

Western Electronic Product Stewardship Initiative
Multi-Stakeholder Meeting #2 Minutes
September 25, 2001, 10 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
Embassy Suites Hotel - Seattle, Washington

Attendees: Jennifer Allen (OECDD), Shirli Axelrod (City of Seattle), Leslie Byster (Oregon Center for Environmental Health/SVTC), Larry Chalfan (Zero Waste Alliance), Sheila Davis (MFF), Kent Dunn (Quantum Resource Recovery), Cate Gable (Global Futures Foundation), Lesa Grant (Sharp), John Heffernan (Computers for Kids), Tom Cusack (WA DOE), Mike Heth (NxtCycle), Kathy Hudson Kerns (Portland State University), Sego Jackson (Snohomish County), Patricia Jatczak (WA DOE), Scott Klag (Metro), Serena Lee (PRR), Craig Lorch (Total Reclaim/EcoLights NW), George Lundberg (Epson Portland), Kevin McCarthy (Waste Management), Tim Northern (Hallmark Refining), Oso (Free Geek), Betty Patton (Environmental Practices/Project Team), Will Perry (Seattle & King County Public Health), Ted Reichelt (Intel), Morgan Rider (LSI Logic), Wayne Rifer (WEPSI Project Manager/Recycling Advocates), Ivy Sager-Rosenthal (WashPIRG), Viccy Salazar (EPA Region 10), Greg Sampson (Students Recycling Used Technology), Tanya Schaefer (Recycling Advocates/Project Staff), Dick Schmidt (City of Portland), Lisa Sepanski (King County), Heidi Sickert (Oregon Environmental Council), David Stitzhal (Northwest Product Stewardship Council), Lori Stole (Recycling Advocates/Project Team), Cindy Tatham (Washington County), Indigo Teiwes-Cain (Portfolio 21), Larry Wallace (Gless IIC), Gary Wivag (Gless IIC)

1. Welcome and Introductions (Cate Gable): During today's meeting, we will divide ourselves into four subgroups. Based on the input from the first multi-stakeholder meeting, the Organizing Committee recommends the following subgroups:
Subgroup #1 – The Recycling System
Subgroup #2 – Policy and Regulatory System
Subgroup #3 – Product Design
Subgroup #4 – Financing and Market Drivers
Each group will bring its analysis of the current situation and SWOT (see below) to the full group – Subgroups 1 & 2 to the third meeting and Subgroups 3 & 4 to the fourth meeting. The fifth and sixth meetings will involve drawing up an action plan.

We will post the stakeholder participant contact list on the Web site. Please contact Tanya Schaefer at tk@hevanet.com if you do want to be listed.

2. NEPSI Update and Other Activities (Wayne Rifer): Though WEPSI is an independent process, we want to keep the participants informed about the national process in NEPSI. NEPSI also is a multi-stakeholder dialogue process involving the same types of stakeholders. However, it is somewhat more formal with specific designated members. The September NEPSI meeting was canceled, and the next meeting is November 8-9. So far NEPSI's focus has been on financing models, and they are close to prioritizing two of the most viable models, most likely models that involve a front end fee. The tentative plan is that they will form two subgroups on regulations and collection/recycling infrastructure, there will be a rescheduled workshop on product design, and they will continue convening a data subcommittee. They will also soon start talking about the goals of the program in terms of rates and dates.

There was a discussion about what happens after the WEPSI Action Plan is drafted. The plan will be a strategic one, and we must ensure we have the appropriate players to implement the plan. The plan will include an implementation chapter. Unlike NEPSI, WEPSI's focus is a strategic plan rather than an Agreement.

A good point was raised that we are using the term "recycling" but it is important to include reuse as well as recycling. Note that the functional definition for EOL means the end of its first life, and for computers, reuse with servicing or upgrade is very often viable.

System Models: System models have been developed by NEPSI to describe three different policy options for how an end-of-life system could be financed:

- General tax base, e.g., current municipal recycling programs
- Back end fee, e.g., OEM mail-in programs, white goods, some drop-off collections
- Front end fee, with three subgroups.
 - Advanced recovery fee (fee designated up front, could be visible or invisible –would be paid into an individual producers or collective fund that would be used to handle EOL equipment), e.g., tires
 - Product licensing fee (payment directly by the manufacturer to a private collective), e.g., German Green Dot packaging system
 - Deposit-refund system, full or partial refund, e.g. bottle bills.

These options will be considered and narrowed in future NEPSI meetings.

Other activities: Sheila Davis updated the group about MFF's stakeholder meeting. They have been hosting two working groups, one on infrastructure and one on EPP. The infrastructure working group has identified key areas such as CRT disposal and recycling, and the next meeting will focus on smelting and contract agreements between cities and recyclers. Several cities and counties are passing electronic product stewardship resolutions. The next EPP meeting is on 10/18 in Santa Clara, and will focus on three areas: licensing agreements for software and operating systems (open source); flame retardants; and bid specific language for take-back, trade-in or leasing agreements.

WEPSI Participants: There was concern expressed about lack of retailers and distributors. We have not had much success in recruiting representatives; no large retailers are headquartered here. The Association of Washington Business is interested in this process (according to Denis G. from Computers for Kids), but couldn't attend due to a conflicting meeting. Association of Oregon Industries is the similar group in Oregon. If we're missing major players, then the usefulness of the end document is in question.

3. Formation of Subgroups: The Organizing committee proposes the formation of four subgroups which will have multi-stakeholder representation in each. Each subgroup has an assigned staff support person. Participants will select their subgroup and meet today to discuss how it wants to work together and communicate. A staff person will be assigned to support and assist each subgroup.

Subgroups:

Subgroup 1. The Recycling System (Staff: Betty Patton): This group will cover everything that happens at the end of first life, including reuse, piecemeal upgrades, and longevity. It will define the materials, infrastructure, and the opportunities. There are a lot of systems in place, but the goal is to decide what the ideal mechanism is.

Subgroup 2. Policy and Regulatory System (Staff: Lori Stole): The group will first look at the current system for electronic waste and reuse, and then look at what hinders and helps what we want to do, and what we could design to further the handling of e-scrap, e.g., CRT regulations, landfill bans, controls on environmentally sound recycling, overseas electronic waste shipment, and the international regulatory picture.

Subgroup 3. Product Design (Staff: David Stitzhal): The challenge of this subgroup is how we can approach the issue of design effectively given who joins the group and what resources are available. This group will consider how products can be designed for effective end-of-life management and toxics reduction, and how design issues can be productively inserted into the current regional and national electronics dialogues. We will define design broadly, looking at its impact in demanufacturing, disassembly, recycling, etc. We will look at feedback loops, what is most important to communicate and the best way to do so, e.g. recyclers have this information to give to OEMs. Industry efforts are ongoing, e.g. lead-free solder implementation. How do we incentivize and reward design improvements? Can we do this on a local level, e.g. procurement and product purchasing? What is an appropriate role for public sector in pushing design changes? Ultimately, we will make sure we define something that can be acted upon.

Subgroup 4. Financing and Market Drivers (Staff: Wayne Rifer): The key word for this group is drivers or motivators. If we're going to design a great system, what will bring people to the table to implement it? We will look at models other than laws and regulations, such as ways for people to pursue their own self-interest while working within the system. We will talk about the financing system as a motivator, not in and of itself.

Discussion: Each staff person will liaison to the Organizing Committee and the other staff to facilitate information dissemination among groups. Specific topics likely will arise in more than one subgroup.

It was suggested that we use a dynamic web page (like a whiteboard) for subgroup communication. Also, universities have video conferencing at lower cost.

What is a SWOT?: It is suggested that a SWOT process be used in the subgroups. A SWOT is a business analysis tool to create a situational analysis. The analyzer takes a snapshot of the current situation and compares it to the proposed ideal. It is a tool for implementing or strategizing change. Strengths and weaknesses are analyzed from an internal perspective; threats and opportunities are analyzed from an external perspective.

Identify costs and viability of options when thinking about strategic action items for your portion of our coordinated plan. When groups overlap perhaps they can get together to discuss the issue. Subgroups can assign research to the staff person. Groups should identify other key actors who are not here today and contact them.

4. Key Information Resources: Staff members gave a presentation and handed out a list of key information resources. This will be finalized and posted on the Web site. Please send corrections, additions and list serve information to Lori Stole at stole@hevanet.com.

5. Subgroup Reports:

The subgroups met separately and then made presentations to the full group.

Subgroup 1: Recycling (Oso): They discussed monitors and the looming television problem. They want to talk to the policy and regulatory group about regulations at the landfill gate. If there are no regulations, then it's difficult for refurbishers and recyclers to charge a fee. The problem with some of the products is that they are so cheap they are disposable technology, e.g., inkjet printers, scanners. How do we change the consumer mindset of getting something better for cheaper in a few months? They will set up their own list serve, and then will figure out how to meet.

Subgroup 2: Policy and Regulatory (Lori Stole): They need to define a lot before they begin the process, and learn what the current status is. They will review Region 10 states and other states that are active in e-waste regulation. They identified many potential areas for research. They will meet via conference calls.

Subgroup 3: Product Design (David Stitzhal): They identified a priority to create an information feedback information from recyclers and reusers to manufacturers and the OEM community. Retailers, recyclers, regulators, governments, and NGOs all have information for OEMs. How do OEM's want to see it packaged and what do they want to see? The group is thinking about some sort of survey that would focus on recyclers that would be useful in getting design-related information to OEMs. They will contact IAER to ensure efforts aren't duplicative. They will use videoconferencing, conference call, and e-mail to communicate.

Subgroup 4: Financing and Market Drivers (Kevin McCarthy): They want to develop a system that provides a framework for DFE, EPP, and product labeling. The system could also be used in a variable fee structure for financing the end-of-life system. Wayne will research what systems exist now. NWPSC, SVTC and MFF previously have worked on this. Conference calls will be basic meeting format, with a predominance of Portland people to meet at Larry Chalfan's office. Wayne will e-mail a choice of dates to the list with a first meeting in about 2 weeks.

6. Next Steps:

Should groups start talking about flat panels?

Contact information and meeting minutes will be distributed as soon as possible.

Many liked the idea of list serves for each group. Conference calling so far has been made possible by the EPA. Final documents can be posted on the Web site and notification sent to the list serve. The organizing committee will investigate videoconferencing via universities.