

# Waste Management in Minnesota

Y-CSI 2014

# Existing Problems

- Landfill Overcrowding
- Low Recycling Rates
- Lack of Corporate Responsibility
- Poorly Managed Hazardous Waste Treatment



# Landfill Overcrowding



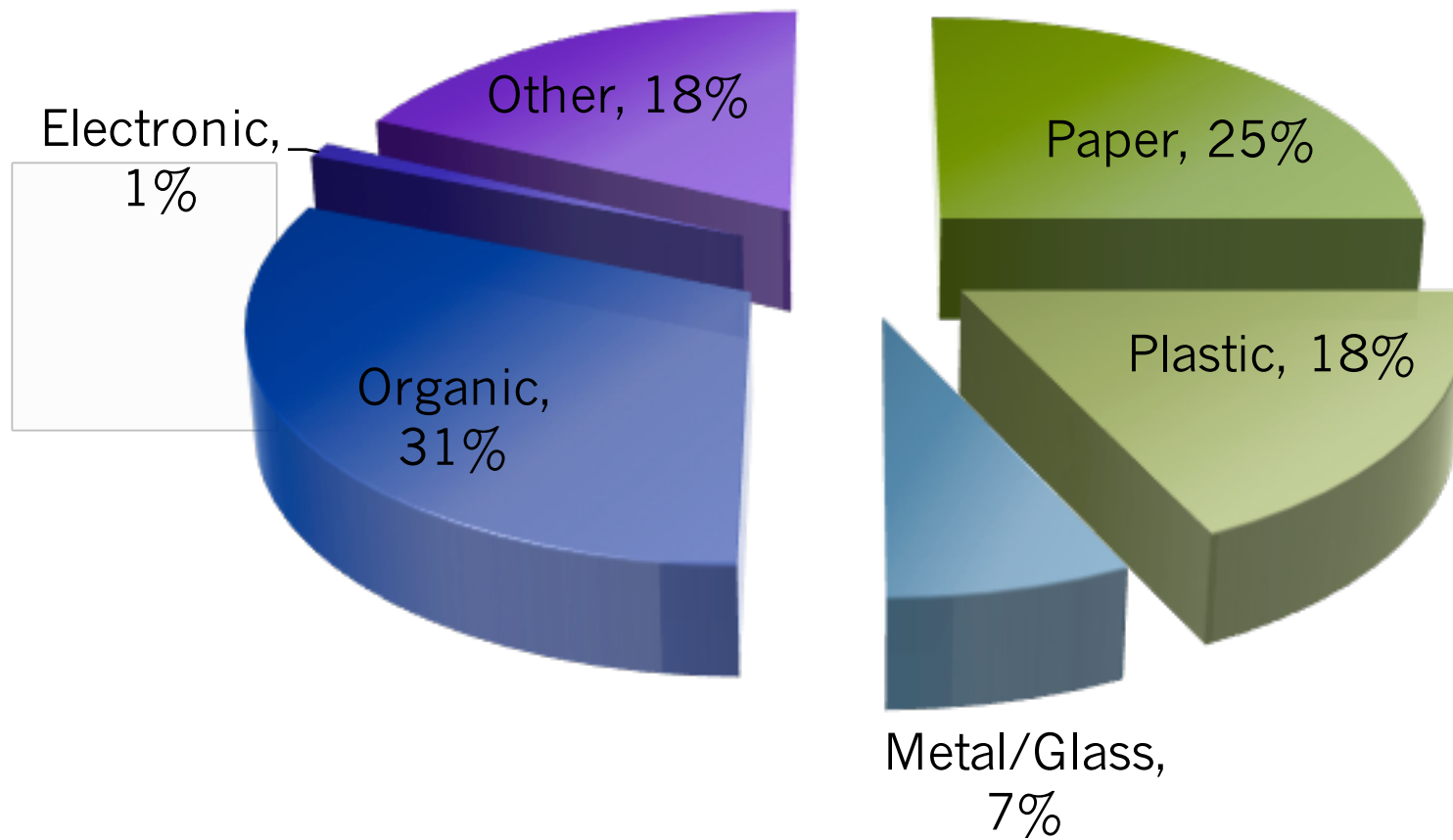
- 21 State-run Landfills
- 1,800 unapproved “Closed Landfills” (Dumps)
- Some waste in overfull landfills is recyclable
- Aquifer pollution

## Low Recycling Rates



- Minneapolis has 37% compared to San Francisco's 77%
- Despite improvements, not all recycling is single-sort
- Recycling bin sizes are too small for larger families or frequent recyclers

## What's Thrown in Landfills that SHOULD be Recycled?



# Lack of Corporate Responsibility

- 3M Pollution of Washington County Landfill in 2008
  - Hazardous materials were dumped
  - Cleanup cost taxpayers \$15 Million
  - State held responsibility, not 3M
    - So 3M was not obligated to pay for it



# Poorly Managed Hazardous Waste



- Some is ending up in landfills
- High probability of water contamination
  - Can be catastrophic
  - VERY difficult to remedy
- Little to no public knowledge of proper disposal
- Electronics are not defined as hazardous waste
- Only about 4% recycled

Source: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) 2003



**So how do we solve  
these problems?**



# Our Proposed Solutions



- Waste-to-energy facilities
- Central hazardous waste treatment plant
- Household composting bins
- Increased recycling bin size
- Set maximum threshold for hazardous waste production by corporations
  - Corporations take financial responsibility

# Waste-to-energy Facilities



- Called “Resource Recovery”
- Helps eliminate landfills and prevent landfill growth
- Burns both organic and inorganic waste to produce energy
- Location determined by population
  - One facility per 500,000 people

# Central Hazardous Waste Facility



- Waste could be dropped off directly at this facility or at a Resource Recovery facility (then shipped in periodically)
- Facility would recycle metals and materials from electronics
- Located in Minneapolis
  - Largest population
  - Centrally located

# Household Composting Bins



- Bins similar to recycling and trash bins
- Designed for food and yard waste
- Clearly labeled with instructions on proper composting
- Completely optional, but highly encouraged (like recycling)

# Corporate Responsibility



- Maximum threshold of 10% hazardous waste
  - Must be reached by 2030
- Corporations would be financially responsible for any problematic waste
  - Regardless of where it is dumped or recycled

# Increased Recycling Bin Sizes



- Optional increased bin sizes
  - Increased to 96 gallons
  - Provided by county
  - No extra cost to households

# Fun Facts About our Hotel's Recycling



- 30-40 *tons* of trash per month
- 30-40 *tons* of recycling per month
- 50% of total waste is recycled
  - Higher than most hotels