



Delaware
Solid Waste
Authority

A Time for Decision
for Delaware's Future

2003
Annual Report



This Annual Report is
dedicated to the
memory of

John P. Healy.

More than a
guiding voice,
he was also
our friend.



Our Mission

Define, develop, and implement cost-effective plans and programs for solid waste management which best serve Delaware and protect our public health and environment.

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Chairman,
Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard V. Pryor".

Richard V. Pryor

A Letter from the Chairman

Fiscal Year 2003 provided a memorable milestone for the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA). Through judicious and risk-minimizing programs, we were able to defease the last series of tax-exempt bonds sold in 1995. Since its beginning, DSWA has borrowed approximately \$262 million in the bond market, and with this defeasance, we are now debtfree.

DSWA remains flexible and adapts to changes remarkably well, in large measure because our ongoing advance planning and implementation processes assure continuity in quality service over time. Our program to build solid waste transfer stations in advance of the growth of a specific region best demonstrates this. The expansion of the Pine Tree Corners Transfer Station will serve the growing needs of the region below the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. We have now started the design of two additional transfer stations – one near Rehoboth Beach and the other near Milford.

Another demonstration of this forward planning involves the Cherry Island Landfill in New Castle County. Engineering studies indicate that raising the height of the CIL could prolong its serviceable life from the present three years to approximately 30 years. However, respecting the concerns of nearby communities, the DSWA embarked upon an extended and continuing series of presentations and conversations with the public and governmental officials on this important and sensitive matter. As a result, we are ratcheting back the pace of our decision-making on this and will explore all reasonable options including, among others, a smaller expansion, more aggressive but genuine recycling programs with greater public financial support, and alternative waste-handling processes. Though a definitive decision on the course, or combined courses, of action to take regarding CIL may not occur until sometime in Fiscal Year 2005 or 2006, this is another example of DSWA's constant effort to look ahead and avoid the kind of surprises that could destabilize a critical industry which includes waste reduction, disposal, and management.

On a broader front, our public education programs reached over 8,000 youngsters, and they are becoming aware of why we must make every effort to recycle materials and to dispose carefully those materials that cannot be recycled. These youngsters will one day become productive and environmentally sensitive adults who will look at "garbage" with a much less casual eye than their parents and grandparents were wont to do.

Fiscal Year 2003 was also a very sad year for DSWA. Our Board of Directors lost one of its exemplary members – Mr. John P. "Pat" Healy – in an automobile accident. A real problem solver on our Board, Pat Healy was also an enthusiastic participant in all DSWA activities and used his keen judgment and mediating talents to tease out the very best on the part of management and staff. We shall miss Pat so very, very much.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard V. Pryor".

A Letter from the Executive Office

Integrating the elements of recycling, transport, collection and landfilling of solid wastes through the implementation of planned projects was the mainstay of DSWA's success during the past year. We focused on expanding recycling programs, including electronic goods and construction and demolition (C&D) wastes. Building on the initial success of these programs, we recycled over 2 million pounds of electronic goods and 37 thousand tons of C&D wastes statewide during the fiscal year.

Progress in the design and permitting of two new transfer stations to serve Kent and Sussex counties remained on schedule. These transfer stations are integral to the efficient and cost-effective collection and transport of solid wastes from their centroids of generation to our landfills located in each of the counties. In these continued times of economic distress, the transfer stations will provide a much needed public service while helping the environment. Automotive emissions will be greatly reduced when the transfer stations become operational due to the reduced truck traffic of commercial and public haulers.

Landfills in each of the three counties are the cornerstone of our integrated solid waste management plan. It is our policy to have at least fifteen years of landfill capacity statewide to manage Delaware's growing solid waste stream. Our landfill designs and construction use state of the art technology and are environmentally sound. However, we continuously investigate new and innovative technology, as an alternative to landfilling those wastes which cannot be recycled. The planned expansion of the Cherry Island Landfill has particularly brought into focus the need to vigorously pursue alternate technology to meet Delaware's future solid waste management needs.

Our operational success over the past year was a direct result of the dedication and teamwork of a highly qualified and committed staff who got the job done with the available resources and within budgetary constraints. As important was the support and counsel of our Board of Directors, without whom progress cannot be made.

Delaware has attained a national and international reputation as being a leader in the field of solid waste management. DSWA's policy of managing Delaware's solid wastes within our borders, coupled with an integrated solid waste management plan, keeps Delaware first. In our 28-year history we take pride in the fact that Delaware has never been confronted with a solid waste management crisis! States in our region that export their solid wastes for disposal are beginning to find those doors closing as importing states are taking legislative action to achieve that goal. This is the inevitable result of poor planning and reliance on external forces to resolve internal problems.

Executive Office



Chief Executive
Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N.C. Vasuki".

N.C. Vasuki,
P.E., DEE



Chief Operating
Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pasquale S. Canzano".

Pasquale S.
Canzano,
P.E., DEE

Responsible Decisions for Delaware's Future

Making responsible decisions that will affect Delaware's quality of life for decades is never easy. Every option must be thoroughly considered, not only for the near term, but also for its long-term effect on our State's best interests. The Delaware Solid Waste Authority followed this principle throughout Fiscal Year 2003, as it took action to strengthen Delaware's commitment to forward-looking solid waste stewardship for the public and the environment.

Delaware has a long tradition of self-reliance in waste management. Committed to continuing this practice, DSWA's priority for the year was to ensure adequate landfill capacity for the ongoing safe disposal of Delaware's municipal solid waste.

DSWA chose a plan to improve and expand the existing Cherry Island Landfill in the industrial section of east Wilmington. DSWA presented its plan to the people of Delaware through an extensive outreach initiative that began in August 2002 and continued throughout the fiscal year and beyond.

As the Cherry Island proposal moved ahead, DSWA continued its aggressive pursuit of recycling and reuse programs to reduce the State's waste stream. A curbside program was launched in parts of New Castle County, and a new partnership with Delaware's U.S. Post Offices dramatically increased bulk mail recycling. In addition, a wide variety of initiatives, including the innovative Trash Can Dan and Clean Up Kids education program for children, and the State's exemplary electronic goods recycling effort, continued to demonstrate DSWA's commitment to recycling.



Vice Chairman,
Board of Directors

Ronald G. McCabe
Ronald G. McCabe



John P. Healy
John P. Healy



J. Donald Isaacs
J. Donald Isaacs



William J. DiMondi
William J. DiMondi



Phyllis M. McKinley
Phyllis M. McKinley



Theodore W. Ryan
Theodore W. Ryan

Unprecedented Public Outreach

Long before the Cherry Island Landfill expansion proposal application was submitted, DSWA initiated an extensive outreach effort that began in August 2002. DSWA presented to the public the rationale for the Cherry Island proposal, the details of the expansion plan, and the consequences of inaction.

Over the course of the fiscal year, DSWA conducted 10 public workshops, 12 media interviews, landfill tours, and met with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, State legislators, local government officials, State departments, business and industry representatives, civic groups and individual citizens. To spread the word about meetings, DSWA notified elected officials, ran paid notices in newspapers, sent announcements to civic associations, and submitted news releases to media organizations.

DSWA responded to the Delaware State Senate by holding special meetings in four senatorial districts, and it cooperated with environmental groups by providing access to information related to the Cherry Island project.

A cool bottled drink to quench your thirst... a mailbox stuffed with letters and magazines... a party with festive decorations and gifts. Daily living generates municipal solid waste in many ways we barely stop to consider. But as easy as it is to make trash, it's much more challenging to dispose of it.

At the Delaware Solid Waste Authority, we regard our mission to provide safe and healthy waste management as essential to preserving our State's quality of life. We seek to remain true to that mission in every action we take and every choice we make. Our commitment to responsible decision-making guided us throughout Fiscal Year 2003, and it will continue to guide us in the future.



DSWA is committed to continuous environmental testing utilizing over 300 geotechnical instruments throughout Cherry Island.



DSWA's gas collection contractor, Cereza, collects landfill gas and prepares it for transport to the nearby Connectiv plant.



Environmental protection at the Cherry Island Landfill includes the use of this litter fence designed to keep windblown debris from leaving the site.

The Cherry Island Landfill: A Sound Plan for Managing Delaware's Waste

With four boxes of documents delivered in April 2003 to the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, DSWA officially submitted its proposal for the future of solid waste disposal in New Castle County. The submission followed two years of careful study and many months of public outreach.

The proposal calls for extending the life of the Cherry Island Landfill by approximately 30 years through a variety of site enhancements. Failure to provide for future disposal of New Castle County's annual 575,000 tons of solid waste would result in a severe disposal capacity shortage by mid 2006, when Cherry Island reaches the end of its current life expectancy. The expansion alternative was selected from among nine options because it promised to deliver the the least environmental impact and the lowest cost to users.

Although the review and permitting process was still underway as the fiscal year ended, DSWA moved expeditiously to address odor concerns expressed by Wilmington residents. In Fiscal Year 2003, DSWA's Landfill Gas Contractor installed new gas wells and over 10 thousand feet of additional piping to increase the capture of landfill gas for use as a fuel in an energy generation plant. Another 31 gas wells were scheduled for installation in September 2003. A new, more powerful gas compressor and a back up flare system were also added. As of June, the gas collection rate at Cherry Island had doubled from the previous year, to 5 million cubic feet per day.

DSWA initiated studies with the University of Delaware and Entrix, a respected environmental consulting firm, and participated in a series of DNREC odor roundtable discussions with industries in northern Delaware.



DSWA staff and Board tour improvements to the Pine Tree Corners Transfer Station

The Pine Tree Corners Transfer Station: Turning the Corner on Convenience

As Delaware's solid waste volume grows, transfer stations have become increasingly important as a method of mitigating traffic while enhancing convenience. In Fiscal Year 2003, DSWA began major improvements at the Pine Tree Corners Transfer Station to accomplish both of these goals.

Southern New Castle County is one of the fastest growing regions in Delaware. Pine Tree Corners' location is convenient for both residents and commercial trash haulers, who can use the transfer facility rather than drive an additional 30 miles to the Cherry Island Landfill. The Pine Tree Corners improvement project is expanding capacity and enhancing safety at the facility, which handles approximately 130 vehicles and 170 tons of trash every day. The project is separating homeowner traffic from large commercial trucks by adding a new, aesthetically designed commercial facility and enhancing the existing transfer building exclusively for homeowner use.

The DSWA design team worked closely with local residents and officials to continue to minimize the site's impact and to ensure that its appearance meets the area's visual standards. Completion of the project is anticipated for Fiscal Year 2004.



PTCTS improvements include specific buildings dedicated to commercial and residential vehicles.



Detailed plans play an important role in the overall success of the project.



DSWA staff play a vital role in the new curbside collection program.

Curbing Landfill Waste with a New Recycling Program

DSWA's voluntary recycling strategy has been highly successful in providing cost-effective and environmentally responsible recycling and reuse opportunities. Nearly 70 percent of the waste material generated by Delaware residents and businesses in Fiscal Year 2003 was recycled or reused.

To supplement RECYCLE DELAWARE and other programs, DSWA introduced a curbside recycling initiative during the year. The program provides weekly curbside pickup of corrugated cardboard, narrow neck plastic bottles, steel and aluminum cans, glass, junk mail, newspapers, magazines and yard waste. Participants are provided with biodegradable bags and a specially marked blue bin made from recycled plastic.

The curbside pilot program was offered to targeted neighborhoods in densely populated areas of New Castle County for a nominal monthly fee of \$6 to help offset costs. DSWA purchased new equipment and hired new employees to operate the program.

To generate interest, DSWA sent direct mail notices to every household in the four zip codes served by the program and advertised the initiative with full-page newspaper ads and radio spots.



The UBBM program started at the Dover Post Office and continues to grow.



U.S. Post Office Bulks Up Recycling Success

Underscoring the effectiveness of public outreach, a U.S. Post Office employee in Dover set in motion a major recycling success story after hearing a DSWA “Talking Trash” radio program. The program mentioned bulk mail recycling, prompting the employee to suggest that the Post Office recycle its undeliverable bulk business mail, or UBBM.

Dover Postmaster Lynda Shiflet embraced the idea, and nine post offices had signed up for the new initiative by the end of the fiscal year. Through the program, DSWA provides a roll-off container into which postal employees discard UBBM. The program was generating more than one ton of UBBM per day and continues to grow.

To recycle the collected paper, DSWA signed a three-year agreement with Marcal Paper Mills Inc. of New Jersey, which produces a wide variety of consumer products, such as facial tissues, paper towels and napkins, from recycled materials. Marcal also uses recycled paper to produce animal litters and bedding, landfill capping material and industrial and environmental absorbants under its Kaofin® brand name.



More than 85% of the materials collected through DSWA's EGR program is either recycled or reused.

A Plug for Electronic Goods Recycling

DSWA's electronic goods recycling program continued to set the standard in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region III as a model for other Mid-Atlantic states. At EPA's invitation, DSWA presented the specifics of its highly successful program during an EPA-sponsored conference in Washington, D.C.

With outstanding cooperation from Delaware residents, businesses, schools and other organizations, the "e-cycling" program generated approximately 2.1 million pounds of unwanted items during 2003, up from 1.9 million in the previous year. The discarded items included goods such as computers, televisions, telephones and audio equipment. More than 85 percent of the material was removed from the landfill waste stream and recycled.

The program has benefitted from DSWA's investment in equipment and has set up six year-round drop-off locations. As a result, Delaware collected nearly as much volume of discarded electronic goods in the past two fiscal years as all four other Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia combined.



DSWA Electronic Goods Recycling
Collects Over 2 Million Pounds of
Used Electronics Annually Including:

- 21,494 monitors
- 15,588 CPUs
- 10,502 printers
- 7,012 televisions
- 7,515 other devices



DSWA's Earth Day Festival offers Delaware families a unique, yet fun opportunity to learn more about our precious environment.



Education Outreach Celebrates Birthday

DSWA mascot Trash Can Dan turned 20 years old in January 2003, and 7,100 Delaware youngsters gave him the best-possible present by participating in the Clean Up Kids awareness program. The young members of the Clean Up Kids collected more than 50,000 recycling symbols from a wide variety of products to earn points and receive prizes.

As club members, the children learned the importance of recycling and the ways in which they and their families can help preserve Delaware's environment for future generations. In addition to collecting points by cutting out recycling symbols, members participated in environmental activities and received a membership kit with an original storybook, trading cards, stickers and a magazine with games and projects.

Trash Can Dan travelled the State throughout the fiscal year to promote the Clean Up Kids program and all of the Authority's educational initiatives that encourage responsible waste management.

Among the most-visible events was the third annual Earth Day Festival that attracted more than 5,000 visitors and received broad newspaper and television coverage. The event at Brecknock Park outside of Camden featured games, presentations, instructional programs and an ECO trail with seven stations where hikers received important information about Delaware's environment.





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