

February 19, 2010

Dear ASTSWMO Member,

I hope that the new year is going well for all of you! At each ASTSWMO Board of Directors (Board) Meeting, your Region's Representative to the Board reports on significant issues solicited from the States in your Region. It is no surprise that in 2009, the top priority in each Region was the serious fiscal conditions affecting State waste programs. Each quarter we learned of more States experiencing furloughs, layoffs, pay cuts and hiring freezes. Last January the Board, Subcommittee Chairs and staff met to develop the 2009 Strategic Plan based in part on member responses to the survey that was conducted in advance of the planning session. Concerns about diminishing resources resulting from both funding cuts and the significant number of retirements among the most experienced waste program staff weighed heavily in the development of the Plan's Strategic Focus Areas.

The 2009 Strategic Plan was introduced at the ASTSWMO Annual Meeting in October 2009. The Plan identified Resources as its #1 Focus Area which includes assisting with knowledge transfer and succession planning. The organization and its members have already made significant headway in achieving many of the Action Items for its #1 priority.

Action Item: Explore alternative ways of providing training such as web conferencing.

The Annual Meeting Plenary Session entitled **Balancing the Basics with New Initiatives** explored alternative ways to accomplish program goals. The session format was an interactive dialogue in which attendees shared practical examples and innovative ideas for providing training and maximizing productivity with diminishing resources. ASTSWMO videotaped the Plenary Session for the first time to provide an alternative means for members to access the important information shared in this session for members who were unable to attend the meeting. The video can be viewed on ASTSWMO's website at http://www.astswmo.org/meetings_pastmeetings-2009annual-plenary_video.html.

ASTSWMO also invested in web conferencing software this year which provides the flexibility to conduct meetings and exchange information remotely. Various Subcommittee Task Forces and Focus Groups are employing this technology to make significant progress on their projects in between face-to-face meetings. This tool also allows members who are unable to travel to participate remotely in ASTSWMO Task Force and Focus Group meetings which are typically held in Washington, DC. This tool ensures that members who are unable to attend can also share in the dialogue with EPA headquarters personnel who typically attend these meetings.

ASTSWMO also continued its traditional means of supporting opportunities for training and information exchange among its members. **ASTSWMO funded 1,021 trips for members** to attend 74 different meetings ranging from meetings of Task Forces that are working on emerging issues to peer match opportunities in which staff from a State in need of technical assistance travelled to another State that was able to share its experience to solve the visiting State's particular programmatic issues.

State members also received funding to attend the following ASTSWMO sponsored meetings that facilitated information exchange and training in a number of program areas:

Federal Facilities Munitions Symposium	San Antonio, TX	3/3-6/09
ASTSWMO Mid-Year Meeting	Columbus, OH	4/15-16/09
UST Compliance and Prevention Workshop	Denver, CO	6/1-3/09
Solid Waste Managers Meeting	New Orleans, LA	6/16-18/2009
Long-Term Stewardship Symposium	Boise, ID	8/25-26/2009
Tanks Subcommittee State Funds Workshop	St. Louis, MO	9/15-16/2009
ASTSWMO 2009 Annual Meeting	Bethesda, MD	10/29-30/2009
Removal Action Symposium	San Francisco, CA	12/3-4/2009

Action Item: Ensure that all Subcommittee and Task Force products include training and/or outreach components.

While ASTSWMO has always placed emphasis on providing training opportunities, the 2009 Strategic Plan ensures that training is viewed as an essential component of all ASTSWMO sponsored meetings and activities. Some examples of training at upcoming meetings include:

Federal Facilities Managers Symposium	Jacksonville, FL	3/10-12/2010
EPA/DOD Training Session on UFP-QAPP Implementation		
ASTSWMO Mid-Year Meeting	Los Angeles, CA	4/28-29/2010
Training in a Variety of Program Areas		
Remediation and Reuse Symposium	Portland, OR	5/12-13/2010
Vapor Intrusion Training		

Action Item: Build upon "Members in Action" to facilitate the leadership transition within the Association; recruit and increase the participation of the next generation of ASTSWMO members.

The *Members in Action* policy adopted in 2007 highlights the important role that each volunteer fulfills in participating in one of the seven Subcommittees and the 31 Task Forces and Focus Groups. The purpose of the policy was to provide opportunities for new members to participate in Subcommittee activities. In 2009, that goal was met – 68 of the 310 (22%) Task Force members are new. In addition, four members stepped into leadership roles as Subcommittee Chairs and 4 members joined the Board as Regional Representatives. Last year, Chairs were encouraged to name Vice-Chairs which provided leadership experience for several more members. Providing opportunities for new members to participate in Subcommittee activities is critical to succession planning.

These are just a few examples of ASTSWMO's continuing efforts to assist States in these difficult economic times. The intensity of ASTSWMO's efforts will only increase in 2010 and beyond as the organization, through its volunteer members, strives to fulfill its Strategic Plan objectives. As your new President, I want to ensure that your needs are met. Please do not hesitate to contact me or the staff of ASTSWMO if you have any ideas you would like to share.

Sincerely,



Gary Baughman
ASTSWMO President