Mid-Maine Waste Action Corporation
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MMWAC
FACTS AND FIGURES

Did you know?

- The Mid-Maine Waste Action Corporation (MMWAC) facility was constructed in 1992 and is the fourth and latest waste-to-energy plant in the State of Maine. It is located in Auburn, Maine and is owned by the following 12 municipalities: Auburn, Bowdoin, Buckfield, Lovell, Minot, Monmouth, New Gloucester, Poland, Raymond, Sumner, Sweden, and Wales.

- The MMWAC facility serves communities from Raymond to Sumner, and from the New Hampshire border to Richmond. We service the disposal needs of over 30 area municipalities.

- Our main job is to safely and dependably process trash through modern incineration techniques to:
  - Lessen landfill needs by reducing the volume of household trash by 90%
  - Minimize any air pollution impacts using advanced operating procedures and air pollution control equipment
  - Create clean renewable domestic energy from society's post-recyclable waste

- A family of three generates about 1 ton of trash per year. MMWAC processes about 70,000 tons of trash per year.

- Through 2012 MMWAC has safely and reliably processed 1.4 million tons of solid waste converting it into reliable domestic renewable energy. This has offset the need for 2.8 million barrels of foreign oil. It has also saved about 2.5 million cubic yards of landfill space, equal to a football field of trash 1,200 feet high.

- We create electricity by incinerating trash and capturing its heat. The plant makes all the electricity it needs to operate its heavy equipment. Excess electricity is sold to the local power grid. The plant makes enough electricity to serve the yearly needs of 2,000 homes

- The USEPA is on record as stating that waste-to-energy is a net reducer of greenhouse gases. EPA has also stated that the electricity generated by this industry has less environmental impacts than almost any other source of electricity.

- For each ton of solid waste that we process approximately 1 ton of CO_2 emissions are avoided. This equates to a CO_2 emission reduction of 70,000 tons per year and 1.4 million tons since the plant began operations. There are several reasons for these reductions. First, if the solid waste had been landfilled methane would have been generated, and methane is an extremely potent greenhouse gas. This emission is avoided. Secondly, waste-to-energy displaces electricity generated from fossil fuels, and thus the greenhouse gas emissions from those sources. Lastly, metals recycling at waste-to-energy facilities results in reduced energy consumption associated with processing virgin ores. Note: the landfilling of ash from waste-to-energy facilities creates no methane at the landfill.

- Ever notice the white "smoke" coming out of our stack? It's not smoke at all – it's simply water vapor that has condensed when it reaches the cool air at the top of the stack. This water is used in our flue gas scrubber, a part of our advanced air pollution control system. When atmospheric conditions don't condense the water vapor there is no visible evidence from the stack that we are even in operation.

- We minimize emissions through controls on the type of waste accepted, by operating efficiently with appropriate high temperatures to destroy organics, and by using highly efficient air pollution control equipment.

- MMWAC's air pollution control equipment starts with scrubbers that use 2 ½ million pounds of lime per year to neutralize acid gases. Activated carbon is added to remove mercury and dioxin. Lastly, 800 high efficiency filter bags, each 16' long, capture even minute particles to achieve emission levels 1/10th of that allowed by our permit.

- The City of Lewiston and MMWAC have an ongoing agreement to be partners in the region's waste management. Lewiston has invested in a modern, safe landfill. In order to stretch the life of the landfill Lewiston sends all of its waste to MMWAC to be processed. This reduces volume by 90%. In return MMWAC sends the dense, inert ash to Lewiston. Lewiston has estimated that this arrangement doubles the life of its landfill. Both partners have saved a large amount of public dollars, maximized energy recovery, and extended the life of the landfill.

- Mid-Maine Waste has modified its original ash handling equipment to sort out and recycle metal that was discarded by area residents and businesses. We recycle about 1,500 tons of this material per year. In addition, all of MMWAC's member communities engage in conventional recycling.

- Waste-to-energy is consistent with the State of Maine's solid waste "hierarchy", which in order of priority promotes: Waste Reduction, Waste Reuse, Recycling, Waste-to-Energy, and Landfill. Waste-to-energy is thus an integral part of a comprehensive waste management system, provides domestic renewable energy, extends landfill life, minimizes emissions, and is a net reducer of greenhouse gases.

- For more information contact Mid-Maine Waste at 783-8805 or see www.midmainewaste.com