

September 18, 2008

Governor Deval Patrick
Massachusetts State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

In regard to the updated Solid Waste Master Plan now being considered by the DEP, the undersigned Massachusetts organizations and legislators wish to register interest in being fully involved in the process, and begin by stating our absolute opposition to lifting the statewide moratorium on additional capacity for waste incineration. Note that along with the US EPA, we recognize high-heat conversion technologies (such as plasma, pyrolysis and gasification) as incineration. Studies independent of the waste industry indicate that these technologies are at least as hazardous as conventional mass-burn incinerators.¹

Good reasons for an incinerator moratorium in 1989 are still valid today, notably, threats to public health, pollution, and environmental injustice. And now additional concerns are making headlines: depletion of energy and material resources, and climate change. Your administration should not ignore the following facts:

- Waste-to-energy is a waste OF energy. Only a small portion of the energy that goes into the production of products can be recovered at disposal sites. **Recycling recovers 3-5 times more energy than incineration.**²
- Garbage is not a renewable energy source, and should not be subsidized. It is a waste of diminishing and irreplaceable resources and ecosystems that keep our planet habitable.
- Incinerators emit more climate-changing CO2 per megawatt hour than coal-fired, natural-gas-fired, or oil-fired power plants.³
- Thirty-eight percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions are generated by resource extraction, transportation, processing, and manufacturing.⁴ "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle" programs can reduce these emissions dramatically.
- Massachusetts cannot legally prohibit out of state waste from being trucked into and burned in Massachusetts.

The Commonwealth is at a crossroads. It is clear that waste reduction is the forward-looking path. We must conserve resources, not look for new ways to destroy them. Incineration technologies compete with recycling for discarded resources, and undercut waste reduction programs.

Energy and material resources can be saved, and pollution avoided, by implementing safe, proven strategies that in concert are known internationally as Zero Waste. These strategies include waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting (or anaerobic digestion), and extended producer responsibility. Unlike high-heat waste conversion technologies, Zero Waste strategies will strengthen the economic base of Massachusetts cities and towns by generating new businesses and jobs and supplying feedstock for manufacturing. In 2000, the state already had 1400 recycling businesses employing close to 20,000 people in collecting, processing, and turning recyclable materials into new products.⁵

We are counting on you to lead Massachusetts and the region on the road to a healthy, sustainable, and prosperous future. To that end we call upon you to (1) preserve the statewide moratorium on incineration capacity, (2) create a more aggressive, comprehensive statewide waste-reduction plan, and (3) restore the Clean Environment Fund to ensure adequate funding from this and other sources. We offer full support.

Respectfully submitted by the Massachusetts organizations and legislators listed on the reverse.

(over)

Senator Pamela Resor

Representative Peter Kocot

Representative Frank Smizik



Concerned Citizens of Russell

Green Decade Coalition/Newton

Haverhill Environmental League

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Massachusetts

Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition



The Pioneer Valley Preservation Coalition

Residents for **A**lternatives to **T**rashing **S**outhbridge
www.southbridgedump.org



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¹ Weber, R., Sakurai, T., Formation Characteristics of PCOD and PCDF During Pyrolysis Processes. *Chemosphere*. 45:111-1117 (2001); Jay Chen, P.E., South Coast Air Quality Management District, Emerging Technologies Forum, IES Romoland Emission Tests, Status Update, April, 17, 2006; Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, Incineration and Gasification: A Toxic Comparison, April 12, 2002.

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ USEPA (Preliminary), from the work of David Allaway, Oregon DEQ; see SERA White Paper, July 2008, Recycling and Climate Change: "Finding the Big Bang," Community Strategies for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Skumatz Economic Research Associates, Inc.

⁵ Recycling Economic Impact Study, 2000, Northeast Recycling Council.