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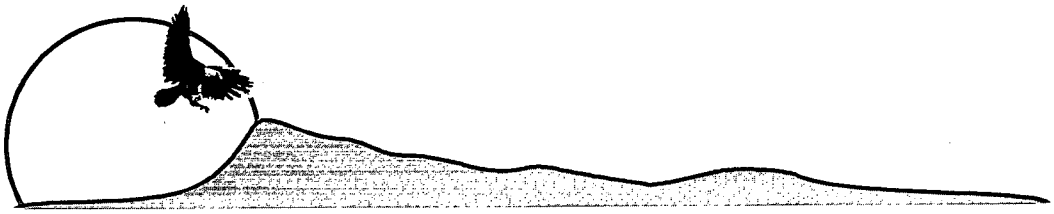
Native American Network



A RCRA Information Exchange

AROUND THE REGIONS

The Solid Waste Network:

Creative Assistance for Tribal Governments

Indian reservations faced with the challenges of complying with the new municipal solid waste provisions of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) now have greater access to valuable technical assistance through a promising new program now underway in Region 10. Called the Solid Waste Network, the program is building an alliance of federal and private sector advisors to aid tribes in their efforts to manage solid waste.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Solid Waste Network
- ITCA and the Multi-Media Assistance Program
- The Circuit Riders
- Region 6 Tribes Meet the Feds
- The General Assistance Program
- Information Sources: IndianNet
- Bulletin Board

EPA Region 10 developed the network in 1992 as an efficient means of delivering solid waste management expertise to tribes. Currently, staff from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Indian Health Services (IHS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the Northwest Renewable Resources Center (NRRC) participate with Regional solid waste staff in network activities. EPA also provides contractual support.

One of the network's first projects was assisting the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) in developing a solid waste management plan, a necessary first step in exploring viable alternatives to the tribes' current waste disposal method. The plan provides information on closing the existing landfill and has interim and long range options for waste management. IHS and HUD have entered into a $150,000 cooperative agreement with the Umatillas for the plan's development.

In the next year, the Network will expand to respond to requests for assistance in at least three other areas. In addition to providing experts in waste management planning, the Region's solid waste staff has offered its assistance in source reduction, recycling, and composting strategies. Region 10's Office of Regional Counsel will provide assistance to the Network for tribes that want to develop reservation-wide solid waste ordinances.

The Solid Waste Network offers a previously unavailable innovative, cooperative approach—and an unusual mix of creative energies and technical assistance—to tribes in solid waste management.

Contact: Fran Stefan, Region 10 Solid Waste Program, 206-553-6639.

ITCA:

Responding To Tribal Solid Waste Needs

The Phoenix-based Intertribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) recognized that the 21 Native American tribes in the states faced a tremendous solid waste management burden, a burden that took on more urgency with more stringent federal rules for solid waste disposal facilities on the horizon. Taking the initiative, ITCA approached Congressional representatives and committees for a special appropriation for Arizona tribal solid waste management.

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AROUND THE REGIONS

ITCA: Responding to Tribal Solid Waste Needs

ITCA's initiative certainly paid off. In 1992, Congress allocated $500,000 to the organization through EPA's Multi-Media Assistance Program (see related item, p. 4). ITCA, in turn, entered into cooperative agreements with eight individual Arizona tribes to support their solid waste planning activities. ITCA also used a portion of the funds to provide the tribes with technical and administrative assistance and to sponsor workshops on solid waste management. An additional $1 million appropriated to EPA for ITCA in 1993 will allow the organization's solid waste management planning efforts to reach more tribes. And, ITCA intends to request a third year of funding in 1994!

ITCA's effort under the Multi-Media Assistance Program is an excellent example of how tribes can confront a problem that they have identified as one of their most pressing environmental needs. ITCA has benefitted as well. Environmental staff have developed a sound expertise in solid waste management that will prove invaluable in the years ahead.

Contact: Julian Appel, Region 9 Solid Waste Program, 415-744-2103.

Region 6 Tribes Meet the Feds — And Each Other

Following the example of tribes in EPA Regions 4 and 8, Region 6 tribes recently met in two locations (Oklahoma and Albuquerque). Representatives from EPA, BIA, IHS, HUD, and the states discussed environmental issues, their respective agencies' roles in Indian country, and the necessity for cooperative efforts if we are to effectively address tribal environmental concerns. The Oklahoma session was attended by 46 tribal representatives; approximately 140 were at the Albuquerque two-day meeting, some of whom were from as far away as Montana.

The Region 6 Solid Waste Section, in conjunction with EPA Headquarters' (HQ) Office of Solid Waste, sponsored the Oklahoma meeting and worked closely with the All Indian Pueblo Council in sponsoring the Albuquerque meeting. The agendas covered a variety of topics, including presentations by staff from a number of EPA program offices. At each meeting, tribal representatives made presentations on the "state of the environment" on their respective reservations, and shared invaluable insight on how they were tackling specific issues and concerns. Region 6 also led an open forum discussion on environmental issues, which, at times, was quite lively as well as informative.

A highlight of each meeting was training on the requirements of the solid waste landfill regulations, and how they will affect solid waste disposal on tribal lands. Participants learned how to apply for and obtain EPA approval of their solid waste permitting programs; to plan solid waste management activities; and to develop tribal environmental programs. Attendees received an extensive package of training materials.

Presentations by EPA staff were extremely well received, and audience participation was outstanding. Region 6 solid waste staff have already seen positive results from the meetings. First drafts of rules and ordinances from the Wyandotte and the Cherokee (OK) submitted for review and applications for permit program approval are expected from several tribes in Oklahoma and New Mexico.

Contact: Will Lemmond, Region 6 Solid Waste Program, 214-655-6752.

[*Editor Note:* Similar meetings have been held in Regions 5 and 9 and are planned for Regions 4 and 10. Contact your regional solid waste staff for more information.]

Riding the Circuit:
Meet the Solid Waste Circuit Riders

In 1992, the Office of Solid Waste (OSW) initiated the Solid Waste Circuit Rider program in an effort to provide hands-on, technical assistance and training to tribes on solid waste management issues. This team of RCRA-trained Senior Environmental Employees (SEES) work for EPA through a grant to the National Council of Senior Citizens and are directed and monitored by EPA Regional staff. Currently, Regions 4, 6, 7, and 10 have SEES "riding the circuit." We thought that you might like to find out what they've been doing.

BULLETIN BOARD

Trash Management Guide

Small communities might be interested in obtaining a copy of the Trash Management Guide, developed by the Alaska Health Project with a grant from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Designed for small, rural communities with populations of less than 1,000 (and off the road systems), the Guide provides information for developing solid waste management plans, without needing expensive, outside assistance.

The Guide explains the importance of developing a plan to manage solid waste; explains management alternatives and forms to complete a solid waste management plan; provides references for further help in solid waste management planning, from technical assistance to grant sources; and briefly outlines the requirements for solid waste disposal, including the new federal landfill regulations.

For information on how to obtain the Guide, contact Judi Kane at 703-308-8644.

EPA/BIA Sponsor Training Sessions for New Mexico Tribes

EPA/HQ and the BIA Albuquerque (NM) area office are cosponsoring a series of training sessions on developing solid waste management plans. Participants in the three-day course are introduced to the Guide for Initiating Solid Waste Management Planning on Indian Lands, a workbook designed by the BIA Waste Management Task Force (of which EPA was a member). At the conclusion of the course, each participant will receive a computer disk that has been formatted with the contents of the entire workbook to make data compilation easier and more efficient. Followups to the initial training sessions are planned to ensure that work is proceeding smoothly. Participants will have an opportunity to get assistance if necessary.

RCRA Subtitle C Rulemaking Resumes

On April 27, 1993, the first meeting of the "reactivated" Tribal Authorization Workgroup was held at the Region 5 offices in Chicago. The workgroup members, representing EPA HQ and regional program offices, discussed the myriad of legal and policy issues associated with delegating hazardous waste management programs to tribes. Rich La Shier and Bob Roberts in the State and Regional Programs Branch, Office of Solid Waste, co-chair the workgroup. Ideally, the workgroup would like to have a draft proposed rule by the end of 1993.

New Publications on Solid Waste

OSW has recently released several publications on solid waste management. For copies at no charge, contact the EPA RCRA Hotline. Call 800-424-9346, or TDD 800-553-7672 for the hearing impaired, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. In Washington, DC, the number is 703-412-9810 or TDD 703-412-3323.

Summary of Markets for Recovered Glass highlights points contained in EPA's recently completed report entitled **Markets for Recovered Glass.**

Summary of Markets for Aluminum summarizes, in a concise brochure and in nontechnical language, the main points of a larger study entitled **Markets for Aluminum.**

Safer Disposal for Solid Waste: The Federal Regulations for Landfills is an educational booklet to assist the general public in understanding the role and proper operation of landfills in solid waste management.

Criteria for Solid Waste Disposal Facilities: A Guide for Owners/Operators is a "plain English" guide to assist owners/operators and communities with the implementation of the Municipal Solid Waste Landfill Criteria.

Household Hazardous Waste: Steps to Safe Management discusses what household hazardous waste (HHW) is, dangers of improper disposal, ways to reduce and recycle HHW, and safe storage and disposal practices.

Used Dry Cell Batteries: Is a Collection Program Right for Your Community? examines the economic and planning issues to be considered before establishing a collection program for used dry cell batteries.

MONEY MATTERS

Indian Environmental General Assistance Program Act of 1992

EPA recently held a series of three public meetings to provide information to tribes about the General Assistance Program (GAP) that was enacted by Congress in 1992. Under GAP, EPA must develop, by October 1993, rules that establish procedures for awarding grants to tribes. Although the authority provided by GAP differs slightly from the earlier multi-media assistance authority, EPA plans to rely only on its experience with the multi-media program in developing rules for GAP.

The GAP has two primary purposes: (1) to provide grants to Indian tribal governments and intertribal consortia for planning, developing, and establishing environmental protection programs on Indian lands; and (2) to provide technical assistance through EPA to Indian tribal governments and intertribal consortia for developing multi-media programs to address environmental issues on Indian lands.

Some provisions of GAP are that:

- New grants cannot be less than $75,000, and no single grant can be for more than 10 percent of the total funds appropriated for the GAP;
- Awards may exceed one year up to a period of four years, with grants renewable under a new or revised workplan, if appropriate, after four years.
- General assistance funding does not preclude a tribe from applying for and/or receiving media-specific program grants.

As part of the rule, EPA will include a simplified procurement process for certain procurements less than $50,000.

Applications from grants will be managed through EPA's regional offices. EPA will issue "call letters" (requests for grant applications) late in 1993.

Contact: Kate Biggs, OFA, 202-260-5078 or your Regional Indian Coordinator.

INFORMATION SOURCES

IndianNet:

A Telecommunications Network For Native Americans

IndianNet is an initiative to make a range of information services available to tribal communities. It is the result of a series of forums about issues on and barriers to more effective collaboration on waste management issues among the tribes, states, and the federal government. Tribal participants overwhelmingly indicated the need for more accurate and timely information.

Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) is a community-based, nonprofit organization serving Native American communities. AIO took up the challenge to provide fast and accurate information to tribes. They polled many tribes, and found not only a definite need, but also that 95 of the over 100 tribal respondents had the technologi cal capability to tie into an electronic network.

AIO took up the challenge to provide fast and accurate information to tribes.

IndianNet is the designated Indian Information Center by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the distribution and interpretation of 1990 census data to Indians. It has been designed as a tool for tribal decision makers, national Indian organizations, and federal agencies to find and consolidate information on Indian country. Through newsletters and a bulletin board system, users will be encouraged to contribute information to the calendar, send documents to the clearinghouse, and validate data in the tribal profile database. For more information on the network, contact LaDonna Harris, President, AIO (505-867-0278) or Ellen Hornback, Project Manager, IndianNet (202-544-7743).

Enclosed with this issue ***is a factsheet that discusses proposed changes in the federal landfill regulations. The proposal was issued on July 22, 1993. Comments were accepted for 30 days from July 28, 1993. For more information on the changes, refer to the factsheet.***