

Metro explores waste management alternatives

by Robert Lothian

Metro, the inter-government agency in charge of Portland's garbage, must come up with a waste reduction plan by January 1st.

The St. Johns Landfill is filling up, new landfills are unpopular these days, and so Metro is looking at alternatives such as mass incineration, fuel recovery, recycling, and composting.

Unfortunately, all methods of disposing of the foul stuff seem to have their problems. The agency is between a rock and a hard spot — whatever alternative it comes up with is likely to be unpopular with someone. And the memory of Oregon City voters rejecting a Metro-backed garbage burner in 1982 is still fresh.

Metro's decision will be made out in the open, first with a public process of defining alternatives, and then gathering public input with hearings and surveys.

As the first step, the agency sponsored a conference August 2-3 at the Metro office near PSU. Representatives of over a dozen companies outlined their specialties — mass incineration and electrical generation, incineration at sea, producing fuel cubes from organic waste, recycling, and cellulose conversion to ethanol. One or more of these companies may be awarded a multi-million dollar contract.

Mass incineration was explained by Mark Hepp of Signal Environmental Systems. First, he said, trucks dump the refuse into a huge covered pit. Cranes pick it up by the ton and drop it on a conveyor which takes it into a furnace. The heat from combustion drives a boiler which makes steam to drive a turbine-generator.

Hepp showed slides of his company's plants back east that generate 40-60 kilowatts of electricity, helping to pay for themselves. Another advantage, he said, is that large non-combustible items like refrigerators and engine blocks can go through the furnace. They come out the other end

with the ash.

But what to do with the hundreds of tons of ash? A market might be found for it, but until then, it's an environmental hazard. Air and water pollution are other possibilities. "The bulk of all products of combustion are discharged into the atmosphere" — expensive scrubbers are needed to filter dangerous chemical pollutants, he said. Some screening system is also needed to separate hazardous materials from the burned material.

Hepp downplayed the environmental hazards of burning. "The health effects of resource recovery are minimal. There are plants all over the world, plants in operation for 30 years, and some of them in residential neighborhoods." His slides, however, showed plants far from urban areas, necessitating transfer stations.

According to George Gaiser, of C.A.G. partnership in Texas, transfer stations are unnecessary when garbage is made into his company's specialty, fuel cubes. Gaiser said a "refuse-derived fuel facility" could be built in the back corner of an existing dump close to urban areas.

The garbage is shredded and compressed into fuel after large items, metal, glass, and things that could explode — such as propane tanks — are separated, he said.

Hans van Steiger of Combustion Engineering, Inc., Stamford, Conn., underlined his message that fuel cube plants are clean by showing a slide of one near downtown Madison, Wis.

He said a propane tank exploded in the shredder at the Madison plant recently, causing a one-day shutdown. The shredder is built into a reinforced concrete bunker, he said. "While the shredder is operating, no one is allowed inside the room. When explosions occur, and they do occur, the building is isolated."

Plants and equipment designed by Combustion Engineering, including nuclear power plants, generate 40 percent of the free world's electricity, said Von Steiger.



The founder of Operation PUSH, Rev. Jesse Jackson, recently presented the organization's Businessman's Community Contributions Award to Ford Motor Company. Louis E. Lataif, vice president in charge of the company's sales operations throughout North America, received the award at the Operation PUSH meeting in Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. Lataif announced that Black-owned Ford and Lincoln-Mercury dealerships in the United States would surpass a billion dollars in sales this year. Mr. Lataif also said that during the past three years, his company has more than doubled the number of its Black-owned dealerships, from 28 to 69. "Clearly, our business has become a vital asset to the Black community in terms of jobs and opportunities," he said.

Jewish Congress condemns South African policies

The American Jewish Congress (AJC) condemned the South African government for stripping South Africans "of virtually any protection whatever from the arbitrary whim of a desperate and despotic government."

In a statement issued by its president, Theodore R. Mann, and its associate executive director, Phil Baum, AJC declared that as "Americans and Jews we cannot sit by silently while this moral calamity is acted out on the body of a helpless population."

The text of the statement follows:

We are appalled that the South African government has retreated even further into the dark night of oppression and racial bigotry. The latest edict strips South Africans of virtually any protection whatever from the arbitrary whim of a desperate and despotic government and places their very lives in extreme jeopardy.

As Americans and as Jews we cannot sit by silently while this moral calamity is acted out on the body of a helpless population. The South African declaration of a state of emergency demands an emergency response on the part of our own government. Now that "constructive engagement" has produced this horrendous result it is time for more serious, stringent, and severe measures. The South African government must not be allowed to doubt the condemnation of their acts by the people of the United States.

Prisoner organization offers suggestions to lower number of youthful offenders

The men of UHURU SA SA, a prison based organization, are presently in the process of structuring an innovative Youth Crime Diversion Program. It is the organization's position that the numbers represented in the nation's prisons are reflective of the problems that have been unsolved by the juvenile systems across the country.

It is the belief of the organization that the first time a juvenile is confronted with the problems of becoming

involved with the existing juvenile systems, the opportunity to effect change is at its greatest. The initial concept a child forms during the first encounter with the "authorities" can be the most significant factor in determining future criminal involvement.

A youthful offender who finds that by lying he or she can reduce the extent of the expected punishment, has taken a step in acquiring a criminal thought process. Based upon col-

lective experience, UHURU SA SA feels a Directional Therapy type program would be effective in discouraging future criminal involvement.

By incorporating an incentive program into existing probation policies, a juvenile offender could acquire needed social skills and, at the same time, complete the terms of his or her probation. With the addition of a program designed to provide a means to reduce the time a child would stay on probation, probation officers would realize a reduction in their case loads.

Incentives could be designed to provide a reduction in time on probation for: successfully completing a G.E.D. program; maintaining a bank account; extended periods of employment, and successful completion of a public speaking course. There are numerous community based programs and agencies in existence which could provide the necessary facilities and structured environment without a great addition to the cost of maintaining a child on probation.

It is the position of UHURU SA SA that these suggestions would enhance the effectiveness of programs which are in operation at this time, while realizing the problems brought about because of lack of funds and personnel.

UHURU SA SA feels juvenile crime should be the primary concern of the community. By involving community based organizations and programs, the problems can be more effectively dealt with.

AFS office moves

After August 1, the new address for Alder, Room 608, Portland, Oregon
Juvenile Services Commission is: 97205. The phone number remains
Oregon National Building, 610 SW the same: (503) 248-3565.

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