Creating & Operating a Sustainable Solid Waste Program

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What’s the difference?
Presentation Summary

- Sustainability – What is It?
- SRMT’s Solid Waste Sustainability Model
- Executing the Model
- Lessons Learned
What is Sustainability?

The definition of sustainability depends on who is speaking
—Andy Duncan

Managing a two-year-old is like nailing Jell-O to a tree, goes an old saying.

Maybe getting adults to agree on a definition of sustainability is like that, too. Individuals and groups keep trying, but no one has hammered out one that everybody accepts.
Still, common themes run through most definitions of sustainability. They usually deal with nature, the economy, society or, perhaps most often, all three together. Most are not about maintaining life precisely as it is today. They are about the rate of change, and about equity between generations. Many see sustainability as a continually evolving process.
What is Sustainability Continued

- The Dictionary of Sustainable Management
  - Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- This definition was created in 1987 at the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission). It is enshrined in the Swiss federal constitution. It is similar to the "seventh generation" philosophy of the Native American Iroquois Confederacy, mandating that chiefs always consider the effects of their actions on their descendants seven generations in the future.
SRMT’s SW Sustainability Model Development

Infrastructure & Policies

Current Strategies → Objectives → Future Strategies Defined by Goals
SRMT’s SW Sustainability Model
Development Con’t

- **Goals** – vision for where want to go
  - i.e. from open dumping to using a transfer station

- **Objectives** – provide roadmap to achieve your vision (how are you going to get there?)
  - SMART Principle: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timeline
  - Monitoring to gain measurable results
Infrastructure & Policies – nuts and bolts that allow you to achieve your objectives

- Infrastructure – buildings & equipment
- Policies – SW management plans, regulations, business plans, personnel policies, etc
- Other important considerations: financial health, community education, staff
SRMT’s Solid Waste Sustainable Model

Mission: To promote environmental protection through the use of sound solid waste management practices while contributing to the economic and social progress of the community.
4R's Cultural Education Component


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SRMT’s 4R’s – Cultural Education

4 R’s

Answer: Respect, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Purpose: Motivate people to respect themselves, the community, & Mother Earth.

Idea: Respect leads people to take ownership for the overall well-being of their community creating changes in behaviors.
SRMT’s Financial Health Component

- Operate as a business
- Remain healthy by recognizing the ever-changing world of the solid waste business & adapting to the changes
  - Customers, recycling market conditions, new technology, & maintaining customer costs while operational costs rise.
- Remain healthy through relationships, innovation, strategic partners, & flexibility.
SRMT’s Monitoring

- Use a wide variety of outputs & outcomes to monitoring program activities
- Key is to create useful data that helps to measure success or show where adjustments are needed
- Not afraid to use emerging technologies
  - Fleetmatics
  - SMS Software at Transfer Station
Putting the Model Into Action – Old Process of Emptying Transtors
Putting the Model Into Action
Other Examples – Putting Model into Action

- Recycling Collection
- GPS Vehicle Monitoring
- Telecommuting
- Biodiesel Research
- Designated Outreach Coordinator

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SRMT’s Lessons Learned For Successful Executing Its Model

- Community Ownership
- Design based on needs of community
- Realize the connection between the social, environment, & economic aspects
- Be flexible & adapt
- Analyze, analyze…make changes where needed
- Tribal Council support

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