

State requires counties to make trash plans*

Q. Thank you for the recycling packet you recently sent me. Who makes the decisions regarding our solid waste disposal policies?

A. Government officials at all levels — local, county and state — ultimately make these decisions about how our trash is disposed.

Currently, the vast majority of our trash — 80 to 85 percent — is landfilled. In Oakland County, that's nearly 2,500 tons of the 3,000 tons collected daily.

The Solid Waste Management Act (PA 641) of 1978 requires each county in Michigan to prepare a 20-year solid waste management plan. These plans are approved by the state Department of Natural Resources. Every five years, each county up-



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dates its plan. The Oakland update is occurring this year.

Each county's plan assures that all non-hazardous solid waste generated in the county is collected and recovered, processed or disposed of at facilities that comply with state laws

and rules. In addition, each plan must outline projections for waste handling.

This year's update must also include methods for siting new disposal facility areas to ensure that selected disposal alternatives will be used.

THE STATE recently adopted a new strategy to reduce landfill disposal dependence by 90 percent by the year 2005.

Alternative methods include:

- Waste reduction and reuse, 15 percent.
- Recycling, 25 percent.
- Composting, 10 percent.
- Waste-to-energy incineration, 40 percent.
- Total, 90 percent.

Last winter, amendments to Act 641 were passed that strengthen the recycling provisions of the original act. Local communities are now required to consider seriously the potential for recycling and composting in their respective communities.

Further, the DNR will not approve any updated plan that does not provide for recycling and composting programs. The only exception is a community that can clearly demonstrate that recycling and/or com-

posting would not be necessary or feasible in that community.

CITIZEN COMMITTEES, appointed by the county commissioners, are responsible for updating their county's plan. Most of these citizen committees were established in 1987 to ensure meeting the December 1988 deadline for the update.

The planning meetings of these committees are open to the public, and citizen participation is encouraged. Volunteers can participate in the plan update and play a significant role in the development of their county's disposal plan. More information can be obtained about these meetings on Act 641 by contacting your county commissioners' office.

ECO-TIP: Concern has a new recycling brochure available, "Use It Again, Sam . . . Recycle," printed on 100-percent recycled paper. To get a free copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the address below.

The Consumer Mailbag answers your questions. Address mail to The Consumer Mailbag, Concern Detroit, One Kennedy Square, Fourth Floor, Detroit 48226.

'Singles' programs open at OCC

New programs designed just for singles are scheduled for the fall semester at the Highland Lakes Campus of Oakland Community College. The Highland Lakes Campus of OCC is at 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake.

"Singles and Money," "For Singles Only," "Singles Games Night," "Singles and Communication" are among the enrichment classes being organized to begin Sept. 26 at the campus.

Brochures are available for those interested in information about these and other classes. Call the campus at 360-3186.

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