



# Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

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800-657-3864 | 651-282-5332 TTY | [www.pca.state.mn.us](http://www.pca.state.mn.us) | Equal Opportunity Employer

December 24, 2013

RE: Status of SCORE reporting for 2013 data

Dear County Solid Waste Administrator,

As you may be aware, an effort to improve SCORE (Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment) reporting is underway. Some changes have already been implemented while others are yet to come. The goal of this letter is to ensure those implementing the programs across the state are aware of the changes and the impacts they may have. County reporting for Calendar Year (CY) 2013 will remain similar to previous years and the shift to reporting via an online database will take effect with the CY 2014 SCORE surveys.

In 2009, the Minnesota legislature, based on a request from the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), directed the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to evaluate and make recommendations to amend solid waste reporting requirements. This included an effort to minimize duplicative reporting, reduce the strain on county resources for data collection and to ensure consistent methods are employed statewide. (See 2009 Minnesota Session Law chapter 37, Article 1, Section 62 (1,2) for full text).

In an effort to fully understand the existing challenges and make recommendations that would best serve the counties, the MPCA worked with a variety of partners to develop the *SCORE Implementation Plan* (<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=15726>). This plan recommended multiple modifications to the SCORE data annually collected by the MPCA. To date, several of the recommend changes have taken effect, including:

- Eliminating questions related to the breakdown of full time equivalent (FTE) staff working on various SCORE-related activities;
- Removal of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) and electronic waste (e-Waste) related questions because the data is already submitted to the Agency in other formats, and;
- Removal of credits for source reduction and yard waste collection

One recommendation of the *SCORE Implementation Plan* is to rely on documented numbers, not estimates. The removal of credits for source reduction and yard waste was the first step in this direction. The next step toward fully achieving this goal is to move away from estimated recycling rates. This change will take effect for Calendar Year 2014 data, therefore, **estimated recycling rates will be accepted for Calendar Year 2013.**

While our goal was to begin using an online system for Calendar Year 2013 SCORE reporting utilizing ReTRAC software, contract and database development delays will require a limited launch in 2014 (CY 2013 data) with a complete conversion to the new system in 2015 (CY 2014 data). While modifying the data reporting system can create temporary growing pains as people learn the new software, we believe that overall, this will result in:

- Less county staff time dedicated to reporting because haulers and facilities will report directly into the online system
- Improved data quality
- Better policy decisions
- Improved program management

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We want to ensure that county staff and board members fully understand the improvements being made to SCORE reporting, what and when new changes will take effect, and how that may impact reported recycling rates going forward. While we have worked hand-in-hand with the counties and stakeholders to develop these improvements based on the *SCORE Implementation Plan* recommendations and by providing updates over the past 2 years during the development process, the MPCA is dedicated to working with counties to smooth the transition into the new reporting system. As a result, if additional communication from the MPCA would be helpful for you, your board, or your colleagues as these changes commence, please let me know.

Thank you for your continued dedication to promoting effective solid waste management in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Rust". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Rust  
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Sustainable Material Management Unit Supervisor  
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