

January 8, 2008

To ASTSWMO Members

Happy New Year from ASTSWMO!

On behalf of ASTSWMO Vice President Peggy Harris (CA), Past President Gerald Hardy (AL), Secretary-Treasurer Kathy Stiller-Banning (DE) and myself, we wanted to take this opportunity to share with you the many accomplishments and activities that have been part of the past year and issues or activities that we will likely face for this new year. It is my hope that you will see the value that each of you contribute as you represent your State and Territory within ASTSWMO, and in turn how ASTSWMO can assist in your efforts to run waste programs within your State or Territory. The following is a brief recap of some of ASTSWMO accomplishments and activities within the past year and our plans for the year ahead.

Recent Accomplishments

The year 2007 brought transition to ASTSWMO. Tom Kennedy, long-time Executive Director, retired during the year. Tom's well-deserved retirement was capped with a retirement celebration during the annual membership meeting in Bethesda, Maryland this past October. Tom was presented the 2007 "ASTSWMO Lifetime Achievement Award" along with many other accolades and gifts from his peers in recognition for his years of dedicated service. All who attended had a great time. Tom's retirement, coupled with the departure of Howard Roitman as Deputy Executive Director earlier in the year, put the Executive Committee in action to initiate a national search for replacements to these critical positions within the organization. After an exhausting but fruitful effort, our own Dania Rodriguez was elevated to the position of Deputy Executive Director and we welcomed Mary Zdanowicz as our Executive Director. We are quite excited about both of these appointments and the transition has already gone very well.

One of our significant initiatives for 2007 was to update the *ASTSWMO Task Force, Focus Group & Subcommittee Chair Responsibilities* document, last updated in July 2000. This document is now known as *Members in Action*. This undertaking resulted in significant changes to the original document that we hope are significant improvements so that it is more transparent about how State & Territorial members can become active in ASTSWMO and the role that you may serve to further our collective mission. The *Members in Action*, coupled with the ASTSWMO by-laws, serve as your road map to ASTSWMO and the critical role that State and Territorial members play.

The Hazardous Waste Subcommittee, under the leadership of Chair Stephen Cobb (AL), finalized the *RCRA Core Program Report*. Presentations to EPA, ECOS and others on the content and findings of the report were completed during the year. As a result of the Subcommittee's fine work, the EPA has stated that they will hold State grants harmless in budget discussions as well as being open to less resource intensive ways to implement the Compliance Assurance & Enforcement program. State and Territory comments were compiled on the latest EPA supplemental proposal of revisions to the definition of solid waste (DOSW) regulation. Discussions continued with EPA on improvements and the latest developments to the Financial Assurance aspects of the program. Planning continued for the upcoming 2008 RCRA Info Conference and continuing support was provided to the information management WIN/Informed Project effort. Finally, Congressional staff solicited comments on the developing electronic manifest legislation and the Subcommittee provided specific comments as well as its technical paper on the issue.

The Tanks Subcommittee, under the leadership of Chair Richard Swanson (GA), continued to coordinate and work on the many issues surrounding the implementation of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The Subcommittee remains active in promoting information flow between State tanks program managers and EPA staff. The subcommittee also continues work on the issue of alternative fuels, specifically, ethanol and biodiesel fuels and emerging issues.

The CERCLA and Brownfield Research Center Subcommittee, under the leadership of Chair Gary King (IL), provided comment on EPA's Draft Policy Memorandum on Assessing Non-Residential Exposures to Vapor Intrusion. Research also continued on State use of Institutional Controls (ICs), which culminated in the finalization of the report on "State Status in the Implementation of ICs". Additionally, research continued on State long-term O&M costs at Superfund sites, and new research began to determine the investigative approaches employed by State Response Programs when conducting site-specific assessments. The Subcommittee also produced a final report on the Assessment and Remediation of State Sediment Sites and published a "Toolbox" for States to use in assisting small cities and rural communities with Brownfields cleanup and redevelopment.

The Federal Facilities Research Subcommittee, under the leadership of Chair Clarence Smith (IL), assisted ECOS staff in collecting information on the latest program and policy changes to DSMOA, which was used as background information on the "ECOS Green Report on DSMOA". A joint response to DOD was also developed with ECOS regarding DOD's determination that ECOS and ASTSWMO are ineligible for funding since neither organization meets the definition of a nonprofit conservation agency. Efforts continued on the development of a Munitions Resource Guide to assist States and Territories in addressing Ordnance and Explosive Waste (OEW) cleanup. Additionally, work continued on compiling survey responses from the States on reassessing State's practices and needs related to radioactive materials in solid waste.

The Solid Waste Subcommittee is under new leadership in Chair Brian Tormey. The subcommittee prepared a report from its 2006 survey of State non-hazardous beneficial use programs and processes, the findings of which were presented during the successful ASTSWMO Solid Waste Managers Conference held this past year.

The Program & Information Exchange Subcommittee (PIE), previously known as Training & Information Exchange Subcommittee or TIE, under the leadership of Chair Cheryl Coleman (SC), planned and hosted very successful member mid-year and annual meetings. PIE also completed reports on the results of two State and Territory surveys; the first on “Leadership & Transition”, the second on State and Territory “Disinvestment of Activities in Light of Stagnant or Declining Resources”. Both reports will be posted to ASTSWMO’s website for member use in the near future. PIE also continued to be ASTSWMO’s conduit to the ITRC through our liaison Gary Baughman (CO).

Finally, ASTSWMO’s newest Subcommittee was established during the year. The former Sustainability Task Force was elevated to Subcommittee status and is under the leadership of Chair Jennifer Kaduck (GA). Much of the Subcommittee’s initial efforts involved creating their organizational structure and identifying Task Force themes and members. The subcommittee is assisting EPA in preparation for the upcoming Resource Conservation Challenge (RCC) Workshop to be held in March 2008. Year 2008 promises to be a very busy year for this newest Subcommittee as it begins tackling issues of green chemistry, creating greener cleanups, product stewardship, sustainable practices and continuing efforts on moving towards the goals of the 2020 Vision.

In addition to all of the noted programmatic area accomplishments, there have been several conferences and meetings organized by the various Subcommittees, Task Forces, and ASTSWMO staff. For instance, ASTSWMO held a very successful Solid Waste Conference, a Remediation and Reuse Symposium, as well as ASTSWMO’s mid-year and annual membership meetings. These events are instrumental in bringing together the State, Territorial, EPA and regulated community “players” to assist in keeping up to date with the changing regulatory environment, new technologies, emerging contaminants or issues, and creates effective cross-training and information exchange learning environments for our members.

2008-The Year Ahead

In keeping with the theme of bringing our members together in an effort to learn from one another as we implement waste programs across the country and to converse with EPA and other partners and also to enhance information exchange, ASTSWMO is planning and helping to plan numerous conferences and meetings for 2008. The Hazardous Waste Conference, the Federal Facilities Managers Symposium, the RCRA Info Conference, the National Tanks Conference and Expo, and the State Superfund Managers Symposium are all in their planning stages. In addition, of course, ASTSWMO will plan and host member mid-year and annual meetings.

The ASTSWMO Strategic Plan was last updated in 2005. Since that time, ASTSWMO, through the efforts of our State and Territorial members, has been actively working to accomplish the goals established for us in the Strategic Plan. Recognizing that many of the goals have been successfully implemented or otherwise satisfied, the Board of Directors has tasked the Subcommittee Chairs to evaluate and report to the Board at our upcoming January 2008 meeting what has been accomplished and what may yet need to be accomplished as originally outlined in the Strategic Plan. This review may result in the decision to begin the planning process to produce a new Strategic Plan within the next year. Stay tuned, you may hear more about this in the near future.

ASTSWMO will be instrumental in shaping the regulatory framework on numerous issues during the year. Some of these issues will involve streamlined cleanups, property reuse, sustainability and product stewardship, emerging technologies and contaminants, nanotechnology, waste recycling and reuse, DOSW, electronic manifesting and continuing efforts toward the goal of the 2020 Vision.

Our collective efforts have accomplished a great deal. As an association of States and Territories, it is exciting to be a part of such a great organization. State and Territories will continue to set the direction nationally for environmental protection and issues of sustainability. We will continue to have a significant voice and be a critical force in changing the face of the regulatory environment in a sustainable manner. Your efforts do make a difference and are much appreciated.

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you who have contributed to the success of ASTSWMO and to our collective mission. If you have been involved in ASTSWMO over this past year, please remain involved. I would ask others to become involved. Whether your involvement is with a Task Force or Subcommittee, on the Board of Directors, or as part of the Executive Committee, your participation will make a difference! I encourage you to consider running for office. We will have openings this year for Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer. It is a very rewarding experience and an opportunity to work with many dedicated people across the country toward common goals.

Best of what the New Year has to offer,



Michael Savage (OH)
ASTSWMO President