

MDEQ Announces Statewide Recycling Measurement Program for Local Governments

MDEQ's Waste Division is initiating a statewide recycling measurement program through a new electronic reporting system. Mississippi law sets a state waste reduction goal of 25 percent and requires local governments to develop and implement a local 20-year comprehensive solid waste plan that includes "a strategy for achieving a 25 percent waste reduction goal through source reduction, recycling or other waste reduction technologies." Miss. Code Ann. § 17-17-227. MDEQ has had no formal means of measuring recycling conditions in the state, but with the launch of this new measurement program the agency will now have statewide data to measure Mississippi's progress toward reaching the 25 percent waste reduction goal. In addition, local governments through the new reporting and measurement system will have information and tools to determine the success of their recycling programs and to build more sustainable and efficient solid waste and recycling services for their citizens.

In this initial effort, MDEQ is partnering with Emerge Knowledge Design, Inc. (Emerge) and The Recycling Partnership to employ its electronic reporting system, the Municipal Measurement Program (MMP), provided through Emerge's Re-TRAC Connect Software platform. The MMP has launched for reporting 2018 Calendar Year data and can be used at no cost to municipal and county governments. This program provides municipal and county solid waste and recycling programs the opportunity to record and store recycling and solid waste data, compile reports on that data, receive program recommendations and measure the local recycling program's progress over time. MDEQ will use the data to determine the state's progress towards reaching the statutory 25 percent waste reduction goal. MDEQ will also use the data to determine how state recycling grant funding may be distributed and in recommending improvements in cooperative efforts by local governments to collect, transport, process and market recyclable materials.

MDEQ is requesting all local governments that offer recycling services (regardless of the extent or type of services) complete the MMP survey by March 31, 2019. In order to participate in the MMP, each local government will need to register using the following link:

<https://recyclesearch.com/profile/mmp/registration>. The program assessment survey takes approximately 30 minutes to complete and can be stopped and started as needed to facilitate the input of accurate information. More information about the Municipal Measurement Program and its many features and benefits is available at: <https://recyclesearch.com/profile/mmp>.

Emerge and The Recycling Partnership will be hosting a webinar on the MMP on Tuesday, February 12, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. CST. The webinar details and registration information can be found here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/243194776060327683>.

In addition, while the goal of this new program is to improve the measurement of recycling in the state, MDEQ encourages all county and municipal governments to register for the MMP. This program will provide each local government with an opportunity to learn more about the solid waste and recycling programs and services it offers and to contribute to the statewide measurement of recycling and waste reduction.

Additional information on the MMP will be sent to local governments by MDEQ. Any questions or requests for additional information should be directed to Jennifer Milner, State Recycling Coordinator at MDEQ, at 601-961-5739 or by email to jmilner@mdeq.ms.gov.