To Association of State & Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO) Members

On behalf of ASTSWMO Vice-President Gary Baughman (CO), Past President Mike Savage (OH), Secretary-Treasurer Cheryl Coleman (SC) and me, the ASTSWMO Executive Committee wishes you all a happy and productive 2009. The year ahead will be an exciting and challenging one for all of us. We want to ensure that ASTSWMO continues to meet the needs of your State and Territory (hereinafter State) during these times of flattening or decreasing budgets and loss of experienced staff due to retirement. One of the highest values that ASTSWMO adds to its members is the opportunity to connect to people doing similar work, facing similar challenges, and solving similar problems. ASTSWMO continues to explore opportunities to expand and improve fulfillment of its mission to enhance and promote effective State waste management programs, and affect national waste management policies.

2009 - The Year Ahead

The Board of Directors, Subcommittee Chairs and ASTSWMO staff are meeting at the end of this month to begin the process of updating the 2005 Strategic Plan. Using the membership input that was received from the Strategic Planning Survey that was conducted in October 2008 and the review of all of the completed activities, the vision and direction of the organization for the next three to five years will be charted. Specifically, we will be reviewing whether the strategic focus areas need to be adjusted and whether any adjustments in capacity or how ASTSWMO delivers its services to our members are needed. We expect to publish the new Strategic Plan in the spring of 2009 and it will be discussed at the April 15-16, 2009 Mid-Year Meeting in Columbus, Ohio.

We are planning a full range of Association meetings during FY 2009. The Annual Meeting will be held in October in the Washington DC metro area. The election for Vice President will be held at the Annual Meeting. I encourage you to consider running for office. I can testify that it is a very rewarding experience.

In addition, ASTSWMO will sponsor or co-sponsor the following events:

March 4-5, 2009 – Munitions Symposium will be held at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel in San Antonio, TX
March 30 – April 1, 2009 – National Tanks Conference will be held at the Sacramento Convention Center in Sacramento, CA.
June 2009- Solid Waste Managers Conference
June 2009 – UST Compliance and Prevention Workshop
Summer/Fall 2009 – State Funds Soundness Workshop
Summer/Fall 2009 – Long Term Stewardship Symposium

ASTSWMO continues to forge partnerships to broaden the influence of its members and to enhance the sharing of information between the partners. Our members will continue to represent ASTSWMO or have representatives that participate with agencies and organizations, such as EPA, DOD, Quicksilver Caucus, Environmental Council of the States, Interstate Technology & Regulatory Commission, and the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable.

Accomplishments of 2008

ASTSWMO and its members were very active and productive in FY 2008. ASTSWMO implemented several initiatives to enhance membership participation. Responding to a membership survey in which members expressed an interest in participating in one or more Task Forces or Focus Groups (hereinafter Task Forces), the Board of Directors implemented the Members in Action Policy. The Policy ensures that members that have an interest in becoming active in ASTSWMO have an opportunity to do so. The high interest expressed in participating in ASTSWMO Task Forces and Focus Groups is a testament to the impressive efforts of our members.

The Mid-Year Meeting in Mobile, Alabama and the Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland were well attended. There were over 200 registrants for the Mid-Year Meeting, which was entitled, “Waste Management to Materials Management: Creating a Vision,” with a variety of panels and discussions including the value of building strategic partnerships with organizations such as the Industrial Resources Council, the Recycled Materials Resource Center and Recycling Commodity Groups. The Annual Meeting, which focused on Risk Communication, attracted even more attendees with 256 registrants representing States, Territories, U.S. EPA Headquarters and Regional offices, the Department of Defense, consults and other environmental associations, including the Environmental Council of the States. At both the Mid-Year and Annual Meetings this year, panel discussions about greener cleanup approaches were very popular with attendees.

Additional conferences and symposia designed by our members to meet the special, current program needs of State programs included:

- State-EPA Energy Policy Act Implementation Meeting II
- Remediation and Reuse Symposium
- Federal Facilities Managers Symposium
- State Superfund Managers Symposium, and
- Hazardous Waste Conference.
ASTSWMO successfully located meetings on both the east and west coasts to ensure that the travel burden is shared equally by all States. ASTSWMO also participated substantially in a number of other EPA and independent conferences, developing parts of the agenda dealing with State issues, and forming panels of State speakers to address those points.

ASTSWMO member-driven program committees addressed the many issues your State encountered in operating your State programs. The individual activities of each of the seven subcommittees may be found on the ASTSWMO website under the listing of each the subcommittees: Hazardous Waste, Solid Waste, CERCLA and Brownfields, Underground Storage Tanks, Federal Facilities, Sustainability, and Program and Information Exchange. The Sustainability Subcommittee was newly formed last year to meet the growing needs of States to address such issues as product stewardship, green chemistry, greener cleanups and greening State government.

Several new, highly relevant reports produced by the Subcommittees are available on the ASTSWMO website. Examples include: Analysis of State Strategies for Funding O&M at Superfund Sites; Update of: Analysis of State Operation and Maintenance Costs at Superfund Sites; Tungsten Issues Paper; Pulse of the Nation 2008; State Fund Survey Results 2008; Survey on State Disinvestments; and Survey on State Leadership.

In closing, I want to reiterate that through your efforts in ASTSWMO, the organization continues to be a significant voice and a leading, critical force in changing the face of the regulatory environment in a sustainable manner. The collective efforts of our members have led to the significant accomplishments and continued improvements of the organization in delivering services to our members. ASTSWMO continues to encourage and create opportunities for our members to be involved with the activities of the Task Forces and Subcommittees. Members looking for other opportunities within ASTSWMO should seriously consider running for office as Vice-President this year or as Vice-President or Secretary-Treasurer next year. Whether your involvement is with a Task Force or Subcommittee, the Board of Directors, or as part of the Executive Committee, your participation does make a difference and is very much appreciated.

Wishing you a happy and successful year,

Peggy Harris, P.E.
President
ASTSWMO