

Consolidation of Resources in Lawrence and Mercer Counties

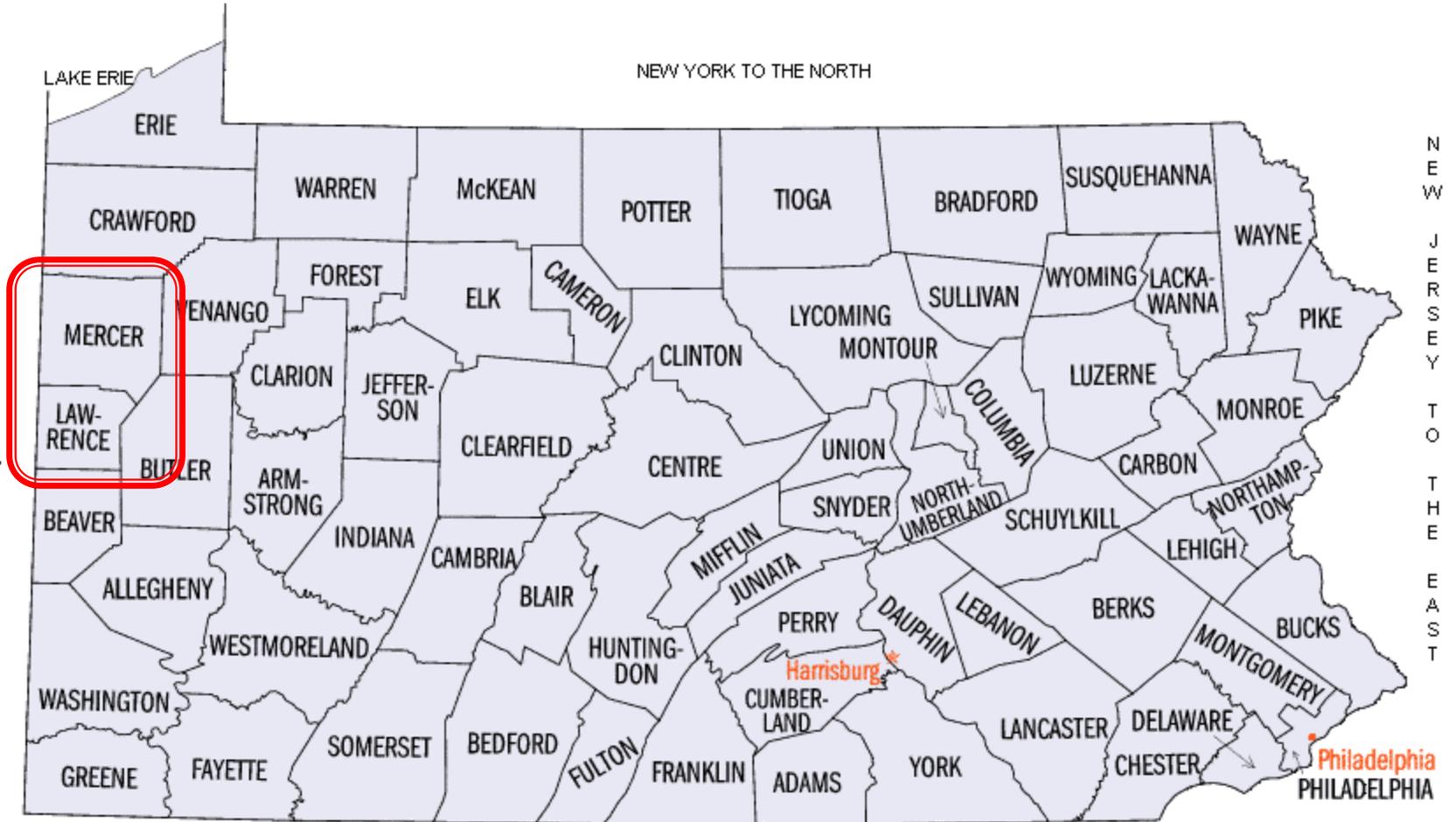
Jerry Zona
Lawrence–Mercer
Recycling/Solid Waste Department

CANADA

NEW YORK TO THE NORTH

O H I O
T O
T H E
W E S T

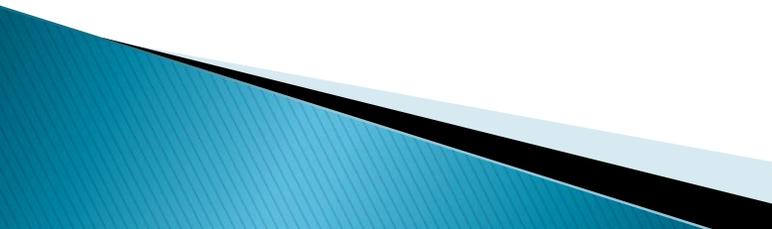
N E W
J E R S E Y
T O
T H E
E A S T



WEST VIRGINIA

MARYLAND

DELAWARE



Background:

Lawrence & Mercer Counties

- ▶ 5th Class (91,108 & 116,638)
 - ▶ Both border OH (makes MSW planning fun)
 - Lawrence County has the access roads to one of the largest landfills in the area.
 - ▶ Struggling economies
 - ▶ Financially distressed communities
 - Two in Mercer
 - One in Lawrence
 - ▶ Predominately rural
- 

History: Lawrence County

▶ Lawrence County

- Recycling/Solid Waste Department – Official 1992
- Originally three staff
 - Director, Compliance Officer, & Administrative Asst.
 - Currently two*.
- Responsible for all things waste & recycling.

History: Mercer County

- ▶ Established Solid Waste Authority in 1989.
 - ▶ Initially, one person through the MCRPC.
 - ▶ Shortly after the loss of the admin fees, Mercer County cut staffing and programs.
 - ▶ The MCRPC submitted annual reports after 2005.
- 

History:

Lawrence–Mercer Recycling/Solid Waste

- ▶ Established 2011
 - Via Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement
 - Initiated by county commissioners

Challenges

▶ Budget cuts

- Lawrence 2014: \$313,093.00 (-11.0% from 2013)
- Lawrence 2005: Approximately \$500,000
- 1 / 3 of the 2014 budget pays for the drop-offs
- Mercer 2005: \$886,500
- Mercer 2014: Approximately \$130,000
- 54% of the 2014 pays for the drop-offs
- General fund used for 55-60% of the RSW budget

▶ Staffing

- Two staff...expected to do 100% for two counties...

Challenges

- ▶ Funding (external & internal options)
 - ▶ Struggling economies
 - ▶ Local politics
 - Future boards may not share the same priorities
 - Recycling & waste management are not priorities
 - ▶ Different county focuses
 - ▶ Regulatory updates needed
 - State level
 - ▶ No landfills or MRFs
 - ▶ Public's understanding of the industry
- 

Addressing the Challenges:

Administrative:

- ▶ Commitment of the county commissioners
 - ▶ Creation of the L-MRSW Department
 - ▶ Partnerships with like-minded organizations
 - Partnership with TCC saves approximately \$50,000
 - ▶ Quarterly reports to the commissioners
 - Commissioners always know what we are up to
 - Face time is important
 - ▶ Try to remain in contact with municipal officials.
- 

Mandated Communities Recycling Performance

Lawrence and Mercer County Municipal Recycling Performance 2012													
Rank Based on Per Capita Rate	Single Stream	Municipality	Population	Households	Residential Tonnage	Yard Waste	Commercial Tonnage	Commercial Organics	Residential Recycling Rate	Residential Pounds per Person	Residential Pounds Per Household	Total Recycled	Overall Recycling Rate
1	x	Shenango Township	7,479	3,014	582.4	45	367.71		9.7%	155.7	386.5	995.1	16.6%
2	x	Ellwood City Borough	7,921	3,523	530.46	150	466.89	71.2	8.4%	133.9	301.1	1,218.6	19.2%
3	x	Hermitage	16,220	7,246	986	728.92	2,371.07	70.55	7.6%	121.6	272.2	4,156.5	32.0%
4	x	Greenville*	5,000	2,241	215.43	27	137.41		5.4%	86.2	192.3	379.8	9.5%
5	x	New Wilmington Borough*	1,315	556	40.33	150	38.82		3.8%	61.3	145.1	229.2	21.8%
6	x	Sharon	14,038	6,035	428.9	33.88	242.8		3.8%	61.1	142.1	705.6	6.3%
7	x	Grove City	8,322	2,590	232.2	1,026.40	293.1	804	3.5%	55.8	179.3	2,355.7	35.4%
8		Neshannock Township	9,609	4,194	136.86	55	603.44		1.8%	28.5	65.3	795.3	10.3%
9		Union Township	5,190	2,203	68.61	20	900.56	73.89	1.7%	26.4	62.3	1,063.1	25.6%
10		City of New Castle	23,273	9,765	270.45	145	1,517.71		1.5%	23.2	55.4	1,933.2	10.4%
11		Farrell	5,111	2,181	31.85	17.65	125.58		0.8%	12.5	29.2	175.1	4.3%
			103,478		3,523	2,399	7,065	1,020	4.4%			14,007	17.4%

Addressing the Challenges: Programming

- ▶ “Big Blue Bin” program is our biggest expense
 - 15 sites in Lawrence, 5 in Mercer
 - Small sites have 40 cars per day (14,600 per year)
 - Large sites average 100 cars/day (36,500 per year)
 - At a minimum we estimate 400,000 visits to our 20 sites each year.
 - Residents “opt out” of curbside recycling
- ▶ Promoting curbside single stream recycling
 - Urban and rural
 - Rural curbside program in place

Addressing the Challenges: Programming

- Working to model local programs with single stream recycling similar to Shenango Township
 - Work to tailor the program to each municipalities' specific needs
 - Two sizes of carts and a bag program
 - Opt out options available
 - Every home is billed and the township ordinance is set up to support the hauler with compliance
 - 904 Funding is used to assist low income residents
 - Shifts costs from government to users = sustainability
 - Special opt-out conditions exist for certain residents
 - Recommend contracts over subscription services

Addressing the Challenge: Partnerships

- ▶ Hard-to-recycle items
 - Shenango River Watchers (also cleanups)
 - Tri-County CleanWays (also cleanups)
 - Includes user fees
 - Municipalities
- ▶ Enforcement
 - Sheriff's Department
 - PA Fish & Boat Commission
 - DA
 - Municipalities

Addressing the Challenge: Partnerships

- ▶ Public education
 - Earth Day events
- ▶ On-Farm Composting
 - Pennsylvania Resources Council

Addressing the Challenge: Enforcement

- ▶ Time-intensive
- ▶ Updating the Lawrence Cty SWM Ordinance
 - Requires all subscription-based haulers to offer recycling to customers that request it
 - Includes more aggressive language to address illegal dumping
- ▶ Use surveillance cameras
 - Partner with Sheriff's Department
 - Partnered with contractor for dumping in recycling bins at drop-off sites
 - Municipalities must agree to enforcement

Addressing the Challenges: Public Education

- ▶ Address the public's lack of understanding
 - Importance
 - Recycling & waste management
 - Industry
 - Myths
 - Cost
 - Tailor presentations to include local information to illustrate the importance of recycling a single bottle
 - Changes in the waste stream

What is Working in our Favor?

- ▶ System saves money & resources
 - ▶ System demands efficiency
 - ▶ Two supportive boards of commissioners
 - ▶ Community supported
 - ▶ Partnerships
 - Help create awareness
 - Bring in new programs
 - Bring additional resources (time, money, equipment)
- 

Questions?



Recycling/Solid Waste Department

430 Court Street

New Castle, PA 16101

724-658-6925 (P)

724-656-2287 (F)

E-mail: jzona@co.lawrence.pa.us

Website: www.co.lawrence.pa.us/recycling