

Mr. Bussen,

Most are aware of the recent discussions regarding funding or lack thereof for the Solid Waste Management Districts. I believe solutions are available at the local level without having to make any changes to state statute. It is my understanding that each Solid Waste Management District, in addition to being governed by state statute, is governed by their own bylaws. With that comes the authority and responsibility to adjust those bylaws as deemed appropriate and at the Districts discretion. It appears that some Districts, including Region H which I represent, may have language that does not allow for or discourages the funding of projects or cooperative efforts outside of our respective Districts. Having this type of language could be hindering our ability to increase the State Diversion Rate and advance Missouri in the field of innovative opportunities; both of which could create/retain jobs.

I would like to suggest that SWAB encourage each District to consider reviewing their bylaws. During the review, identify and consider removing or replacing language described above to ensure we are not limiting our abilities by our own rules. This request simply allows the Districts an opportunity to identify and potentially remove restrictions we have set for ourselves and may increase spending freedom.

Here are a few examples;

- Grant Funds: Remove stipulations that the District will not fund projects outside the District or remove automatic point deductions. Should applications from outside of the District be received, they receive the same review as the others and the applicant will have the chance to argue to the Advisory Board as to why they feel they deserve to be funded. The Advisory Board may still score as they see fit and the Executive Board may still approve grants as they see fit. Absolutely no control is removed from the local body.
- Conferences and Education: Many of us could be unable to provide funds for conferences because they are not being held in our District. Yet we still attend and benefit from the information being presented at the conference and take that information back with us to enhance and improve our communities.
- District/State-Wide Cooperative Efforts: Region H recently received a request from another District asking us to consider helping fund or support innovative research solutions for scrap tires and fly ash. Partnering in this venture could ultimately provide sustainable solutions for these hard to recycle items for the state as a whole. Unfortunately, it is not located in our District so our support would be limited to words only. If our bylaws allowed, our Board could vote to allocate monies to help fund this venture and we could partner with this District to move these efforts forward.

The Solid Waste Advisory Board supports the Missouri Recycling Associations efforts to increase the State's Recycling Rate to 75%. Doesn't it seem counterproductive to have local bylaws that don't allow for us to financially support efforts that have an impact on reaching this goal?

Region H will be placing bylaw review on our next agenda. We will take the necessary steps towards updating them to ensure we are placing our District in a position to be an appropriate resource to help advance the Solid Waste Industry in Missouri. We hope to encourage others to do the same as the outcomes of a simple review may lead to significant positive impacts in our industry and on our state.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lauren Henry  
Chairperson, MMSWMD Region H