

3 Steps to Developing a Tribal Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP)



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Why Develop an IWMP?

An Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) is the blueprint of a comprehensive waste management program. A successful IWMP can effectively lower total operating costs, increase efficiency, reduce the use of open dumps, and improve protection of human health and the environment.

An IWMP is a practical document that provides the information and guidance needed to make critical waste management decisions. The plan also identifies alternatives for managing waste and the resources needed to implement a waste management program.

What Activities Are Covered by an IWMP?

An IWMP addresses a range of solid and hazardous waste management activities including: waste prevention, waste collection, materials reuse, recycling, composting, and household hazardous waste disposal.

The three steps outlined in this brochure provide a general overview of the components needed to develop an IWMP.

Visit EPA's Waste Management in Indian Country Web site at www.epa.gov/tribalmsw for more information on tribal solid waste management including grants/funding, education, and relevant publications.



STEP 1. Collect Background Data

Determine the Community Service Area. Collect information on population, households, climate, geography, economy, and natural resources. Determine how and where the tribal population will grow in the next 5, 10, 20, and 50 years.

Conduct Waste Characterization and Assessment. Evaluate the current waste stream composition to assess how much residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and agricultural waste is generated.

Describe Current and Future Waste Management Practices. Inventory existing equipment, personnel, and facilities. Outline current waste management practices (i.e., waste collection, storage and disposal), operating procedures, codes, and any type of enforcement authorities or actions. Determine if the waste management program is sufficient to handle the amount of waste generated now and in the future.

Identify Waste Management Challenges. Challenges may include: insufficient infrastructure, transportation costs, illegal open dumps, waste generators, transfer station location and operating costs. Ask residents what they find to be the most significant waste management challenges.

STEP 2. Map Out the Tribal IWMP Framework

Investigate Waste Management Alternatives. Using the data obtained in Step 1, assess waste management policies and develop alternatives for collection, storage, transferring, reduction, recycling, composting, and disposal. Consider how neighboring tribes, counties, or other jurisdictions operate and fund their waste management programs.

Determine Program Costs & Perform a Cost/Benefit Analysis. Based on the alternatives being considered, conduct a preliminary cost analysis that includes capital and operational cost estimates and estimate how much time is required to implement the different options such as developing, building, and designing a new facility or developing a curbside pickup program. Include cost-effectiveness and an economic assessment of each system.

Select a Final Alternative Option. Determine what option will be the most economically, socially, and environmentally feasible for your tribe based on Steps 1 and 2.

STEP 3. Write & Implement the Tribal IWMP

Develop Goals and Objectives. Based on the option selected in Step 2, establish overall goals and objectives by analyzing issues and evaluating demographic, geographic, and waste data. These will serve as a guide for developing the plan and for resolving future/unforeseen issues. Develop short and long-term goals, keeping in mind future demographic changes.

Determine Milestones. Provide the framework for implementing the plan. Specify partners, major tasks, target dates, anticipated costs, and funding sources.

Write the Tribal IWMP. Include the information obtained in Steps 1 and 2 along with the description of the funding, long-term goals, and how the IWMP will ensure sustainability.

Plan Adoption. Document the approval of the IWMP by the appropriate governing body.

Plan Review, Adaption, Evaluation, & Updates. Review and adapt the plan to meet any new waste codes, technologies, political environments and other changing conditions. Evaluate the success of the plan based on the goals, objectives, and milestones created. Update or amend your tribal IWMP every one to five years, or as needed.

The Role of Public Involvement

The success of a waste management plan largely depends on public involvement and support. Involve the community early and often in the planning process. It is important to identify a lead agency/person, define roles and responsibilities, and identify partners who can provide assistance in developing and implementing the plan at the beginning of the process. Throughout the entire process, engage the entire community – schools, businesses, elders, and children – through education, soliciting ideas and receiving feedback.