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The Waste Information Today

Quarterly newsletter is aimed at communicating the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) Branch: **Chemicals and Waste Management** projects.



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E-WASTE CONFERENCE – 4 SEPTEMBER 2015

E-waste is currently one of the fastest growing waste streams in South Africa as well as in many other African countries. This is the result of increased demand for and the increased production, consumption of electronic and electrical equipment and high rate of obsolescence of electronic goods. This has not only led to a rapid growth in e-waste but more importantly, e-waste is considered to be hazardous, (Gaulon, Rozema & Klomp 2005) and it has been found that e-waste contains over 1,000 different substances, many of which are toxic. Given that the informal collectors, dismantlers and recyclers in Africa are currently the main role-players in the processing of e-waste under generally unacceptable social and environmental conditions, this is of particular concern in South Africa especially as specific policy and legislation to protect our environment and South Africa's citizens has not been promulgated.

A successful multi-stakeholder one day conference was hosted by the Department of Environmental Affairs on 4 September 2015 at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Boksburg. The conference was attended by 321 delegates representing National and Provincial Government Departments, State Owned Entities, Local Municipalities, District Municipalities, Academia, Non-Governmental Organizations, Business, Recyclers, Dismantlers, Collectors and waste exporters.

The Deputy Director General (DDG), Mr Trevor Mark Gordon called for input on the resolutions and after discussion the following resolutions were unanimously adopted at the conference as follows.

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We the conference delegates;

Acknowledge that:

E-Waste is currently one of the fastest growing and most complex waste streams that needs attention;

- The rapid growth in e-Waste has serious environmental and health risk implications;
- The South African Government is mandated to protect the rights of all South Africans to an environment that is not harmful to health and well-being;
- There is a need to address the triple challenges of job creation, poverty and inequality by leveraging socio-economic opportunities associated with waste management; and
- The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) is committed to approving the prioritized e-Waste management plan for South Africa.

After deliberating on the following:

E-Waste management in South Africa: challenges and opportunities with special reference to:

- The challenges associated with e-Waste management at the municipal level, and why?
- The opportunities in relation to the National Development Plan (NDP) exist for e-Waste management and how can these be leveraged at the municipal level?
- What strategies and programmes should municipalities put in place to address e-Waste management challenges?
- The need for further investigation/research, innovation associated with e-Waste management in South Africa require.
- The need to monitor and evaluate e-Waste management practices and the parties responsible for this.

E-Waste management in South Africa: Policy and legislative considerations with special reference to:

- Current policy and legislation that refer to e-Waste management in South Africa
- The state of South African e-Waste management frameworks in relation to that of the developed (e.g. North America, Europe, OECD) and developing (e.g. SADC, Africa, South-South) nations

E-Waste recycling with special reference to:

- Awareness of any e-Waste recycling initiatives at the municipal level and their impacts
- Various approaches, models and technologies for the recycling of e-Waste

We recognised that:

- There is limited understanding of what constitutes e-Waste;
- The socio-economic, health and environmental impacts of e-Waste need to be better understood;
- The benefits/ opportunities related to e-Waste need to be better understood;
- Quantification processes for e-Waste generated by departments/ organisations should be in place;
- Information pertaining to disposal/ storage sites is required;
- More technical capacity is needed to manage e-Waste;
- Information on national and international trends and best practices is required; and
- The role of different stakeholders in managing government e-Waste need to be clarified.

EYE ON IT HAZARDOUS WASTE FACT SHEET

What is hazardous waste?

Hazardous waste is a waste that contains organic or inorganic elements or compounds that may, owing to the inherent physical, chemical or toxicological properties of that waste, have a detrimental impact on health or the environment.

Hazardous waste may be generated from manufacturing processes, chemical processes; medical facilities, refineries, educational institutions, households, research institutions, and many other sectors.

Hazardous waste must be handled with precaution and must be disposed at authorized hazardous waste management facilities.

What are the potential impacts of hazardous waste?

When hazardous waste is released into the environment, it can spread and contaminate all environmental media (i.e. air, water, and land) and pose a threat to human health and the environment.

Typical examples include:

Paints, pesticides, electrical and electronic equipment's, batteries, chemicals, health care risk waste, pharmaceuticals, aerosols, drums, glue, sludge, solvents, mercury containing waste, cleaning agents, etc.

The role of different stakeholders in managing government e-Waste need to be clarified

Resolve that:

- A roadmap to deal with sustainable management of e-Waste must be developed;
- There is a need for evidence-based e-Waste policy development;
- There is a need for a critical mass of improved technical capacity and training to manage e-Waste;
- Develop patents to ensure innovation and technology development within South Africa to address e-Waste challenges within a beneficiation model;
- Introduce and implement measures to ensure compliance and effective enforcement of e-Waste management legislation, including international agreements;
- The recycling, treatment, dismantling and disposal of e-Waste is done in a sustainable manner;
- A circular economy (cradle-to-cradle) model for e-Waste management be implemented;
- Government e-Waste stockpiles are disposed of through registered, certified service providers and accredited asset management measures; and
- Industry e-Waste management plans be aligned with government policy.

For more information on the E-waste conference, please contact Mr Anben Pillay at Tel: 012 399 9827 or email: APillay@environment.gov.za

SAWIS INTENSIFIES IT'S DATA VERIFICATION PROCESS

The National Department of Environmental Affairs (Sub-Directorate: Waste Information Management) in consultation with the Provincial Departments responsible for waste management have commenced with the data verification exercise at reporting facilities in terms of the National Waste Information Regulations, 2012. The Purpose of the information verification process is to verify and confirm the accuracy and authenticity of the waste data submitted to the South African Waste Information System (SAWIS).

The following are some of the expectations from the SAWIS team during the verification process:

- Reporting facilities will avail the responsible officials to assist the Verification Team during the onsite inspection date.
- All waste records (such as but not limited to weighbridge receipts, invoices, internal control documents, waste manifests, waste related payment records, valid weighbridge calibration certificates etc) will be made available to the SAWIS Verification Team for inspection as required in terms of regulation 9 (1) of the National Waste Information Regulations, 2012.
- The reporting facility must demonstrate the method that they use to collect and quantify their waste data.
- Advise of any PPE and induction requirements to gain entry to the site.

The data that will be verified is all the data submitted for the year 2014. It should be noted that there is no criteria for selecting facilities for the verification. The reporting facilities that are not equipped with weighing equipment such as weighbridge / weigh pads that are reporting on estimates will be required to produce daily records sheets as well as the calculation / conversion methods applied.

A site tour of the reporting facility must be undertaken to observe the quantification method applied at the reporting facility. The Department urges full co-operation from all role players during this process. A notification letter will be sent out to the randomly selected reporting facilities that must acknowledge receipt of within 5 working days, the reporting facility is then afforded a period of one month to prepare themselves for the scheduled verification.

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