

To: LWVGL Management Team

From: Karen Griggs 463-5215

September 19, 2011

Re: Committee report about LWVGL position on Solid Waste

Bill Evers, Diane D'Amico, Joanne Evers, and I met twice, pooled and analyzed information (Details are below). We recommend two actions:

1. We recommend that the last sentence of the LWVGL position on Waste Management should be deleted.
2. We recommend a restudy of the Solid Waste issue

Our position should reflect the present situation. A two-county Wildcat Solid Waste Management district (SWMD) was established around 1991 to plan for all solid waste recycling and disposal. The District operates two facilities and has, until recently, done a considerable amount of environmental education. The Lafayette facility cannot accept all wastes, e.g., water and gas mixture.

The economic and legal context for the policy has changed dramatically: Indiana's Solid Waste Management Board strictly controls and permits landfills. A "good character" law prohibits landfill operators with criminal corporate behavior from building facilities in Indiana.

Energy costs have risen since the last study. The appeal of incinerators has declined in the face of growing markets for recycled materials and higher prices for recycled materials as industrial process materials.

State and federal laws changed dramatically since the early 1970's when the most recent LWVGL study was done. For instance, Indiana's state law now allows county governments to form districts with other counties and delegating powers to the new districts to regulate hazardous waste. Also, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA, 1976), citizen participation requirements related to it, and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA aka Superfund, 1980) became federal law. Furthermore, the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act was passed to control gross pesticide, herbicide, and rodenticide pollution. The state Pesticide Review Board has some authority to prevent some contamination as well.

Recycling has grown in the District. Flammable, corrosive, toxic, and other hazardous wastes are not being dumped and mixed with household refuse as often as in the past. The residents of both Clinton and Tippecanoe counties can use the hazardous waste facilities in Frankfort and north of Lafayette. A Tippecanoe facility for receiving, handling and temporary packaging and shipping of hazardous waste may be built in 2011. To avoid OSHA problems with the District facility, the new building should protect workers and residents from weather; it should protect them from injury in case of spills and explosions; and it should have space for segregating wastes to prevent accidents.

Groundwater protection is very important to our region. Experts agree that we are on the eastern edge of a drought area. The demand for groundwater in Indiana is growing. We protect groundwater by meticulous waste management.

If you agree that a new study is needed, these questions could be answered:

1. What kinds of wastes are generated in Tippecanoe County?
2. What is done with the wastes?
3. Does the Wildcat SWMD long-term plan advocate any new landfill?
4. When will the plan be revised? Will it include goals for 2012? Five years?
5. What are the goals of the Wildcat SWMD? Have they been achieved?
6. Does the Wildcat SWMD have any citizen participation? Are there vacancies on its advisory group?
7. Does the Indiana Department of Environmental Management evaluate SWMDs? If so, how?
Does the SWMD evaluate itself?

HAZARDOUS

8. How does the Wildcat SWMD handle hazardous waste?
9. How will the Wildcat SWMD handle hazardous waste if its facilities improve?
10. How do businesses and schools handle their wastes?
11. What does the state Pesticide Review Board advise about farm and garden chemicals? Anything but efficacy? They do have a training program, required for operators of lawn and garden chemicals and farmers who use chemicals.

RECYCLING

12. Who recycles in Tippecanoe County? How has this changed recently?
13. What is now recycled?
14. What is not picked up by city recycling trucks? Waste from apartment buildings with four or more units? Would the census data show how many people live in such buildings?
15. Where can we get summaries of the federal RCRA and CERCLA laws? Resource Recovery Act and Comprehensive hazardous waste laws had not yet been passed at the time of the LWV study. CERCLA established the Superfund through a tax on chemical manufacturers, so funds would be available for hazardous waste site. The tax stopped being collected after 1995 and the fund was exhausted in 2003. Since then, any funds for cleanup have been appropriated by Congress out of general revenues (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superfund>). What does Indiana require SWMD districts to do?

SUGGESTED DRAFT OF REWRITTEN POSITION

- A. LWVGL supports solid waste management that emphasizes waste reduction, putting source reduction (or waste minimization) foremost, followed by yard-waste composting and recycling as a means of reducing reliance on disposal.
- B. League members support government-sponsored, economically feasible, enforceable recycling systems. "Economically feasible" does not necessarily mean self-supporting.
- C. League members support government-regulated means for collection and disposal of privately generated wastes.

- D. League members support public and private sectors working together to actively promote waste reduction in Tippecanoe County and in the solid waste district.
- E. League members support financial incentives for waste reduction for both public and private trash services
- F. LWVGL believes that solid waste decisions depend on public understanding and support. Solid waste decisions are not primarily engineering decisions but public policy decisions.
 - a. The LWVGL supports responsive government decision-making on solid waste issues which develops procedures for active public involvement and which ensures the public has adequate information to participate effectively.
 - b. The LWVGL supports the full accounting and public reporting of all costs of solid waste management by local government.
- ~~G. LWVGL believes that the selection of a future landfill site should be part of an overall land use plan.~~

In order to achieve our goals

1. We will use all available educational opportunities
2. We will work for better enforcement of present laws.
3. We are open to work at whatever level (local, regional) a problem can best be solved. We should work toward a regional approach if such an approach becomes feasible.