What you need to Know:

President’s Corner ....................................................................................................................................................... 1
Casino Night & Additional Tours Added to Agenda for the 2017 Annual Conference! ................................................... 1
Improving Colorado’s Diversion Rate: The 2016 Data Is In ............................................................................................ 2
Managing Health & Safety Risks by Engaging Community Resources ........................................................................ 3
Chapter Election Ballots Coming Soon .............................................................................................................................. 5
Trending on Social Media .................................................................................................................................................. 5

President’s Corner

By Stephen Gillette

Time flies by and what a great year thus far for the Colorado Rocky Mountain SWANA Chapter. We are looking forward to seeing many of you next month at the Annual Conference in Steamboat Springs. Colorado Chapter elections will be soon, and you’ll be voting on a new Chapter President this year. Before I hand over my crown, I wanted to say that it has been an honor serving in this capacity for the last two years. SWANA is your opportunity to get involved with other Solid Waste Professionals - locally, in our state, in the United States and Canada, and the world. Don’t miss your opportunity to be involved.

On the National level, later in September SWANA will be hosting WASTECON “No Time to Waste” in Baltimore. This year’s WASTECON conference will be co-hosted with the International Solid Waste Association and will have attendees and presenters from all over the world. It is not too late to register for WASTECON 2017!

Casino Night & Additional Tours Added to Agenda for the 2017 Annual Conference!

By Tom Strickland

Don’t Delay & Get Registered Today! To complete your registration for the Annual Conference, visit http://coloradoswana.org/annual-conference/. The Early Bird conference registration rate ends August 13, 2017. Each registration includes all of the technical sessions, tours, entertainment, and meals (as listed in the agenda). The complete conference agenda (Wednesday through Friday) is now available for viewing at http://coloradoswana.org/annual-conference/.

In addition to the great education programs scheduled for this year’s Colorado SWANA Annual Conference, there will also be different and hopefully very fun hands-on entertainment. On Wednesday night, the welcome reception and dinner will be accompanied by a Casino Night. Craps, Roulette, Blackjack and Poker tables will be set
for your enjoyment. Please note that this activity is for entertainment purposes only, and there will be no actual gambling as part of this event and playing chips will have no monetary value.

There will be a Thursday bus tour of the Xcel Energy’s Hayden Generating Station when attendees will be able to tour the Ash Landfill and 441 megawatts Generating Station including the coal fire and turbines. Space is limited for this tour so be sure to check that you checked off that you’ll be attending this tour when completing your online conference registration.

In addition to the Thursday tour, there will also be two optional “self-drive/carpool” tours offered Friday afternoon.

- **ACZ Laboratories, Inc.** will be hosting a tour of their Steamboat Springs facilities Friday afternoon. ACZ analyzes many matrices including: drinking water, surface water, groundwater, wastewater, soil, mine tailings, overburden, sludge, plant and biota tissue for Inorganic, Organic and Radiochemical parameters. ACZ operates in a 31,000 sq. ft. facility with over fifty employees that includes a Class-100 Clean Room.

- **Twin Enviro Services**, supported by Revolution Systems, will host a tour of their Single-stream Recycling Facility displaying the Revolution Sorting System. The Revolution Sorting System is designed for smaller communities where transporting of materials is expensive.

Space is also limited on each of the Friday tours, so please be sure to preregister separately for each tour you want to attend. To register for these tours visit [https://coloradoswana.org/annual-conference/optional-friday-tours-registration-page/](https://coloradoswana.org/annual-conference/optional-friday-tours-registration-page/).

Last but not least, remember to book your hotel room now! Colorado SWANA has negotiated a reduced rate of $106 per night. This discounted guestroom price and availability is only guaranteed for reservations made prior to August 11, 2017. When making your room reservation at The Steamboat Grand, be sure to reference the “Colorado SWANA” group to receive the discounted guestroom rate. For room reservations, call 1-877-269-2628 or visit [online](https://coloradoswana.org/annual-conference/optional-friday-tours-registration-page/).

---

**Improving Colorado’s Diversion Rate: The 2016 Data Is In**

*By Wolf Kray, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) Materials Management Unit*

Unfortunately, for the second year in a row, Colorado’s waste diversion rate as a whole took a step backward on the percentage of material that was recycled or composted rather than disposed. The final tally for 2016 shows that Coloradans recycled and composted a slender nineteen percent of the waste generated from residential and commercial sources.

Much like the population of Colorado and the number of construction cranes operating in downtown Denver, the quantity of solid waste disposed each year continues to increase. For every year going back to 2012, Colorado has experienced a sizable increase in the amount of solid waste disposed compared with the prior year. While the increasing quantity of waste generated is likely tied to both the growing population and construction uptick, recycling
tonnages have not kept pace with the growth of the state. On a per capita level, recycling rates by weight have slightly declined in each of the last three years. “Light-weighting” of recyclable products has certainly made an impact on decreasing the tonnage of materials recycled. Nonetheless, many states with developed recycling programs are still yielding waste diversion rates in forty percent to fifty percent range even with light-weighting of recyclable materials.

In an effort to improve diversion rates along with solid waste management, CDPHE released the [Colorado Integrated Solid Waste & Materials Management Plan](#) in 2016. The Plan, which was developed with industry consultants, includes a list of recommendations to improve waste diversion that are suitable for Colorado. A key recommendation of the Plan is for Colorado to adopt statewide and regional waste diversion goals for the next twenty years. Adopting waste diversion goals will set a collective standard by enacting measurable benchmarks for the department, local governments, businesses, nonprofits and all other stakeholders to strive for through improved recycling, composting and waste reduction.

![Graph: Colorado's MSW Diversion Rate](#)

While setting a goal can help us strive for improvement, it is meaningless without action. Fortunately, there are many opportunities for improvement when it comes to waste diversion in Colorado. For starters, increasing recycling service and participation from commercial entities to collect materials has a high potential to increase diversion of commodities such as cardboard, metals and plastics. Additionally, collection services, drop-off sites and facilities that manage organic materials such as landscaping waste and food waste from residential and commercial sectors are limited statewide. Organics diversion remains an economic, logistical and operational challenge, even though organic materials comprise the largest percentage of the waste stream. Recycling services for multifamily housing is lacking, even in many of the larger cities within the Front Range. Finally, construction and demolition debris remain as an untapped source of materials that could drastically boost the overall solid waste diversion rate.

![Graph: Colorado Per Capita Waste Generation](#)

Although there are many operational challenges that can hinder waste diversion in Colorado, we should not let that get in the way of the potential to advance to managing materials rather than disposing of waste. While the data shows us we still have a long way to go from where we are now, Colorado has a great opportunity to truly embrace sustainable materials management and tie in to circular economy in the coming years.

---

**Managing Health & Safety Risks by Engaging Community Resources**

By Anne Peters, Gracestone, Inc

Many communities in Colorado have done or will eventually conduct waste audits or waste composition studies. CDPHE’s RREO grants encourage getting data about waste composition to better support waste diversion and planning. These can be simple one-day “snapshot-in-time” sorts of the waste stream, or multi-season, multi-day events sorting massive amounts of trash. All hands-on studies of waste composition come with costs and risks. The May 2017 waste audit conducted for Otero, Bent, and Crowley Counties took several unique approaches to managing costs and risks, which may be of interest to other Colorado waste managers.
The Otero County Health Department received an RREO grant in early 2017, and began planning for its one-day waste audit early in the year and hired Gracestone, Inc. to assist. The grant covers Otero, Bent, and Crowley counties (population about 30,000), served by three landfills (one major landfill near La Junta and two smaller ones), and two non-profits providing drop-off and collection recycling services, Clean Valley Recycling and the South East and East Central Recycling Association. With a desire to increase diversion, create jobs, and protect the environment, OCHD Director Rick Ritter convened a stakeholder group to guide the grant, comprised of elected officials, staff such as Danny Chavez (manager of the large Otero County landfill), the recyclers, and interested citizens. The stakeholder involvement approach proved successful in both cost containment and protecting health and safety.

Rather than hire temporary day laborers (costly), or use community service workers (may be unreliable) for the actual waste sorting, Mr. Ritter and the recyclers put out a call to the community, asking for volunteers, publicizing the event through local media, community networks, and the boards of all involved organizations. Over 20 members of the community stepped forward – including the Otero High School chemistry teacher with five of her students, many board members, recycling enthusiasts and staff, a local journalist, and curious citizens. Interested, committed, and intelligent, these sorters were conscientious and efficient.

Mr. Ritter and Mr. Chavez both have leadership roles the regional emergency management system, so they applied their knowledge of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to the waste audit planning. NIMS is a standardized approach to incident management that stresses coordination between organizations, uses common processes for planning and managing resources, and uses a standard template for staging equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications. Designated roles in NIMS which worked well for the waste audit were:

- Incident Commander – with full authority to stop all operations if needed (Ritter)
- Safety Officer/Deputy Incident Commander – ensure safety of all personnel (Chavez); liaison to the landfill where the sort occurred
- Public Information Officer – external communications (Ritter)
- Operations Section Chief – planned all operations (Peters)
- Logistics Section Chief – ensured all equipment was where it needed to be (OCHD staff)
- Planning Section Chief – worked with operations before the sort to select material categories, etc. (Executive Director Dee Hostetler from Clean Valley Recycling)

This team was clear about all roles and practiced careful communication before, during and after the event. This just about eliminated miscommunications and supported smooth operations on the sort day.

Safety at the Otero-Bent-Crowley waste sort included some welcome and unusual features:

- Extensive two-hour safety and sorting training for all volunteers the day before the audit, with a hearty lunch included.
- Handouts on health and safety requirements for volunteers to read and sign before the audit, with reminders such as wearing heavy-duty closed-toe shoes and drinking extra water the day before. (For high school students, letters went to their parents on what to expect, too, from Ritter.)
- Review of the function and purpose of all safety equipment before sorting started. PPE included coveralls, heavy gloves & optional liners, protective eyewear, surgical masks for dust protection. The team discussed hard hats extensively and decided since no waste would be lifted above waste level, or thrown, they would be optional. Sorting tools to minimize contact with the waste included shovels, scissors, tongs, garden forks, and a magnet on a long pole.
- A one-on-one check by the Incident Commander with each volunteer prior to sorting, to ensure they were aware of all safety issues and requirements.
- Sorting under a good-sized tent to reduce sun exposure and dehydration.
• And best of all, a health and safety tent staffed by an OCHD employee who is an RN and EMT – a NIMS feature. She had full first aid equipment, eyewash station, plentiful water (it was a warm spring day in a big landfill cell), and snacks. All but the eyewash station equipment OCHD had in storage for incident and emergency management. There were a few times when volunteers needed breaks in the safety tent, due to being overwhelmed by smells or fatigue. But fortunately, we had no needle sticks, cuts, jabs, squirts, or spills – the usual risks at a waste sort. The RN/EMT provided excellent care.
• An ample lunch was provided under the welcome shade of another tent (again, part of the region’s emergency management equipment), and all were asked to rest before returning to the afternoon’s waste sorting.

All the planning and positive emphasis on safety led to an outcome of a truly fun day (and who ever says that about a waste audit!?) with no safety problems, efficient operations (over a ton of trash was sorted), and a crew of volunteers now enthused about and engaged in waste diversion and better waste management for their community. And, it goes without saying, the team’s waste audit yielded very useful and credible data.

Gracestone, Inc. is a 20-year old consulting firm serving Colorado and beyond with active waste diversion solutions and strategies. For more information, please contact the author at annep@indra.com or 303.494.4934.

---

**Chapter Election Ballots Coming Soon**

The 2018 election ballots for voting on your Chapter Officers and Directors will be sent out soon to all Chapter members by email. Voting will be done electronically on SurveyMonkey.com. Please be sure to vote prior to the Annual Business Meeting which will take place on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 in Steamboat Springs at the Annual Conference. Election results will be announced at this meeting.

---

**Trending on Social Media**

*By Dana D'Souza, SERA, Inc.*

*Did you know you can follow Colorado SWANA anytime through Facebook and Twitter?* You can keep up on the latest happenings in Colorado and the world from anywhere. Some of the latest tweets have links to food waste articles, cops on the lookout for illegal dumpers, and brewery six-pack rings designed to protect marine wildlife. Trending on Facebook is news about China’s import ban, updates for Colorado SWANA’s conference, and new ways to identify hazardous waste. *Not connected through Facebook or Twitter?* No problem, you can go to Colorado SWANA’s website and scroll to the bottom to see what’s going on. So, follow along or share you own news and insights.

---

This email news update is a service provided to members of the Colorado Rocky Mountain Chapter of SWANA. If you would like to share information with chapter members in future updates, please email your information to Lisa Skumatz at skumatz@serainc.com or Tom Strickland at thomas.strickland@denvergov.org. Also, don’t forget to visit us online at www.coloradoswana.org.