

**STARS Advisory Committees Focus Call
Monday, November 19, 2007**

Topic: Materials & Recycling

Participants: Mark Darling, Jack DeBell, Greg Evans, Donna Hall, Mary Jensen, Mark Kelly, Michael Koch, Matt Malten, Gordon Nelson, Jane Nichols, Mike Sims, Michael Youdelman.

Present from AASHE: Julian Dautremont-Smith, Judy Walton

Agenda

1. Operations Prerequisite 1: Recycling Program

QUESTION 1: Do we need to further define "facilities" and "materials that are collected by the local jurisdiction"? How?

Say "provide a means for recycling" rather than "provide facilities" (broader, captures more than facilities; includes maintenance, staff, programs).

Even if no materials collected by local jurisdiction, suggest requiring basic waste streams for recycling – say "bottles, cans, fiber (paper & cardboard)."

QUESTION 2: Should we require any additional criteria to meet this prerequisite?

No.

2. Operations Credit 18: Waste Diversion Rate - Trend

QUESTION 1: Is there a standardized definition of which waste streams are counted in the "diversion rate"?

Important to use a standard definition for STARS. Universities might do more than local area – try to encompass as much as possible in "diversion rate" (such as C&D, reuse of items like furniture, steel). There may be issues to figure out around weighing, estimating, converting estimates, and how to count hazardous waste. Suggest looking at Recyclemania definition. **Mark D. will check with Rob Gogan on definition.**

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Recycling is a little different than reuse; maybe credit differently, or as separate credit. Maybe diversion rate should just include basics; with other items covered in additional credits.

QUESTION 2: Are there any waste streams generally not included in diversion rate that need to be included in some other way?

Suggest including compost, reuse, construction and demolition (sheetrock, windows, wood, etc.), roadway materials (asphalt, brick, concrete). C&D generally not included in diversion rate; but needs to be given credit. Maybe look at LEED and see what they are giving credit to. Staying the same as other programs would make it clearer. Additional items could be worth extra; beyond normal recycling. Recyclemania added "waste minimization" this year; should be rewarded somehow.

QUESTION 3: To avoid penalizing campuses that have already made a lot of progress, should we drop the trend requirement and instead use threshold levels, worth more points at higher diversion rates?

QUESTION 4: To account for regional differences, does it make sense to use the diversion rate in the surrounding community as the benchmark? For instance, a campus would get: one pt for having a higher diversion rate than the surrounding community, two pts for having 50% higher diversion rate than the surrounding community, three pts for having double the diversion rate of the surrounding community, and four pts for a diversion rate of 100%.

Confusing to reference "surrounding community" as benchmark (campus may be surrounded by 4 local jurisdictions), and in many cases university should be doing better anyway. Local community may not know its diversion rate, or may be including different materials than campus.

Suggest dropping "trend" and using absolute thresholds instead. Be sure to also look at additional items recycled that aren't in the standard calculation; shows intent to keep more out of waste stream. Worth separate credits.

Anything not regulated should be in diversion rate. Regulated waste should be another category entirely - electrics, universal waste, chemicals. (STARS will have indicators related to "hazardous waste.")

Use average diversion rate over three years (provide average annual rates for those years as well). Evens out blips; means people track it consistently. Offer translations for converting volume to weight. Recyclemania uses EPA document with volume to weight conversions.

Suggest adding metric to institutional profile – "tons per year in waste generation."

3. Operations Credit 19: Paper Consumption – Trend

Question 1: Are there other key product types in addition to paper that we should be asking about?

No need for separate credit for reducing paper consumption. Although strategically might be good – gives more credits for recycling; makes it more equal to other sections (some have considerably more points). Don't we want some parity between various environmental initiatives on campus? Materials only has 3 pts. However, paper is fully captured in OP Credit 17 – waste minimization; should probably be removed as redundant. Technical reason for keeping it: often waste minimization trend might overshadow ability to measure paper; paper is consistently the biggest percentage of waste by volume; so that it doesn't get drowned out by other areas, consider keeping.

Could make waste minimization credit (OP Credit 17) into intensity credit.

Waste minimization options developed for ACUPCC may make good Tier 2 credits for this section. All are programs or practices or strategies to improve waste minimization.

4. New Credits

QUESTION 1: Should we add a credit for programs that donate (or sell at low cost) computers, furniture, etc to community groups or low-income families? If so, are these programs Tier 1 or 2? (How do we define them so that giving away a single old computer or desk doesn't earn a credit?)

The more STARS can give credit to value-added practices like donation the better (to convey that we need to think beyond the normal). Furniture reuse should be included. Reuse & donation shouldn't get fewer points than diversion. But need outcomes, not just program in place. Can get weight estimates on items reused; can come up with average weights if needed (file cabinets, etc.). Maybe those who can't calculate tonnage can satisfy the credit with a monthly sale; a regularly held event.

What would threshold weight be to turn this into a credit? Avg. weight per campus user? Maybe we're back to where we started - this is all diversion; these things would otherwise end up in a dumpster; so why not just include in diversion? Still the same thing; there's no difference. But some would like to see "reuse" as a separate category; recycling takes more energy to put back into consumer stream; reuse doesn't require extra processing. Need to push people into reuse programs. **Donna and Jane to help come up with reuse indicator.**

Might consider factoring in that certain wastes contain greater risks than others. Electronic waste will have a much bigger impact if not diverted than paper. Might want to separate those things out. Smaller volumes doesn't necessarily mean smaller impact. STARS will likely cover e-waste separately.

Note: classification of electronics is different across states; no consistency. Some consumer electronics end up being managed as chemical, hazardous, or universal waste. Look at C2E2 Solid Waste section - very good. Set up to compare institutions. Want to index solid waste against square footage or number of employees to normalize it.

QUESTION 2: Should we add a credit about wastewater? If so, what should it be?

Waste water generally out of our purview. It will in fact be moved into an "EH&S" section.