

BURNT

IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH
CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT,
BUSINESS, AND ACADEMIA

6 April 2009

BURNT Recommendations For the Solid Waste Advisory Committee

RECOMMENDED ACTION Re-open the solid waste planning process. Solid waste should be a raw material for jobs and business. These proposed regulations simply continue the same Tennessee system of quotas, reports, and loop-holes. *We spent three years of planning from 1988 to 1991 for the last major reform [which did not work].*

1. **Solid waste is a health issue.** Methane gas, truck traffic, and ground water pollution are serious threats. The Dickson County landfill began as a 75 acre landfill and has now spread underground to 12 square miles. Coffee County landfill may be worse. The Class II Coal Ash Facility in Harriman has cost \$68 million to clean up.

2. **Regulations must be based on the content of solid waste—we should manage the resources in solid waste as a raw material for business, compost, and jobs.**

A. Keep food waste (12% of the waste stream) and yard waste (13%) separate to allow composting to generate clean methane gas and compost not dangerous landfills

B. Construction and demolition waste (15%–20%) can be recycled and reused

C. Paper/paperboard (36%), metals (9%), and plastics can be reused

The above is more than 80% of the waste stream—what are we landfilling?

3. **We need measures for the Solid Waste Disposal board to evaluate solid waste performance**

3. **Since 1991, Tennessee solid waste has been dominated by complex, multiple level Regional and county reports with major loop-holes**—no county was fined or sanctioned for not meeting 25% goal *because the State would evaluate if the local government was trying.*

4 **Since 1996, Tennessee allowed credited LANDFILLED construction waste in construction landfills as RECYCLED.** *Tennessee is the only state which allows this.*

5. The 'Solid Waste Reduction Task Force', formed by TDEC to develop these regulations [23 out of 23 white, 21 out of 23 white males, and 20 out of 23 local solid waste managers] voted unanimously

1. The Task Force was not the correct way to institute reform—a part time executive director or consultant was needed

2. The local reports of the counties do not reflect reality.