



# Calling for less waste, less disposal

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is drafting the state's Solid Waste Master Plan for 2010-2020. We now burn and bury millions of tons of trash that we should reuse, compost, recycle, or not generate in the first place. The question we face is whether the Commonwealth will commit to statewide waste reduction or allow more incineration and landfilling of trash.

Now is the time for Massachusetts residents to step up for a healthy and sustainable future, and call on the DEP to conserve natural resources, safeguard our residents, and foster economic stability. The new Solid Waste Master Plan must recognize:

- Garbage is not a renewable energy source.
- Waste-to-energy is a waste OF energy. Only a fifth of the energy in our trash is captured by incinerators. Recycling recovers 3-5 times more energy than incineration.<sup>1</sup> Waste-to-energy incineration should not be subsidized.
- Thirty-eight percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions are generated by the production, transportation and disposal of goods and materials.<sup>2</sup>
- Incinerators emit more climate-changing CO<sub>2</sub> per megawatt hour than coal-fired, natural-gas-fired or oil-fired power plants.<sup>3</sup>
- Incineration technologies compete with recycling for discarded resources that could be reused or recycled into new products if not burned.
- Many estimates conclude that 90% of our waste could be recycled or composted rather than burned or buried. Collecting, processing, and manufacturing discarded resources means new businesses and jobs.
- Both landfills and incinerators emit toxic gases that travel long distances and impact public health.

DON'T WASTE MASSACHUSETTS, platform, 2009 >>>

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<sup>1</sup> Morris, Jeffrey, Comparative LCAs for Curbside Recycling, Versus Either Landfilling or Incineration With Energy Recovery. *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*. (2005); 13(3) 226-234.

<sup>2</sup> Stolaroff, Joshua K., US EPA, Materials Management and Greenhouse Gas Emissions; presentation, CRRRA, August 5, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> USEPA. How Does Electricity Affect the Environment? available at: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanrgy/energy-and-you/affect/municipal-sw.html>. accessed 9/11/2008.



## PLATFORM, 2009

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts should strengthen its waste reduction and diversion policies rather than allow new landfills and trash incinerators. Burning and burying garbage squanders money, energy, and natural resources, contributes to climate change, and places an unfair health burden on communities and the most vulnerable in our society. It also wastes the opportunity to create green jobs in collection, processing, and manufacturing. The goal must be to move toward zero waste generation, with maximum reducing, reusing, and recycling.

We call on the Patrick administration and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to augment existing state waste reduction programs and add additional programs. The DEP must:

1. Retain the moratorium on increased incineration capacity (recognizing that waste combustion based on high-heat conversion technologies such as gasification, pyrolysis, and plasma arc are incineration).
2. Enforce existing state wastes bans to keep recyclable paper, metal, glass, wood, yard wastes, and other recyclable wastes out of disposal sites.
3. Divert discarded food and other non-toxic organic wastes to compost facilities (that do not accept toxic sewage sludge or toxic industrial waste).
4. Expand PAYT (pay-as-you-throw) trash disposal programs, which are proven to increase residential recycling rates by giving people an incentive to recycle.
5. Support Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation and regulation. EPR gives manufacturers financial responsibility for end-of-use costs, a strong incentive to design products that are more durable, recyclable, and less toxic.
6. In the 2009-10 Legislative Session:
  - a. Support producer take-back for electronic products (E-waste Bill no. H833)
  - b. Support the expanded bottle bill (Bottle Bill no. H3515)
7. Support the development and expansion of local markets that use recyclable materials to create new products.

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### Founding Member Organizations

Alternatives for Community and Environment • Clean Water Action • Haverhill Environmental League •  
MASSPIRG • Residents for Alternative Trash Solutions • Sierra Club Massachusetts •  
Toxics Action Center