



eCycling Advisory Committee

June 6, 2007 2:00 pm

Speaker's Conference Room, 6th Floor, General Assembly Building

- **Call to order, roll call:**

Delegate Kenneth Plum, chairman of the eCycling Advisory Committee called the meeting to order. The members of the committee and JCOTS staff introduced themselves and shared their interest and experience in eCycling.

- **Chairman's Welcome:**

Delegate Plum expressed his interest in eCycling and the impressive group of individuals comprising the committee. He emphasized the importance of calling on professionals to develop sustainable and appropriate policy. He indicated that it makes good business sense to develop environmentally responsible public policy.

- **Overview of the role of JCOTS advisory committees:**

Staff provided a brief introduction to the committee about the role of JCOTS in establishing science and technology policy in the Commonwealth, and how the various committees work with JCOTS in establishing this policy. A copy of the presentation is available at the JCOTS website.

- **Overview of eCycling Issues:**

JCOTS staff provided an overview of policy issues and recent legislation related to eCycling, and highlighted the issues to be addressed by the Advisory Committee. Of particular note was HB 2946 (Plum) and SJ 361 (Ticer), both adopted by the General Assembly in 2007. HB 2946, as adopted by the General Assembly, requires the Department of General Services (DGS) to develop guidelines to ensure the transfer or other disposition of computers or information technology assets are consistent with data and information security policies

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developed by the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). SJ 361 requests the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to study waste minimization, reuse, and recycling and evaluate programs in Virginia and other states, and recommend a plan to achieve long-term waste minimization. Staff also discussed other state initiatives relating to disposal of Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT) (e.g., television tubes, computer monitors, etc.) and recent adoptions of statewide eCycling laws in other states. A copy of the presentation and supplementary materials for the presentation are available at the JCOTS website.

- **Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) overview of eCycling regulations in the Commonwealth.**

Steven Coe, DEQ, provided the advisory committee with a status report on electronics waste and eCycling in the Commonwealth. DEQ emphasized policy relating to Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT), its participation in eCycling pilot programs, and the current status of eCycling in Virginia.¹ DEQ also distributed copies of frequently asked questions and a list of E-Waste vendors in the Commonwealth. A copy of this presentation and links to supplementary materials is available on the JCOTS website.

- **Discussion & formulation of work plan:**

Delegate Plum opened the discussion by suggesting the members discuss their various opinions and capacities to help formulate a work plan. Members stated their capabilities and where they believe the committee should direct its attention.

One member suggested the need to utilize private entities for asset recovery programs. The member stated that these programs are offered by many businesses and do not charge consumers for the service and that the programs could help immediately. The member stressed the importance of public education on consumer eCycling assistance.

Members discussed the variety of technology users that require eCycling (i.e., government, consumers, and businesses). The committee recognized the importance of convenience to residents who wish to eCycle and the ability to recycle all electronic equipment at one location.

¹ Virginia Department of Environmental Quality eCycling webpage *available at*, <http://www.deq.state.va.us/ecycling/> (last checked June 7, 2007)

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One member stated that there is no "one size fits all approach" to eCycling of electronics. The member distinguished electronics into categories of computers, televisions, and cellular phones.

Members discussed current policies to encourage consumers to recycle electronics. The members acknowledged cell phone drop boxes and retailers who offer rebates on new purchases for the return of older electronic equipment. The chairman stated the importance of developing strategies to entice consumers to eCycle.

Members stated that one challenge to consumer participation is costs. It is important that the monetary costs of consumer participation in eCycling be addressed. Members discussed how vendors may charge a single fee for all equipment, charge a fee just for the monitor or television and include all other equipment free, or charge per pound of electronic equipment.

A member suggested consumers are accustomed to paying disposal fees when purchasing new tires and that possibly this may be an area of investigation with disposal of electronics. Another member explained that tires and other such equipment create less difficulty in requiring disposal fees because the transfers are one-to-one. The imposition of an electronic disposal fee is more difficult because consumers do not generally dispose of one electronic when a new product is purchased.

Members discussed the importance of timely disposal of electronic equipment to ensure usability and revenue. The problems associated with warehousing older equipment and the effect on reusability and value was emphasized. Delegate Plum stated there is a need to look into current government practices of disposal and warehousing of unused electronics.

Members discussed the responsibilities of businesses to dispose of hazardous materials correctly and how many electronics are overlooked and not considered hazardous waste. A member stated that many businesses are unaware of what materials may be hazardous.²

One member stressed the need to address the regulatory and market barriers of recycling electronics. He stated that transportation and end of life electronics are the major market

² The member provided an informative website on the different types of electronic waste. *Available at*, <http://www.knowtoxics.com/>. (Last checked June 7, 2007)

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barriers. Interstate transportation of electronic waste from states who may adopt tough e-waste policies is a concern of many members.

Another member felt it was important to note a barrier to a national policy is that EPA considers electronics as an environmental risk and not a health risk, and therefore not priority. The member also stated that three other states (Oregon, Texas, and Connecticut) are currently in the final stages of approving e-waste legislation. He stated that California has a comprehensive Environmental Preference Purchase (EPP) program utilizing EPEAT products.³

Delegate Plum made closing remarks and explained the possible policy outcomes the committee may reach in its effort to help the Commonwealth. He stated the committee recommendations may take several forms and that the Commonwealth should take the lead on responsible policies to foster eCycling.

● **Public comment:**

No public comment was received.

● **Actions for next meeting:**

The committee identified several potential agenda items for future meetings, including:

- Assessing current government policies of disposal of electronics;
- Obstacles and barriers which inhibit consumer eCycling;
- Incentives that may be used by the Commonwealth to encourage consumer eCycling;
- Public education on the availability to eCycle;
- Presentations concerning other states policy related to eCycling;
- Environmental Preference Purchases (EPP) and EPEAT assessment of goods; and
- European Union adoption of the Restriction on Hazardous Substances (RoHS) standards.

● **Adjournment**

³ An overview of the California government EPP procurement process is *available at* <http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/PD/strategic/Summit-PD-EPP-March142007.ppt#316,6,Motor Vehicles>

