Producer Responsibility
The Right Approach To Managing Solid Wastes In Times Of Lean Government

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Lean Times Call for Changes

- Limited relief from economic recovery
- State & local gov’t especially hard hit
  - Decreased state and federal assistance on top of stressed budgets
  - Greater demands on all public services
- Rethinking role of gov’t in service provision
  - Does public sector need to do it all?
  - Shift burden from public sector to others involved in product life cycle (manufacturers, retailers, consumers)
Why Product Stewardship?

- State/local gov’t unable to meet needs & demands
- Industry demands more recycled materials
  - Support domestic markets in global market competition
  - Source of rare earth metals
- Reverse stagnating recycling rates
  - Expand collection infrastructure
    - Curbside collection, business and away from home
    - Achieve greater efficiencies and economies of scale
- Support forward thinking companies
  - Levels playing field among all companies
A Means to Leaner Government

- Reduced role for government
  - Oversight and enforcement vs. “delivering”
  - Flexibility vs. “command and control”
    - Allow business latitude to achieve goals employing common business practices and focus on deliverables

- Increased opportunities for private sector
  - Benefit to take back/collection sites
    - Greater foot traffic, visibility
  - Foster customer loyalty
  - Generate jobs and business expansion
Challenges for Governments

- Change can be difficult
  - May require different employee skill sets and aptitudes
  - Start up costs (IT systems, guidance, administration tools)
  - Rethinking of tradition role of “service provider”
  - Concern for level of service maintenance
  - “Stranded” assets

- Requires “transition” time
  - Budget adjustments in staffing, contracts, investments
Benefits: Cost Efficiencies

- **Savings to Public Sector**
  - Greater efficiency in use of public sector resources
    - Focus on services not easily provided by private sector
    - Increased efficiencies in oversight & compliance

- **Savings to Tax Payers**
  - Shift costs to producers and consumers of products
  - Lower end of life management costs through economies of scale and enhanced collection and recycling infrastructure
Benefits: Stimulate the Economy

- Create stable jobs
  - Recycling jobs resilient to recession
  - Recycling multiplier effect
    - 1 job in recycling collection -> 3 jobs in recycling related and reliance industries (2010 IL Study)
      - Examples: reclaimers, converters, brokers, dealers, manufacturers
    - Example E-Cycle Wisconsin
      - Reduced costs to local gov’t
      - Increased recycling facilities and jobs in WI
Benefits: Greater Efficiency

- Business can do this better
  - Gov’t role – standards and oversight
    - “rates and dates”, reporting, handling
    - Landfill bans are effective!
  - Businesses follow established practices

- Results (EU, Canada, US)
  - Higher recycling rates at a lower cost
  - Enhanced penetration into all sectors
Resources

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Product Stewardship Resources:
  Product Stewardship Institute
  http://www.productstewardship.us/
  Product Policy Institute: http://www.productpolicy.org/