

**Waste Futures Summit – San Diego Edition**  
**April 6, 2005**

**Challenges**

*The assembled group was tasked with identifying their top five challenges to reducing wasting in terms of Southern California and especially San Diego. All participants were first asked to brainstorm and identify their suggested challenges. What follows is a general listing of the suggested challenges.*

- C Citizens group discussed 15 years capacity; Disposal capacity requirement tends to dictate new landfilling but does not address capacity extension that could be raised by “zero waste” approaches without new landfills.
- C Need mandatory rules for collection and recycling.
- C No major composting facility for organics stream
- C Barrier of ads promoting wasting and uncaring attitude.
- C Markets absent for some materials – if no markets then perhaps materials and products should not be produced until markets established.
- C Individuals ask what can gov’t do for them; but perhaps we need more personal accountability and proactiveness rather than waiting for gov’t intervention.
- C Education is needed to counteract negative advertising.
- C Producer responsibility never developed due to municipal intervention to clean up wastes and litter in the early 1900s.
- C Public education is a critical lacking factor.
- C Recycling may not be as convenient as it should be or as convenient as disposal.
- C Lack of infrastructure and education materials to encourage resource management.
- C Consumers lack awareness and responsibility.
- C Large venues generally lack recycling such as in airports (AB 2176 may address this).
- C Education – lots of efforts aimed at small audiences instead of larger audiences. Need entertainment industry to fully embrace social marketing to encourage recycling.
- C Perspective of private sector is that lots of businesses pay 30 to 50% more than they need to and recycling could help to reduce costs.
- C Property managers don’t realize economic importance of waste reduction.
- C Emphasis on bottom line and cost/benefit drives resource equation but equation lacks conservation inputs.
- C Need for business to understand potential for recycling.
- C Waste haulers have incentive to dispose rather than recycle since they often have investments in transfer and disposal infrastructure.
- C Lack of knowledge of alternatives is noted.
- C Lack of commercialization of alternative technologies is detriment to recycling.
- C Gap between rulemaking and implementation evident.
- C Not enough large scale education.
- C Businesses too busy working and making money to participate in recycling and waste reduction. Lack of level playing field is contributor.
- C Stakeholders never talk to one another to share new and alternative technologies.
- C An obstacle is how to bring parties together to address issues due to competitiveness.

- C Cost of recycled materials acts as a barrier.
- C Lack of closed loop systems via current grants and loads from the CIWMB.
- C Competitiveness among nations can act as barrier re: crumb rubber recycling and Canada.
- C Permitting issues may discriminate against recycling and composting.
- C Need for statewide campaign and focus on recycling such as evident decades ago such as don't be a litterbug.
- C No national policy on resources = no national passion for recycling.
- C Lack of convenience for recycling and a need for more access to education and outreach as well.
- C Part of cost – educate.
- C Convenience is both problem as well as barrier. Disposal too convenient and recycling is inconvenient.
- C Bottom line lacks full environmental accounting.
- C Getting stakeholders together is barrier to recycling.
- C Money talks – is recycling valuable enough?
- C Cultural differences may dictate lack of recycling as no individual accountability.
- C There are virtually no consequences to disposal and littering.
- C No campaigns or mass media except late at night.
- C Need to emphasize closing the loop in technology and education.
- C Lack of recycling culture. Reference to recycling constituency. More people recycle than vote but no mass action.
- C Inadequate penalties to wasting.

After the general discussion, participants were asked to rank the above-identified comments and come up with a top five list.

### Listing and ranking of barriers:

1. Economics favor wasting
  - § Economics/bottom line is incomplete lacking environmental inputs.
  - § Economic Incentives to dispose too prevalent.
  - § Disposal too cheap.
  
2. Institutions discriminate against recycling
  - § Too much a patchwork of laws both instate and nationally.
  - § Lack of leadership by national agencies and big business.
  - § Disincentives to waste don't exist – no consequences.
  - § Lack of producer responsibility.
  - § Rules favor wasting.
  - § Too convenient to waste and too inconvenient to recycle.
  - § Gap between rulemaking and implementation and often conflicts.
  - § No national policy or passion.
  
3. Markets are inconsistent and not local
  - § Absence of markets and end uses locally.
  - § Too much reliance on foreign markets.
  
4. Education lacking
  - § Stakeholder communication is lacking.
  - § Lack of knowledge for the business community about alternative technologies.
  - § Community mindset is towards wasting.
  - § Lack of promotion to combat overconsumption.
  
5. Technology
  - § Lack of infrastructure to process, compost and recycle.
  - § Lack of commercialization of alternative technologies.
  - § Lack of public venue access to recycling.

As can be seen, the group decided that the barriers should be grouped into priority areas of economics, institutions, markets and education.

### **Solutions**

The group was asked to consider the listing of barriers and their five priority areas, and identify solutions to them. A general listing follows:

1. Economics favor wasting
  - § Economics/bottom line is incomplete lacking environmental inputs.
  - § Economic Incentives to dispose too prevalent.
  - § Disposal too cheap.

Imposition of a wasting fee with proceeds going to the state debt and recycling infrastructural development. Focus on individual corporations and consumer action. Procurement policies need to emphasize buy recycled and waste reduction. Case studies need to be developed and disseminated widely to the public.

2. Institutions discriminate against recycling
  - § Too much a patchwork of laws both instate and nationally.
  - § Lack of leadership by national agencies and big business.
  - § Disincentives to waste don't exist – no consequences.
  - § Lack of producer responsibility.
  - § Rules favor wasting.
  - § Too convenient to waste and too inconvenient to recycle.
  - § Gap between rulemaking and implementation and often conflicts.
  - § No national policy or passion.

There should be an effort to create more of a mandatory environment, beginning with the development of a Clean Land Act that forbids new landfill. EPR should likewise be emphasized. Adequate resources should be allotted for enforcement of resource conservation laws. It has been 15 years since enactment of AB 939 and the recent amendments have not structurally changed the law. We need a revamping of the law. AB 939 could be amended to reemphasize minimum content legislation, manufacturer-EPR, and generator-based systems.

3. Markets are inconsistent and not local
  - § Absence of markets and end uses locally.
  - § Too much reliance on foreign markets.

An emphasis should be placed on development of resource recovery parks. This could be done through the RMDZs or other empowerment zones if jobs are emphasized.

4. Education lacking
  - § Stakeholder communication is lacking.
  - § Lack of knowledge for the business community about alternative technologies.
  - § Community mindset is towards wasting.
  - § Lack of promotion to combat overconsumption.

The group agreed that an educational campaign on a mass scale was needed. Who would undertake this campaign was to be determined, but could be a coalition of state, educational agencies, entertainment industry, municipalities, consumer groups, labor unions, and businesses. Above all, stakeholder participation was needed including trade associations and unions. More and better community leadership is needed and training is essential to the educational objective. Finally, cultural and language barriers should be addressed so the message is widely disseminated.

5. Technology
  - § Lack of infrastructure to process, compost and recycle.
  - § Lack of commercialization of alternative technologies.

§ Lack of public venue access to recycling.

The lack of processing is evident with composting and organic waste. A solution is the need for more composting capacity so that composting is at the same level as disposal is now. This could be done by using closed landfill sites and in-vessel technology. In addition, anaerobic technologies should be encouraged. Finally, convenience zones should be expanded to more outlets to make recycling more convenient and recognizable like “product branding.”