Abandoned Mobile Homes Toolkit

Lorraine Graves
USEPA, Region 2
August 22, 2013
Why did we create the toolkit?

• Concept sprang from a field visit
• National problem (rural as well as tribal)
• Impacts on neighborhood aesthetics and property values
• Unsafe for children at play
• Potential to house vermin/disease vectors
• Meth labs/party houses
• Encourages collection of unwanted goods
Current handling of units

• Scavengers take selected materials.
• Leave a worse condition aesthetically, socially, and environmentally
• Magic Man
Goals

• Teach deconstruction techniques to a broad audience
• Demonstrate the potential to reuse the constituent elements of the abandoned homes
Steps taken

• Worked with the Seneca Nation of Indians
• Prepared census of potential homes for deconstruction
• Selected units: condition, ability to transport to work space, determination of true abandonment
• Following approval by Tribal Council, the SNI donated work space, tools, staff time
Two homes selected

- Home #1 was newer, but it had a leaky roof which compromised its components.
- Home #2 was more degraded and was initially judged to be less valuable, but yielded a good roof and trusses.

- Lesson: don’t judge a book by its cover.
Strategy

- Deconstruct the 2 homes
- Sort and catalogue constituents
- Reuse as much as possible
- Then recycle materials
- Disposal kept to a minimum
- Demonstrate the reuse of materials to create a new structure
- Film the process for teaching purposes
Toolkit Contents

• Video chapters that include:
  – Site assessment
  – Unit assessment
  – Safety
  – Tools
  – Deconstruction techniques in detail
  – Reconstruction project
Toolkit Contents

• Written materials
  – Best Management Practices document
  – Assessment forms
  – Photo album of the deconstruction stages
  – Database of Recycling Facilities in Region 2
  – Bibliography
Is It Worth It?

• There will always be a cost to dealing with solid waste
• Deconstruction results in an inventory of useful material/avoided purchasing costs
• Control over health risks
• Reduces the cost of ridding the community of health and aesthetic problems