

6th Annual Potomac Watershed Trash Summit

October 19, 2011

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



CLEAN LAND.
SAFE WATER.
HEALTHY LIVES.

Founder's Hall

George Mason University

3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22201

Containing Waste:

Can it! And Why: The Importance of Containing Waste

Roundtable Notes

Focus: For years people have been asked to 'pitch in' correctly but what do we do when the containers themselves are part of the issue? What is considered proper containing of waste and why are there so many problems with containerization? At this roundtable we will touch upon a few types of waste (residential and public space), and discuss how regional jurisdictions combat the issue, how communication could help, what new technologies might be needed, and evaluate stakeholders and potential pathways for a solution.

Moderator: Dan Jackson, Senior Consultant Sustainability Solutions, Logistics Management Institute and Board Member for the Alice Ferguson Foundation

Presenters:

- Celeste Amato, Media and Communications, Baltimore City Public Works
- Mandy Lippman, Environmental Cost Efficiencies
- Jeff Smithberger, Fairfax County Office of Recycling and Solid Waste

Key Questions:

- What is considered proper containing of waste and why are there so many problems with it?
- How are regional jurisdictions combating the issue?
- How are containers themselves part of the issue and the solution?
- What new technologies are available? How could the Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative and litter prevention campaign help?

Introduction: Dan Jackson, Moderator

The topic of containing waste is broad issue with many facets. It covers residential, public space, commercial, municipal, construction and hazardous waste containerization and can impact public health, sanitation, litter-free streets and a sense of community pride. For years we have been asking people to 'pitch in' correctly but what is to be done when the containers or what people believe to be proper containers are themselves part of the issue?

Several questions come to mind, "what is considered proper containing of waste (from a hardware point of view)" and "why are there so many problems?" How does 'under-contained' waste directly affect the aforementioned

aspects: health, sanitation, and pride? There are quite a few new waste systems that utilize reinforced structures, squirrel-proof lids, renewable energy, and wireless technology to name a few but how do we communicate the essence of efficient containerization to the public and streetscapers alike?

Jurisdictional solid waste representatives, landscape design experts, and businesses sit at the nexus of all these issues and must balance the responsibility of both being on top of and ahead of the game. During this roundtable we will explore what others are doing about the issue (residential and public space), listen to the successes and challenges (policy and outreach-wise) of a local jurisdiction, and new technology in waste system design and how we can play a part.

Introduction of the speakers:

- **Baltimore's Experience-** Celeste Amato, Media and Communication, Baltimore Department of Public Works
- **Fairfax County's Experience-** Jeff Smithberger, Fairfax County Office of Solid Waste and Recycling-
- **New Technologies in Waste Management Systems-** Mandy Lippman, President, Environmental Cost Efficiencies

Definitions for jargon found in these notes:

- **Containerization-** The hardware (bins or dumpsters) or the processes by which waste is contained.
- **Illegal Dumping-** Illegal dumping is the improper disposal of waste at any location other than a permitted landfill or facility. It is not only against the law, but illegal dumping also poses a threat to human health and the environment
- **Solid Waste-** a general term to refer to any waste that is considered trash or recycling. It is often broadly applied to waste from water treatment facilities and construction/demolition site as well but common speech refers to domestic waste mainly.

1st Speaker: Celeste Amato

(PowerPoint Presentation to compliment these notes named: "Trash Summit 2011_Containing Waste Roundtable_Celeste Amato")

Celeste Amato, Media and Communications, Baltimore City Public Works, addressed the question of "What is considered proper containing of waste and why there are so many problems with it?" Baltimore City started a media campaign with the website: www.cleanergreenerbaltimore.org

Why people don't use trash cans?

Admitted litterers have lots of excuses. The campaign approach recognizes:

- Need to bombard them over and over-pound message into their heads
- Making it personal
- Making it easy to do the right thing

Old approach ineffective—just posting 'No Littering' signs. People actually littered more near the signs. Plus Baltimore City has problems with trash in streams from alleys. 50% of households not using containers effectively.

Citizens need to understand that the issue of litter is about costs-what it costs citizens to cleanup.

A survey went out to residents, to acknowledge how the city could improve .There was little arguing on many of the points. The City needs to lead by example—the way city picks up trash. Don't run over cans, pick up loose litter.

Clean Greener Baltimore Campaign background

Organized by a public-private partnership in order to communicate proper waste management and solve many of the proxy issues with litter. This group was named, Cleaner Greener Baltimore whose intent was to: create a simple message and website. The main tagline of the campaign is “*Don’t make excuses, make a difference*”. It is intended to make litter personal through messaging creating the city and harbor as an extension of home.

Website- www.cleanergreenerbaltimore.org

Direct outreach to adults and students (not one age group in particular- littering spanned all demographic groups, and a volunteer database.

Cleaner Greener Baltimore Campaign

Timeframe- a two year campaign

Several of the Campaign’s Goals:

- Most importantly= to change behavior
- Promote enforcement- stress consequences
- 70% recognition rate after one year of campaign
- Garner community support—to get citizens to use trash cans—
- Transform neighborhood by giving everyone their own can with name on it—peer pressure

Message Outlets: Utilize all of them affordably- online, social media, terrestrial media (radio and TV) + trash trucks + storm drains, etc.

Problem- Many Baltimore citizens not using trash cans

Solution- Municipally standard Bins! Goal is to assign larger green cans to each home. They will be bar-coded to address. Requirements for bins- large, heavy duty, with rat-proof lids. They believe this will end theft of cans because each is ID’ed to a home. Will save money by not cleaning up alleys as much and promote cleaner water and having to spend as much on illegal dumping and litter enforcement to keep trash from accumulating around houses. Rats are dirty and carry disease—the containers will cut down on rat food sources.

Observation- Rental properties harder to motivate to use trash cans. This is a nation-wide problem. They continue to work on outreach.

Access to cans in public spaces is an important addition to their infrastructure.

Baltimore added 500 Public large trash cans in busy areas. They surveyed commuters for advice on where to place them so they do not throw trash in the gutter or storm drains.

More on storm drains- Baltimore added signs to the storm drain covers, “Contrary to Popular belief, this is not a trash Can”. Campaign was influenced by the public. A call goes out occasionally for the public to design aspects of the campaign. This is where they have gotten a lot of good ideas, especially for art around storm drains. Note* They have learned that no ‘mouths’ or hole-like symbols should go on the storm drain covers because studies show that people are more apt to throw things into images that resemble mouths.

Treating dirty, littered water is expensive. They hope that is campaign will save a lot of money and time in many aspects of the waste collection, cleanup, and water treatment cycle.

Q: I witnessed once while in downtown Baltimore a cop watch someone litter in front of them. When I looked at the cop, he just threw his hands up. Why is there no response from police?

A: We should consider a Litter Enforcement Week, like the one AFF organizes. There is a trial on morning news show to take license plate number of litterers to report—lots of reports still coming in.

Question from Audience: How do you measure effectiveness of the campaign?

Answer: Via professional surveys of recognition, knowledge of issues.

For more information, contact Ms. Amato at Celeste.Amato@baltimorecity.gov

2nd Speaker: Jeff Smithberger

(PowerPoint Presentation to compliment these notes named: "Trash Summit 2011_Containing Waste Roundtable_Jeff Smithberger")

Jeff Smithberger is the Director of the Fairfax County Office of Recycling and Solid Waste Management

Solid Waste Management Rules are quite different between VA and MD. Tickets can only be issued by uniformed officers. FC Chapter 109.1 code for solid waste and recycling, including storage and types of containers.

Statistics on county collection- 15% of population served by county—rest commercial. County issues large wheeled carts —private not required to do so but most do provide cans.

Problems:

- Overfilled containers Store owner neglect/ businesses not cooperating
- Containers not picked up often enough.
- Use of multiple companies instead of coordinating with one for one small area. Result- 7 different collection trucks driving down alleys often daily.
- There are only 4 inspectors for county- a very large county.

Whose problem is Containerization of a business's waste? Businesses, jurisdictions, or regulators? Partially all but the main onus is on the business. (Shows pix of trash on ground around container). "Not my job", hauler only picks up trash in container, not on ground. Business owners are often unaware. People don't see problem.

Residents not as much of a problem. They will use cans and arrange pickups. But sometimes leave piles when moving house. Fairfax County's answer: to determine whose waste it is, ticket the household unless it is cleaned up within 10 days or else County charges to pick it up. Not for free- which would reward bad behavior.

Potential Solution to faulty Containerization of waste? - Communication and education. Fines very ineffective. Send picture of business trash to corporate office - very effective. Waste containerization only one problem another large problem—illegal dumping is another major problem. Proper containing of waste needs to become common sense.

Q: What about public embarrassment?

A: Haven't done this. Occasionally do take pictures and talk to manager of business to ask why they have trash piles and are not recycling. Found that managers never look at back and see the problem. Need to get them to realize the problem.

Q: Construction debris from homeowners—what to do with it?

A: Residential Recycling and Trash website has info on how to dispose, e.g. Waste Management will pick up large bag of debris. Don't need to drop at curb—there are lots of options.

Q: Have you reached out to Home Depot to help with collections, etc.?

A: They have their own products and policies, but have reached out re hazardous waste.

Quick Educational Resources for residents and businesses:

Pop-up Trash video- http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/asx/pop_up_trash.asx

Recycling is Real on YouTube-

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/offsite/?pg=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phNSZxdiPiU>

Fairfax County Nonresidential Recycling & Trash website-

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/non-res.htm>

Fairfax County Residential Recycling & Trash Website-

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/residential.htm>

For more information, contact Mr. Smithberger at jeff.smithberger@fairfaxcounty.gov

3rd Speaker: Mandy Lippman

Mandy Lippman is the President of Environmental Cost Efficiencies, LLC.

Note- Mandy's PowerPoint Presentation, entitled, "Trash Summit 2011_Containing Waste Roundtable_Mandy Lippman" is very detailed. Please go to www.trashsummit.org for this presentation and to learn more about Big Belly systems.

Please also visit: **Website for Environmental Cost Efficiencies:** www.costefficiencies.com for information on her local business and the new technologies on efficient, solar-powered compacting waste management solutions by BigBelly, one of Environmental Cost Efficiencies product lines.

BigBelly Solar's main website- <http://bigbellysolar.com/>

For more information, contact Ms. Lippman at mandy@costefficiencies.com