

Chapter 1 Introduction

A. Brief Introduction to Solid Waste Planning in Ohio

In 1988, Ohio faced a combination of solid waste management problems, including rapidly declining disposal capacity at existing landfills, increasing quantities of waste being generated and disposed, environmental problems at many existing solid waste disposal facilities, and increasing quantities of waste being imported into Ohio from other states. These issues combined with Ohio's outdated and incomplete solid waste regulations caused Ohio's General Assembly to pass House Bill (H.B.) 592. H.B. 592 dramatically revised Ohio's outdated solid waste regulatory program and established a comprehensive solid waste planning process.

There are three overriding purposes of this planning process: to reduce the amount of waste Ohioans generate and dispose of; to ensure that Ohio has adequate, protective capacity at landfills to dispose of its waste; and to reduce Ohio's reliance on landfills.

B. Requirements of County and Joint Solid Waste Management Districts

1. Structure

As a result of H.B. 592, each of the 88 counties in Ohio must be a member of a solid waste management district (SWMD). A SWMD is formed by county commissioners through a resolution. A board of county commissioners has the option of forming a single county SWMD or joining with the board(s) of county commissioners from one or more other counties to form a multi county SWMD. Ohio currently has 52 SWMDs. Of these, 37 are single county SWMDs and 15 are multi county SWMDs. The Darke County Solid Waste Management District is a one county district.

A SWMD is governed by two bodies. The first is the board of directors which consists of the county commissioners from all counties in the SWMD. The second is a policy committee. The policy committee is responsible for developing a solid waste management plan for the SWMD. The board of directors is responsible for implementing the policy committee's solid waste management plan.

2. Solid Waste Management Plan

In the solid waste management plan, the policy committee must, among other things, demonstrate that the SWMD will have access to at least 10 years of landfill capacity to manage all the SWMD's solid wastes that will be disposed. The solid waste management plan must also show how the SWMD will meet the waste reduction and recycling goals established in Ohio's state solid waste management plan and present a budget for implementing the solid waste management plan.

Solid waste management plans must contain the information and data prescribed in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3734.53, Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Rule 3745-27-90. Ohio EPA prescribes the format that details the information that is provided and the way that information is presented. This format is similar in concept to a permit application for a solid waste landfill.

The policy committee begins by preparing a draft of the solid waste management plan. After completing the draft version, the policy committee submits the draft to Ohio EPA. Ohio EPA reviews the draft and provides the policy committee with comments. After revising the draft to address Ohio EPA’s comments, the policy committee makes the plan available to the public for comment, holds a public hearing, and revises the plan as necessary to address the public’s comments.

Next, the policy committee ratifies the plan. Ratification is the process that the policy committee must follow to give the SWMD’s communities the opportunity to approve or reject the draft plan. Once the plan is ratified, the policy committee submits the ratified plan to Ohio EPA for review and approval or disapproval. From start to finish, preparing a solid waste management plan can take up to 33 months.

The policy committee is required to submit periodic updates to its solid waste management plan to Ohio EPA. How often the policy committee must update its plan depends upon the number of years in the planning period. For an approved plan that covers a planning period of between 10 and 14 years, the policy committee must submit a revised plan to Ohio EPA within three years of the date the plan was approved. For an approved plan that covers a planning period of 15 or more years, the policy committee must submit a revised plan to Ohio EPA within five years of the date the plan was approved.

C. District Overview

The Darke County Solid Waste District is responsible for planning and implementing policies and programs that assure sufficient capacity for the safe disposal of solid waste generated by county residents, businesses, and industry. The District in cooperation with local governments and private enterprise is also responsible for developing and implementing policies and programs that provide all types of waste generators with the information, infrastructure, and motivation to divert waste from disposal by reducing, reusing, and recycling as much possible.

Since the approval of the first solid waste plan in 1993, the Darke County District has implemented a variety of recycling and waste reduction opportunities for Darke County citizens. In the 1990’s there were very few recycling opportunities for residents and small businesses, and

there was no organized program to educate the public about the environmental, economic, and social benefits of reducing, reusing, and recycling.

With the cooperation of private waste management service providers and the public, in 2018, the reference year for this plan update, the District attained a reported recycling rate of 19.7% for the residential/commercial sector and an 84.38% industrial recycling rate. Although the residential/commercial recycling rate is substantially higher than it was before the District recycling programs were implemented, it falls short of the District's planned goal. The industrial rate is on target with planned projections and the rate significantly exceeds the average rate for Ohio.

Since its inception, the District has worked with private sector waste and recycling service enterprises to provide the infrastructure for waste collection, recycling, and waste disposal. The District does not own or operate any waste collection or disposal facilities or facilities for sorting or processing recyclables.

The District maintains an office at 684 Wagner Ave, Greenville, OH 45331. The District has a staff of two, a District Director, an Administrative Assistant, and a Recycling and Litter Prevention Worker. Job descriptions are included in Appendix T. The staff coordinates the District programs as directed by the Solid Waste Management Plan. Programs include the District's drop-off recycling sites, information programs for adults and school age youth, and on-going and one day recycling events that target difficult to manage materials. They also promote and support programs to prevent illegal dumping and littering and to clean-up litter on public property.

D. Waste Reduction and Recycling Goals

As explained earlier, a SWMD must achieve goals established in the state solid waste management plan. The current state solid waste management plan is the *2020 Solid Waste Management Plan* (adopted in October 2019). The 2009 State Plan established nine goals as follows:

1. **Infrastructure:** The SWMD shall ensure that there is adequate infrastructure to give residents and commercial businesses opportunities to recycle solid waste.
2. **Waste Reduction and Recycling Rates:** The SWMD shall reduce and recycle at least 25 percent of the solid waste generated by the residential/commercial sector.
3. **Outreach and Education:** The SWMD shall provide the following required programs: A website; a comprehensive resource guide; an inventory of available infrastructure; and a speaker or presenter.

4. **Outreach and Education:** The SWMD shall provide education, outreach, marketing and technical assistance regarding reduction, recycling, composting, reuse, and other alternative waste management methods to identified target audiences using best practices.
5. **Industrial Programs and Services:** The SWMD shall incorporate a strategic initiative for the industrial sector into its solid waste management plan.
6. **Restricted Solid Waste, Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) and Electronics:** The SWMD shall provide strategies for managing scrap tires, yard waste, lead-acid batteries, household hazardous waste and obsolete/end-of-life electronic devices.
7. **Economic Incentives:** The SWMD shall explore how to incorporate economic incentives into source reduction and recycling programs.
8. **Measure Greenhouse Gas Reduction:** The SWMD will use U.S. EPA's Waste Reduction Model (WARM) (or an equivalent model) to evaluate the impact of recycling programs on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
9. **Market Development (optional):** The SWMD has the option of providing programs to develop markets for recyclable materials and the use of recycled-content materials.
10. **Reporting:** The SWMD shall report annually to Ohio EPA regarding implementation of the SWMD's solid waste management plan.

All ten SWMD goals in the state plan are crucial to furthering solid waste reduction and recycling in Ohio. However, the challenges posed by Goals 1 and 2 typically require SWMDs to devote more resources to achieving those two goals than to the remaining goals. Thus, Goals 1 and 2 are the primary goals of the state plan. SWMDs are encouraged to devote resources to achieving both goals. However, the 52 SWMDs in Ohio vary significantly in their abilities to achieve both goals.

Consequently, SWMDs are not required to demonstrate that they will achieve both goal 1 and 2. Instead, SWMDs have the option of choosing either Goal 1 or Goal 2 for their solid waste management plans. This affords SWMDs with two methods of demonstrating compliance with the State's solid waste reduction and recycling goals. Many of the programs and services that a SWMD uses to achieve Goal 1 help the SWMD make progress toward achieving Goal 2 and vice versa.

A SWMD's solid waste management plan will provide programs to meet up to nine of the goals. Goal 9 (market development) is an optional goal. Goal 10 requires submitting annual reports to Ohio EPA, and no demonstration of achieving that goal is needed for the solid waste management plan.

The programs the SWMD will use to achieve the required goals are described in Chapter 5.