



SITING A RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY: A PUBLIC HEARING

Worksheets
Activity M.n

GROUP 1 – SAVE THE EARTH

The Town Council plans to build a Resource Recover Facility (RRF) to solve the solid waste disposal problem in our town. They have also proposed a law which will require people to recycle certain things. Under the law, each household would separate aluminum cans and glass from the rest of their waste. These things would be picked up and brought to a processing site near the RRF where they would be sorted and sold. The rest of the waste would be burned. Heat from the waste could be used to produce steam. In turn, the steam could make electricity. The power produced could be used on site or it could be sold to the local power company. The production of electricity would help pay for the cost of running the RRF. Since burning waste reduces its volume, the landfill would receive less waste each day. It would be able to stay open for several more years.

You are a member of a group that is opposed to the Resource Recovery Facility because:

1. There is a chance that the smoke and ash from the burning waste will contain toxic substances. You are worried about dioxin.
2. The town has not discussed the problem of toxics in the ash. After the waste has been burned, the ash will be buried in the landfill.
3. There will be dust and noise pollution from truck traffic.
4. Community members have not made a firm commitment to reduce their solid waste. Careful shopping, composting of yard and kitchen waste, and recycling are all things people must start doing before other alternatives are considered.

You support recycling but think the Town Council has not gone far enough. You want the law to require separation of all glass, metal, and plastic food and beverage containers, and newspapers. You think the town should have a composting program. Perhaps the town should ban the sale of non-recyclable items in local stores.

READ AND DISCUSS THE POSITION THAT YOUR GROUP REPRESENTS. OUTLINE YOUR PRESENTATION AND CHOOSE 2 OR 3 MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP TO JOINTLY PRESENT YOUR CASE TO THE TOWN COUNCIL.

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GROUP 2 – NEIGHBORS UNITE

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You are a member of a group of people who live in the neighborhood where the Resource Recovery Facility is to be built. You are opposed to the facility because:

1. You think that the presence of a Resource Recovery Facility will lower the value of your property.
2. The truck traffic will disturb your quiet neighborhood.
3. You are concerned about the effect of air and noise pollution on your family's health.

You are also against the proposed recycling program because:

1. Separating the trash is too much work.
2. You have no place to store the things until they are picked up.
3. Extra garbage services will cost more money. That will mean an increase in your taxes.

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GROUP 3 – RESOURCE RECOVERY INC.

The Town Council plans to build a Resource Recover Facility (RRF) to solve the solid waste disposal problem in our town. They have also proposed a law which will require people to recycle certain things. Under the law, each household would separate aluminum cans and glass from the rest of their waste. These things would be picked up and brought to a processing site near the RRF where they would be sorted and sold. The rest of the waste would be burned. Heat from the waste could be used to produce steam. In turn, the steam could make electricity. The power produced could be used on site or it could be sold to the local power company. The production of electricity would help pay for the cost of running the RRF. Since burning waste reduces its volume, the landfill would receive less waste each day. It would be able to stay open for several more years.

You are part of the engineering firm which plans to build the Resource Recovery Facility. You are in favor of the project because:

1. It will make a positive contribution to the community by reducing the solid waste problem. Electricity will be produced and many jobs will be created.
2. The problem of toxic substances can be avoided by burning the waste at the proper temperature.
3. Air pollution can be controlled by pollution control devices built into the smoke stacks.
4. The ash will go to a landfill, where plastic liners would collect any leachate.
5. Dust and noise can be controlled by using paved roads that go around, and not through, residential areas. Planting a noise barrier such as rows of trees would also help.

Your company also favors recycling because both aluminum and glass can cause problems for the RRF. Aluminum and glass do not burn well. You know that selling these things will produce money to help pay for extra disposal costs. You would not oppose recycling more items.

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GROUP 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

The Town Council plans to build a Resource Recover Facility (RRF) to solve the solid waste disposal problem in our town. They have also proposed a law which will require people to recycle certain things. Under the law, each household would separate aluminum cans and glass from the rest of their waste. These things would be picked up and brought to a processing site near the RRF where they would be sorted and sold. The rest of the waste would be burned. Heat from the waste could be used to produce steam. In turn, the steam could make electricity. The power produced could be used on site or it could be sold to the local power company. The production of electricity would help pay for the cost of running the RRF. Since burning waste reduces its volume, the landfill would receive less waste each day. It would be able to stay open for several more years.

You work for the state agency which is responsible for managing solid waste. The agency is concerned about the disposal crisis in the town. You support the construction of a Resource Recovery Facility because:

1. The town has no room to site a new landfill. Current landfill space is quickly filling up. A Resource Recovery Facility will reduce the volume of waste coming into the existing landfill by 85%. This will extend the life of the landfill.
2. Energy recovery will help to offset rising fuel prices.
3. An RRF operated according to state laws and regulations should not create environmental problems.

You are also in favor of recycling because:

1. It is a good way to conserve natural resources.
2. The RRF will work more efficiently and safely if recyclables are removed.

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GROUP 5 – THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Council plans to build a Resource Recover Facility (RRF) to solve the solid waste disposal problem in our town. They have also proposed a law which will require people to recycle certain things. Under the law, each household would separate aluminum cans and glass from the rest of their waste. These things would be picked up and brought to a processing site near the RRF where they would be sorted and sold. The rest of the waste would be burned. Heat from the waste could be used to produce steam. In turn, the steam could make electricity. The power produced could be used on site or it could be sold to the local power company. The production of electricity would help pay for the cost of running the RRF. Since burning waste reduces its volume, the landfill would receive less waste each day. It would be able to stay open for several more years.

You are the elected members of the Town Council. You must listen to both sides of the issue. Some groups have concerns about the construction of the Resource Recovery Facility. Others have reasons to support it. As they speak, you should take notes on the important points raised on each side of the issue. It is your responsibility to decide whether or not to build the facility. Your decision must be the best for all of the people in your town.

Choose one member of your group to be the chairperson. It will be that person's job to call the hearing to order. Then, she or he must call upon each of the groups to present information either for or against the RRF. Members of the Town Council will have a chance to question speakers after they present their positions.

**SITING A RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY:
A PUBLIC HEARING
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHEET**

What are they
in favor of?

Ideas for a
compromise?

Group 1

Group 2

Group 3

Group 4
