Expansion

MNCC supports funding for grant and bonding programs to expand capacity for composting in the state. Funding should be made available to public and private sector organizations that could consolidate organics for transfer and/or for compost facilities to increase the amount of source separated organics they can process.

Compost use in Public Road Projects

MNDOT specifications for compost use should be based on market standards, meeting regulatory and health standards and project needs, such as nutrient content, inert standards, and particle size. In addition, the Grade 1 and Grade 2 labels, based on feedstock type, should be changed. They are often confused with MPCA Class 1 and Class 2 standards and give the impression that one is better than another. Labels should be oriented toward the project type the compost is best suited to, such as roadside blend, agricultural blend, etc.

Collection Program Implementation

Communities in which all residents pay for the program have higher program participation rates. The highest performing programs are those in which all residents pay for the program and residents opt-in to participate. This reduces financial barriers to participate for residents, helps keep contamination low and meets State Statute 115A.93 in which haulers are prohibited from imposing a greater fee on residents who recycle than those who do not recycle.

Mixed Waste Processing

The States past experience in the 1990's with separating organic materials from mixed waste has material contains higher contamination levels of both inerts and heavy metals. These higher contamination levels prevented the materials from being marketed and contributed to in the closing of MSW compost facilities. The State should be very cautious in its evaluation of these types of facilities. Compost facility operators and compost end markets that purchase and use the final product must be included in the evaluation of mixed waste processing facilities.

The MNCC supports the diversion of recyclables materials using multiple methods. The source separation of recyclables should be prioritize over the mechanical separation and public funding should reflect that prioritization. At this time the MNCC does not support composting of organics from mixed waste.

Anaerobic Digestion

The MNCC supports anaerobic digestion (AD) as a component of the source-separated organics processing system. Specifically, high solids AD systems are recommended as they are more robust than wet systems and have the ability to handle compostable food serviceware. The digestate from high-solids AD should be further processed via composting to ensure complete breakdown of food and compostable products, and to achieve a mature, stable and marketable product.

Organized Collection

Organized collection allows LGUs to obtain cost-effective and efficient collection services for organic materials for their citizens. A LGU should be able to move forward with organized collection procedures identified in MN. Stat. 115A.94 if they choose. MNCC opposes any legislation that hinders a LGUs ability to organize collection.