

FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT

Solid Waste

Beneficial Use Determinations

Project Strategy: Help states throughout the country improve their beneficial use determinations (BUD) programs by sharing information through a national database developed and managed by NEWMOA.

A variety of companies and individuals periodically approach state waste programs with plans to turn a previously discarded material into a commodity and ask for a determination that the proposed use is acceptable. These so-called Beneficial Use Determinations (BUDs) allow a waste that was previously disposed to be used in new applications, materials, and products, and thereby reduce disposal cost and, in some cases, provide a new source of income. In light of their shrinking waste disposal capacity, the NEWMOA states are interested in supporting the reuse of non-hazardous waste materials as a way to reduce the amount of material sent to disposal facilities. However, states are concerned about the environmental impacts of these alternative uses. In addition, responding to the individual proposals places demands on state staff resources.

In FY 2007, NEWMOA initiated a project with EPA that included NEWMOA member states and five states outside the NEWMOA region. The main objective of that project was to improve the information contained in an existing, members-only online BUDs database that was developed by NEWMOA in 2001. In FY 2007 and 2008, NEWMOA worked with the states to determine the data fields to add to the database and to redesign the user interface. Initially states proposed to do their own data entry and update existing records. However, further development (and therefore the usability) of the BUDs Database became constrained by increasingly limited state resources.

In FY 2009, NEWMOA obtained additional funding to work with the participating states to incorporate their most recent data. In addition, NEWMOA will work with states and EPA to develop searches and output reports that analyze the data, e.g., determine the quantities of a particular waste material reused in a particular year; uses that have been approved for a particular waste material; how many states have approved a particular use. In FY 2009 and 2010, NEWMOA will also promote the database to states throughout the country, and work with them to the extent feasible to get their data into the database. The project also serves as a forum to share information on the pros and cons of various states' BUD program approaches.

The effort is funded by a grant from EPA Headquarters.

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