

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT



Developing integrated solutions for waste management problems requires public involvement. To economically and efficiently operate a waste management program requires significant cooperation from generators, regardless of the strategies chosen—buying products in bulk, separating recyclables from nonrecyclables, dropping off yard trimmings at a compost site, removing batteries from materials sent to a waste-to-energy facility, or using designated containers for collecting materials. To maintain long-term program support, the public needs to know clearly what behaviors are desired and why.

Involving people in the hows and whys of waste management requires a significant educational effort by the community. Ineffective or half-hearted education programs may confuse the public, reduce public confidence, or elicit hostility toward the program. Successful education programs must be consistent and ongoing.

Public education stimulates interest in how waste management decisions are made. And, when citizens become interested in their community's waste management programs, they frequently demand to be involved in the decision-making process. Communities should anticipate such interest and develop procedures for involving the public. When the public is involved in program design, it helps ensure that programs run smoothly.

This chapter provides suggestions for public education and involvement programs. Chapter 2 addresses public involvement in facility siting.



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1



HIGHLIGHTS



Public education and involvement are crucial.

(p. 1-3)

A successful waste management program requires wide-spread public participation. Such participation can best be obtained through early and effective public education programs, which must continue even after the program is in full swing.

Planning and research form the basis for successful education.

(p. 1-3)

Communities comprise different mixes of home owners, apartment dwellers, business people, students (from college-level to preschool), age groups, income levels, and cultures. Planners must first know their own communities well enough to design programs that meet their specific needs.

An effective education program leads people through several stages.

(p. 1-4 — 1-9)

The six stages of a successful education program include the following:

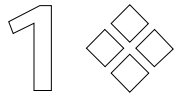
1. *Awareness:* At this stage, people are learning about something new. The goal is to let people know that a different way of handling waste may be preferable. Table 1-1 lists low-cost, medium-cost, and high-cost education methods.
2. *Interest:* After people have been made aware of waste management issues, they seek more information. Program planners must use a variety of methods to inform people. Voluntary programs require strong emphasis on promotion; mandatory programs should make clear what is required.
3. *Evaluation:* At this stage, individuals decide whether to participate or not. For even well-promoted programs, initial participation is about 50%. Making program requirements clear and easy to comply with increases participation.
4. *Trial:* Individuals try the program at this stage. If they encounter difficulty, they may opt not to continue participating. Well-publicized hot lines and clearinghouses provide additional instruction and information.
5. *Adoption:* Participation should continue to grow. Ongoing education programs solicit constructive feedback and provide new program information when necessary.
6. *Maintenance:* Ongoing incentives and education keep participation rates high.

Following this eight-stage plan facilitates public involvement.

(p. 1-10 — 1-13)

Effective waste management is a continuing process of public education, discussion, implementation and evaluation. All options should be continually investigated and actively debated, moving the community toward a consensus on the proper mix of source reduction and waste management programs.

1. *Concern:* Waste management is put on the public agenda.
2. *Involvement:* Representatives of various interest groups (regulatory officials, individuals from neighboring communities, local waste management experts, representatives from environmental and business groups) are encouraged to participate.
3. *Issue Resolution:* Interest groups make their points of agreement and disagreement clear to each other and to program planners.
4. *Alternatives:* Groups should make a list of available alternatives, including "no action."
5. *Consequences:* Economic and environmental consequences of each alternative are discussed.
6. *Choice:* Alternatives are decided upon.
7. *Implementation:* The steps necessary to carry out the program are described and potential adverse impacts are mitigated, if possible.
8. *Evaluation:* The community should continually evaluate the program and solicit input.



PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT

A PUBLIC EDUCATION PLAN

Planning and research are essential for developing effective education plans.

In many ways, public education is similar to developing public support in an election. Motivating the public to support a particular solid waste management program is similar to the aggressive and highly interpersonal way in which a particular candidate pursues votes. The same methods that are used to gain political support can be used to educate the public about the need for a waste prevention and management program and to enlist public participation in such a program. The education plan must begin by introducing people to waste management needs and concepts, explaining clearly how to participate, and then effectively encouraging them to adopt the desired waste management behavior. Once people are participating in the program, incentives and reinforcements can be used to maintain and increase participation rates.

Developing an effective education program requires planning and research. Program developers must use different strategies for different groups, such as home owners, apartment dwellers, business people, and school children. They must carefully consider the diversity of the local culture. Focus groups can help identify the community’s level of understanding, so that achievable goals can be set. For communities with limited budgets, they must target key participant groups and apply resources to reach them. Communities should be realistic about the costs of promotional efforts and the benefits they yield (see Table 1-1). Always deliver a positive message.

Table 1-1
Methods of Publicity

Low Cost	Medium Cost	High Cost
News releases	Flyers	Commercials, T.V., radio
News advisories	Posters	Billboards
Public service announcements	Fact sheets	Media events
Community calendar announcements	Briefing papers	Calendars
Letters to the editor	Media events	Advertisements
News articles	Slide show	Public relations firm
Newsletter articles		
Speeches		
Guest spots on radio, T.V.		
Poster contests		
Church bulletin notices		

Source: Hansen, Z. *Sensible Publicity, A Guide*. Ramsey Co., Minn. Health Department, 1983

Grounded on a sound information base, an effective education program moves people through the following stages: (1) awareness, (2) interest, (3) evaluation, (4) trial, (5) adoption, and (6) maintenance. Each of the stages is discussed below.

Awareness

At the awareness stage, people encounter a new idea or a new way of doing things. At this stage, they do not possess enough information to decide whether a change in behavior is a good idea or whether they should be concerned.

The goal of the awareness stage is to let people know that a different way of handling waste may be preferable to the historical way and that good reasons for considering a change in their waste management practices do exist.

A variety of methods can increase awareness (see Table 1-1). Low-cost methods include news articles and public service announcements or shows on radio and television. High-cost efforts include television commercials or billboards. Nationwide events such as Earth Day also help stimulate public awareness.

For example, the City of San Diego has developed a program informing its citizens about proper management of household hazardous materials (see Figure 1-1). The materials define household hazardous waste, provide recommendations on proper disposal and purchasing, and practices to limit generation. A phone number is listed for those seeking additional information.

Over the long term, education in schools is the best way of raising awareness. Many states now have curricula introducing school children from grades K through 12 to the concepts of source reduction, recycling, composting, and other waste manage-

Figure 1-1
Household Hazardous Materials Program

Put Toxic Waste In Its Place.
Household Hazardous Materials Program

Every day San Diegans unknowingly threaten our environment by throwing out tons of household hazardous waste with the regular trash or pouring it down the sewer or storm drain. When improperly disposed, these products can destroy our environment by polluting the air, water and soil.

It is dangerous, and **illegal**, to dispose of household hazardous waste improperly. Refuse collectors and landfill operators can be blinded, seriously burned or overcome with fumes when acids, corrosives or flammables are carelessly thrown in the garbage. Improper storage and handling of household hazardous waste can result in fires, poisonings and explosions.

What Is Household Hazardous Waste?

Household hazardous waste is the discarded, unused or leftover portions of household products containing toxic chemicals. Any product which is labeled **WARNING, CAUTION, POISONOUS, TOXIC, FLAMMABLE, CORROSIVE, REACTIVE or EXPLOSIVE** is considered hazardous.

Today, hazardous materials can be found in almost every house and come in many forms, including household cleaners, automotive products, paints and solvents, and pesticides.

How Can You Control Household Hazardous Materials?

When shopping for, using or storing household products, keep the following tips in mind.

- Buy only what you need
- Choose the least-toxic product
- Select water-based products over solvent-based products
- Avoid aerosol sprays
- Do not mix cleaning products containing chlorine with ammonia or acid-based cleaners

- Check storage areas at least twice a year, and dispose of products which will not be used again
- Make sure containers are tightly sealed and upright
- Keep toxic materials in their original containers and out of reach from children

How Should Household Hazardous Materials Be Disposed?

The leftover and unused portions of household hazardous materials should never be thrown in the trash or poured down the drain. Instead, use up the material as it was intended, carefully following label directions, or ask others if they could use the remaining portion. Also, you can take your household hazardous waste to a scheduled community collection event or contact the Household Hazardous Materials Program for other recycling and disposal options.

The Household Hazardous Materials Program.

The Household Hazardous Materials Program wants you to know about opportunities to reduce the amount of household hazardous waste in your home. The program provides safe disposal options for hazardous waste from households throughout San Diego County. Through community education programs and collection events, the program is working to keep San Diego's environment safe. For further information on household hazardous materials, the community education program or future collection events, please call the Household Hazardous Materials Program. **(619) 338-2267.**

The Household Hazardous Materials Program is funded by the County and City of San Diego.

Common household hazardous materials include:

- Aerosols
- All-purpose cleaners
- Ammonia
- Anti-freeze
- Automobile cleaner
- Barbecue lighter fluid
- Batteries
- Brake fluid
- Chlorine bleach
- Cosmetics
- Detergents
- Disinfectants
- Drain opener
- Furniture polish
- Gasoline
- Glass cleaner
- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Mothballs
- Motor oil
- Oven cleaner
- Paint
- Paint thinner
- Pesticides
- Rodent poison
- Rubber cement
- Rug & upholstery cleaner
- Scouring powder
- Silver polish
- Snail and slug killers
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Transmission fluid
- Tub and tile cleaner
- Turpentine
- Varnish
- Water seal
- Wood finish

Source: City of San Diego, California

ment techniques. The Town of Islip, New York, uses a dinosaur symbol, always popular with children, to promote and explain its recycling program (see Figure 1-2). Besides educating the next generation of citizens, school programs indirectly help make parents aware of waste issues, because children frequently take home information they have learned and discuss it with their parents.

Figure 1-2
Dinosaur Symbol Used on Recycling Materials to Enhance Appeal of Mandatory Programs



Recycle more so there's even less!

Just a reminder...
Islip now recycles plastics—soft drink bottles, milk jugs and water and cider bottles—so you can help reduce Islip's trash by simply...

- 1) removing their caps,
- 2) rinsing, and
- 3) tossing them into your container.

If you've already begun, **thank you!** Please give this card to a friend.

In Islip, **We Recycle America, and Proudly!**

Questions? Call **665-WRAP**

Supervisor Frank R. Jones
Council Members:
Norman DeMott,
Anne Pfifferling,
Brian Ferruggiari,
and Peter McGowan

A message from Islip's WRAPasaurus.
This reminder is courtesy of the Council for Solid Waste Solutions, and was not paid for at taxpayers' expense.
• Printed on Recycled Paper

Source: WRAP (We Recycle America...and Proudly) Islip, New York

Programs aimed at children should be sensitive to cultural diversity. For example, in some cultures it is considered disrespectful for children to tell their parents how to conduct themselves. For these citizens, use alternative approaches.

Interest

In the second stage, individuals who are now aware of waste management issues seek additional information. Individuals may seek one-to-one exchanges with waste management professionals, political officials, or educators, or they

may seek information about how they are involved in implementing a waste management initiative or an effective public policy. Making changes in required local waste management practices, such as mandatory recycling or yard trimmings disposal bans, will clearly stimulate interest, sometimes in the form of political opposition.

Using a variety of methods to explain the program may be helpful.

At this stage, program developers may need a variety of methods to explain the program. Voluntary programs need a strong emphasis on promotion. A mandatory program must clearly explain required behavior, as well as promote program benefits. Fact sheets prepared and distributed by state and federal regulatory agencies, local governments, university extension services, and waste-related business associations can provide clear and concise information for interested citizens. Making public speeches, offering tours of waste management facilities, creating exhibits for fairs, and preparing written material such as newsletters can help stimulate public interest in the program. Establishing and promoting a telephone hot line has been effective in a number of communities. In Onondaga County, New York, a promotion on two million milk cartons advertised a telephone hot line.

To promote newspaper recycling in San Francisco, residents received a paper grocery bag with newspapers delivered to homes. Printing on the bags gave instructions for recycling newspapers and a phone number for information. One survey concluded that information delivered to each residence, sometimes with utility bills, is a highly effective means of education.

Evaluation

At the evaluation stage, individuals decide whether to go along with the program. Even if the law requires specific behavior, achieving voluntary compliance is easier administratively and politically than strong enforcement. An easily understandable and convenient program will have the best chance of success.

Participation increases when program requirements are easy to follow.

Research has shown that for even well-promoted programs, initial participation is about 50 percent. Another third will participate as the program becomes established. Initial high participation rates should, therefore, not be expected.

Even for mandatory programs, convenience is a major factor in determining participation (see Figure 1-2). For example, the convenience of curbside pickup normally makes participation in waste management programs higher than for drop-off programs. As a result, some communities only provide drop-off service for yard trimmings, so that it becomes more convenient to not collect grass clippings or to home compost. A combined curbside and drop-off program may be the most convenient. At this stage (see Figure 1-3) education should stress what each citizen's role in the program is, their contribution to its success, and the most convenient level of participation.


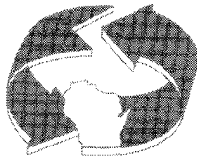
Trial

The trial stage is decisive for participants.

By the fourth stage, individuals have decided to participate in the new activity. This is a crucial step for every program. If individuals try back yard composting or a volume-based system and encounter difficulty, they may choose not to adopt the desired conduct, and the program could lose political and public support.

By this stage in the educational program, everyone should have the information describing exactly what they are expected to do (see Figure 1-4). The community program must then provide the promised service in a highly reliable fashion. An adequately staffed and properly trained clearinghouse or hot line is a useful tool to answer questions and provide additional information. If appropriate, the hot line should be multilingual.

Figure 1-3
Example of Public Education Flyer

Be a holiday detective
... make your own reduction deductions!

Gifts that help others make a difference:

- cloth napkins with matching tablecloth
- cloth or string shopping bags
- compost bin
- gift certificates to resale shops
- library card
- lunch box/bag
- party dishes that are durable and reusable
- picnic basket cups, plates, & utensils
- push mower
- rechargeable alkaline batteries/charger
- recycling bins
- refillable pen & pencil set
- reusable storage containers
- stationery made from recycled paper

Gifts that save water and energy:


- bus passes
- compact fluorescent light bulbs
- insulated bed pads for waterbeds
- pool & hot tub blankets
- waterheater blanket
- water-saving faucets & showerheads

Living gifts:

- house plants
- potted evergreens
- seeds for spring planting
- your time—for childcare, cooking a meal, etc.

More reduction deductions:

- make edible ornaments & write holiday greetings on cookies
- make origami ornaments from used wrapping paper
- place gifts in decorative tins, baskets, or bags
- reuse greeting card picture for a post card or gift tag
- reuse wrapping paper, boxes, ribbons, & bows
- use old jewelry to make new jewelry, art, & decorations



These steps brought to you by...

The Wisconsin Waste Reduction Coalition:

- Citizens for a Better Environment*
- City of West Allis*
- Godfrey Company*
- Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful*
- University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension*
- Wisconsin Depts. of Natural Resources and Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection*
- Wisconsin Grocers Association*
- Wisconsin Merchants Federation*



Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

At the trial stage of a volunteer program, a pilot project can also help stimulate participation. Program organizers should assure citizens that the pilot project's goal is to evaluate various strategies, respond to public feedback, and make any changes required to improve program efficiency and reliability. Citizens may be more willing to try a project if they know that the project is short term and that any concerns they may have will be taken into account in developing a long-term effort. During the trial stage, public hearings may be helpful by giving citizens an opportunity to voice their opinions about the project. A focus group effort prior to initiation of the trial will help pinpoint important participant concerns and issues.

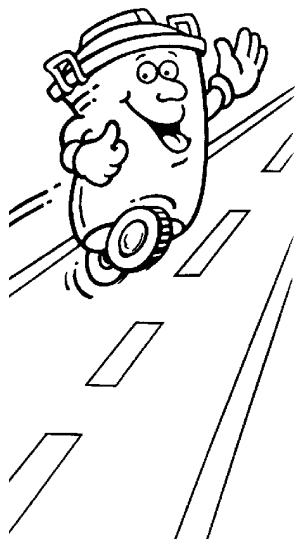
Adoption

Education should focus on reinforcing program participation at this stage.

If the education program has been well-planned and implemented, public support and participation should grow. Educational efforts at the fifth stage focus on providing citizens with positive feedback concerning program effectiveness (see Figure 1-5). A newsletter or other regular informational mailing can help inform citizens about the program's progress and any program changes. Community meetings can serve to reward and reinforce good behavior and answer questions. Local officials should be informed of program participation rates to generate political support for program budgets and personnel needs. At this stage, it can be helpful to target additional educational efforts at program nonparticipants.

Figure 1-4
Sample Education Program

CURB WASTE... SEATTLE'S WAY



HERE ARE THE WAYS YOU CAN REDUCE WASTE

Variable Can Rate:

Seattle residents pay for the volume of garbage their houses hold throws away. If you select curbside collection service, you have your choice of four container sizes provided by the collection contractor. Your garbage is picked up weekly at the curb or alley. Your container needs to be out by 7:00 a.m. to get picked up.

If you want your garbage picked up from your backyard, you will pay a higher rate and you must provide your own garbage can. Call 684-7600 for more information.

Trash Tags:

Occasionally, residents have more garbage than will fit into their regular can or cart. If you have additional garbage and do not want to make a trip to the Transfer Station, or increase your monthly garbage rate, you can purchase a Trash Tag. Put it on your extra bundle—up to 60 lbs. (less for full volume) of garbage, or you can attach Trash Tag Street tags on an extra bin (for up to 100 lbs. of trash tags are available at participating Bottle 7-Eleven, Speedway and Associated Gas stations, and community service centers where utility bills are paid).

Yard Waste:

All of the lush greenery in the Pacific Northwest means that if you have a yard or garden, you will have yard waste. City ordinance requires all yard waste be separated from garbage. The good news is that Seattle has three ways for you to dispose of your yard waste.

- You can compost at home. For more information, call the Compost Hotline at 623-0224.
- You can sign up for the Utility's curb/alley yard waste pick-up program for just \$2 per month.
- Or you can take yard waste to the North or South transfer station for just \$14 a curload.

Transfer Stations:

The City of Seattle has two Transfer Stations. You can self-haul garbage, yard waste, recyclables, appliances, motor oil, and batteries. At the South Transfer Station you can bring in household hazardous wastes. Please call 684-7600 for the hours of operation and fee schedules.

Curbside Recycling:

Seattle residents can sign up for curbside recycling by calling 684-7600. You can recycle glass, tin, aluminum, PET plastic soda pop and liquor bottles, newspaper, and mixed waste paper (e.g. magazines, advertising mail, card-board, etc.). Your recycling collection contractor will deliver containers to you along with a brochure about how to prepare your materials and your recycling pick-up schedule. You can recycle at no additional charge on your combined utility bill.

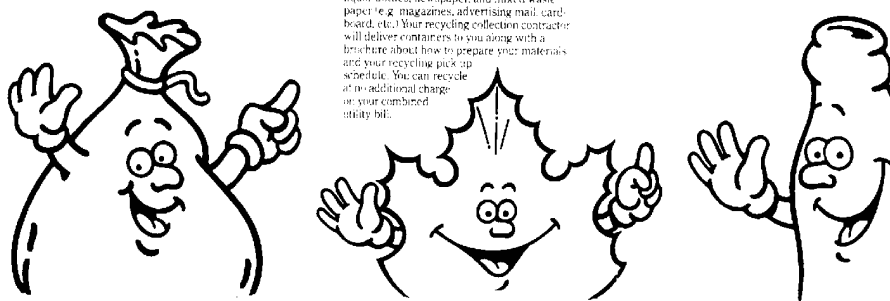
More Recycling:

If you are interested in buy-back centers, dump site locations, or charitable organizations which accept recyclable materials, please contact 1-800-RECYCLE for a location near you.

Waste Reduction:

One way Seattle will reach its recycling goals is by reducing waste—cutting down on things that need to be thrown away. Right now the Solid Waste Utility is working on programs to encourage people to take their own grocery bags and produce bags with them when they shop. It also means buying products that are made of recycled material or materials that can be recycled.

You can reduce your trash at home by buying durable products or products that can be easily and economically repaired. You might be able to rent or borrow something that you will only use once or twice. Do you buy used clothing? Or do you donate used clothing to a charitable organization? Please call 684-7600 for a copy of "Cutting Down On Garbage" brochure.



Source: Seattle Solid Waste Utility

Maintenance

At the sixth stage, the program is up and running. Using a variety of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives will maintain and increase participation. Intrinsic incentives are largely informational. They are designed to induce citizens to perform the desired conduct for its own sake and because they provide a personal sense of well being and satisfaction. Extrinsic incentives are tangible rewards for performing desired conduct, such as reduced fees or monetary payments. A maintenance program may employ both types of incentives. Basic education must also continue.

INTRINSIC INCENTIVES

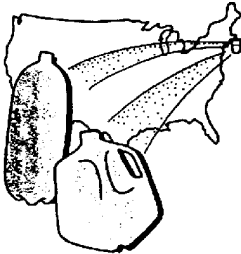
It is important for individuals to view participating as "the right thing to do."

Intrinsic incentives seek to support the desired behavior as the right thing to do. Some studies, for example, have shown that the ideals of frugality, resource conservation, and environmental protection over the long run were strong intrinsic motivators for those participating in recycling and reuse programs.


Issuing routine press releases and reports describing the progress of the program, providing awards for exemplary services, publishing newsletters for participating citizens and residences, and creating special events, such as "recycling week" or "master composter programs," all provide positive support for community waste management activities. An aggressive school education program will provide intrinsic incentives over the long term.

Figure 1-5
Example of Material Encouraging Feedback on a Recycling Program

America, you have another reason to be proud of Islip...



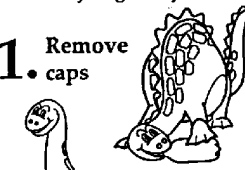

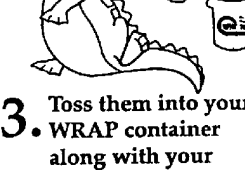
we recycle plastic bottles!







Printed on Recycled Paper

As of November 1989, Islip's WRAP program recycles Plastic Bottles!

Plastics recycling is easy:


- 1. Remove caps** 
- 2. Rinse** 
- 3. Toss them into your WRAP container along with your other recyclables** 

We take these types of plastic bottles:

-  soft drink containers — all colors and all sizes (PET)
-  milk jugs (HDPE)
-  water and juice bottles (HDPE)
-  bleach, detergent and shampoo bottles (HDPE)

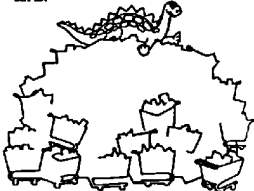
Bottles need not be crushed.

WRAP · a · saur · us · vr:
A protected species committed to the conservation of our natural resources; dedicated to the recycling of glass, metal, newspaper — and now plastic bottles in the Town of Islip.



What are some benefits of recycling plastics for Islip?

- We reduce Islip's waste disposal needs. If yours is an average-sized household, it generates approximately 23 pounds a year of these types of plastics: HDPE (milk jugs, water and juice bottles) and PET (soft drink containers.) That's almost 900 tons for the entire Town, or enough to fill over 120,000 shopping carts!
- We help control disposal costs. Future estimates for off-island hauling our garbage to disposal sites run \$150 per ton.
- We are supplying the raw materials to make everything from new detergent bottles to lumber. Recycling saves valuable resources.



Source: WRAP (We Recycle America...and Proudly) Islip, New York

EXTRINSIC INCENTIVES

Extrinsic incentives provide direct rewards for desired activities. Volume-based fees are a form of extrinsic incentive: the smaller the waste volume generated, the less the generator must pay for waste management. Another well-known example of extrinsic incentives is the Rockford, Illinois, “cash for trash” campaign. This program involved weekly, random checks of a household’s refuse with \$1,000 rewards given to households that properly separated their recyclables from nonrecyclables.

Careful analysis of extrinsic incentives is important. For example, a volume-based fee system encourages both source reduction and recycling. But a volume-based collection system could actually reduce participation in recycling if minimum volumes are large. It is important that the public does not connect the desired activity only with a reward. If that happens, if the incentive program is terminated or changed, some people may stop or reduce participation in the program. The public must see the program as a way to promote proper conduct, not merely as a way to make money.

Nonmonetary social incentives can also be effective. Many communities use block captains or community leaders to help boost neighborhood participation. These local leaders remind neighbors that the problem is, in part, local and that local people can help solve it. Linking social and monetary incentives may also be possible. For example, the proceeds from a neighborhood-run collection center could help support a neighborhood project or local recreational programs.

Organizers should carefully consider extrinsic incentives. Payback in terms of increased participation in the program and improved awareness and understanding of issues should offset the cost of the incentive. The extrinsic incentive should always be seen as an adjunct to the program, not the sole reason for participating. Extrinsic incentives can help get people interested in participating while intrinsic values are being developed through education.

Participation can be encouraged through rewards and public recognition.

THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Public involvement is too frequently confined to the facility siting process (see Chapter 2). Participation of local residents should begin earlier, when program developers are deciding which overall waste management strategy will best meet the community’s economic and environmental needs. The strategy should consider source reduction and other options in addition to the facility being proposed. Allowing public involvement only at the facility-siting stage, and not before, may engender public opposition; residents may view the siting process as a *fait accompli*, because other decisions (which waste management option to use) were made without their participation.

Choosing a site without input from residents and then weathering intense opposition has been called the “decide-announce-defend” strategy. Although this strategy has been used extensively in the past, the increasing sophistication of groups opposed to certain waste management alternatives makes this approach more difficult. The public is demanding meaningful participation in making waste management decisions. But the public must also accept responsibility for its role in implementing sound and cost effective waste management solutions.

Public involvement should start early, before the siting process begins.

THE ISSUE EVOLUTION-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION (IEEI) MODEL

Although some communities still use the “decide-announce-defend” strategy, many now realize that, while there will probably always be opposition to proposed waste management strategies, investigating alternatives and building a consensus are likely to result in more efficient decision making.

Developing a written plan for seeking public involvement is important. Written procedures help insure the inclusion of all important interests and legal requirements. The plan will show involved citizens and groups at which points in the process they can express opinions and how to be most effective in communicating their views. A written, publicly available plan lends credibility to the program.

The “Issue Evolution-Educational Intervention” (IEEI) model provides public involvement throughout the decision-making process. It comprises an eight-stage process for developing and implementing public policy:

Stage 1—Concern	Stage 5—Consequences
Stage 2—Involvement	Stage 6—Choice
Stage 3—Issue Resolution	Stage 7—Implementation
Stage 4—Alternatives	Stage 8—Evaluation

Following the IEEI Model helps elicit public participation.

The IEEI process ensures that the public will have a meaningful voice in deciding how best to manage solid waste. The process is not simple and requires a commitment from the community of time and resources. Each of the stages is briefly discussed below (also see Figure 1-6).

1. **Concern:** In the first IEEI stage, an event puts waste management on the public agenda. Perhaps the local landfill is nearing capacity and is about to close. Perhaps the legislature has just enacted a mandatory recycling bill. The public begins to ask questions.

At this stage, a procedure for providing accurate, reliable information to the public is important. Eliminating misconceptions and establishing a firm educational base for public discussion is the key. County and university extension offices, governmental associations, and regulatory agencies can provide information. Education programs should target local officials, as well as the public. Showing concern and a willingness to take proper action is most important. A focus group can help define important public issues. Community service organizations can provide a forum for discussion.

2. **Involvement:** As discussion of the issue begins, regulatory officials, persons from neighboring communities, local waste management experts, environmental and business groups, and others should be encouraged to participate. Bringing representatives of interest groups together and providing a forum for communication is a valuable activity. Cultural diversity is another consideration when seeking input from the broadest possible spectrum of the community.
3. **Issue Resolution:** Interest groups should make clear their points of agreement and disagreement. The various groups should then attempt to understand and resolve points of conflict. Determining what people can agree on is also important. All parties need to understand the motivation and circumstances of the other community interests in the process.
4. **Alternatives:** The participants should develop a list of available alternatives; the list should include taking no action. Each alternative should have a list of potential sites for facilities.

At this stage participants should use the same criteria to analyze comparative economics, environmental impacts, and other aspects of each alternative. Each interest group should scrutinize carefully the analyses prepared by all others. Results of analyses of various alternatives should be communicated to local officials and input sought from the public and others.

5. **Consequences:** Involved parties should then determine and compare the economic and environmental effects of each alternative. They should

also evaluate consequences in light of community resources and goals. The public must understand the results of choosing one alternative over another. All involved interest groups should acknowledge the benefits and costs associated with each alternative.

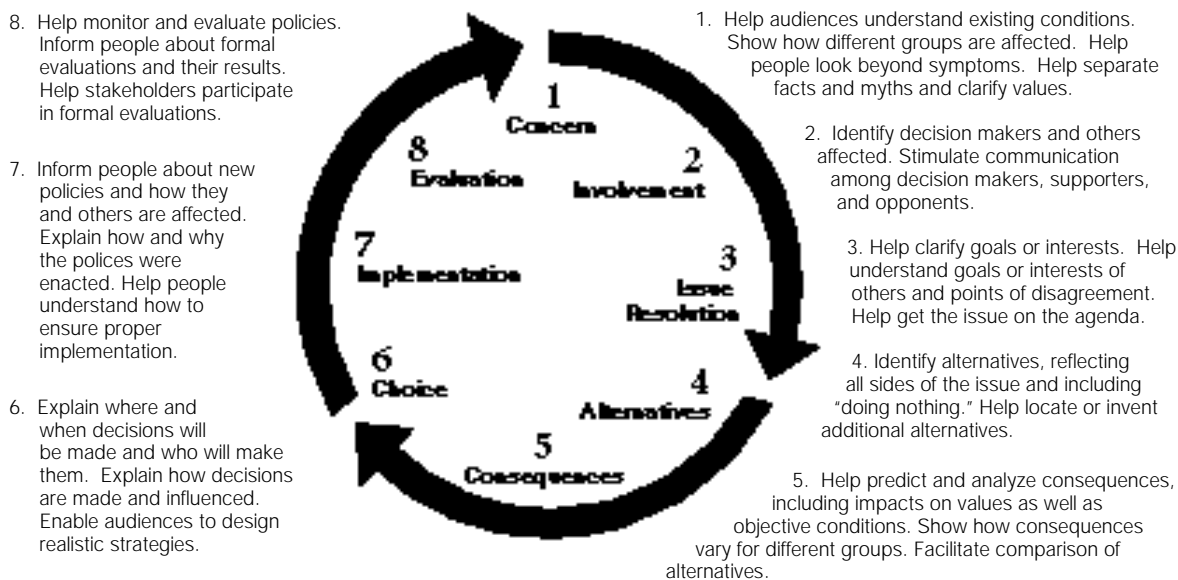
- 6. **Choice:** At this stage, the decision-making body must decide which alternative or group of alternatives to implement. In addition to publicizing the chosen alternative or alternatives, the decision makers should clearly communicate the reasons behind each choice by explaining the necessary tradeoffs, the efforts made to consider the interests of each affected group, and the anticipated impact of the chosen alternative or alternatives on the community.

Not all interest groups will support the chosen alternative or alternatives. Some may oppose the option(s) chosen and seek to force reconsideration of other alternatives through legal and political challenges. The process outlined here does not guarantee success, but it will help develop a broad community consensus, enabling the community to better withstand legal and political challenges.

- 7. **Implementation:** At this stage, the decision makers should describe the steps necessary to implement the chosen strategy. They should also try to mitigate potential adverse impacts which the chosen alternative or alternatives may have on relevant interest groups. Chapter 2 discusses this issue in more detail.
- 8. **Evaluation:** The community should continually evaluate the model and solicit input from affected groups. The impact of decisions should be communicated routinely to the public and to local officials. Ongoing evaluation helps provide an information base for making future waste management decisions. Existing programs will continually improve if they respond to changing conditions and public input.

Figure 1-6

Issue Evolution/Educational Intervention Model



House, V., "Issue Evolution and Educational intervention," *Working With Our Publics, Module 6: Education for Public Decisions*, 1988

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