



Wednesday, September 23

10:00 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Conference Check-In Conference Center Lobby
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)/Program Managers Meeting Johnnies Room
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Tour: SCRAPs 1201 7 th Street South, St. Cloud, MN 56301
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Tour: Stearns County HHW Facility 3601 5 th St S, Waite Park, MN 56387
4:00 – 6:30 p.m.	Dinner On Your Own/Hotel Check-In
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.	SWAA Executive Board Meeting Johnnies Room

Thursday, September 24

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	Conference Check-In Conference Center Lobby
8:00 – 8:55 a.m.	Breakfast Celebration Room
8:55 – 10:00 a.m.	SWAA Annual Business Meeting Rox-Gophers Room Eligible members will vote on the 2027 SWAA Legislative Platform, elect officers, review the budget, and more.
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break & Sponsor Displays

10:15 – 10:45 a.m.



Minnesota's Boat Wrap Recycling Program

Sarah Bonvallet, Operations Program Coordinator | Reverse Logistics Group

Sarah will present an overview of Minnesota's boat wrap recycling program, Wrap Recycle Right, created under the state's first Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) law for boat wrap. She will explain how the law shifts recycling responsibility to producers, outline the role of key partners, and describe how counties and solid waste partners are playing their part.

Sarah Bonvallet is an Operations Program Coordinator for Reverse Logistics Group (RLG), a global leader in extended producer responsibility (EPR) compliance solutions. She currently leads Minnesota's pioneering boat wrap recycling initiative, Wrap Recycle Right. In this role, Sarah oversees the strategic design, implementation, and operational management of the state's first EPR program targeting marine shrink wrap—a material historically overlooked in stewardship frameworks.

10:45 – 11:30 a.m.



Partner Updates

Sam Holl, Facility Director | Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy; Acting Chair | MRRA

Cathleen Hall, Environmental Resources Director | Olmsted County; Board Member | Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)

Marcus Zbinden, Senior Environmentalist | Carver County; Chairperson | MN Composting Council

Michael Bennett, Executive Director | RAM

Sam Holl is the facility director for Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy and the acting chair for the Minnesota Resource Recovery Association. Minnesota Resource Recovery Association members are key to state-wide waste management. Our facilities operate primarily in rural MN counties (Blue Earth, Olmsted, Otter Tail, Polk, Pope, Douglas, Goodhue) as well as the metro counties of Ramsey, Washington and Hennepin.

Cathleen Hall has 33 years of experience in the solid and hazardous waste management field and has served with Olmsted County Environmental Resources for the past year and eight months. Prior to joining Olmsted County, she managed a solid waste facility in Colorado and previously worked in environmental consulting, bringing extensive experience in facility operations, waste management, environmental compliance, and program development.

Marcus Zbinden brings more than 35 years of experience in the solid waste and environmental services industry. He currently serves as a Senior Environmentalist with Carver County, where he manages the county's recycling, composting, and solid waste management programs. Marcus also serves as Chairperson of the Minnesota Composting Council, where he works to advance composting practices and promote sustainable waste management throughout the state. In recognition of his contributions to the composting industry, Marcus was awarded the Rufus Chaney Award by the U.S. Composting Council. The award recognizes an individual whose breadth of research or research findings has had a significant impact on the composting industry. Throughout his career, Marcus has been actively involved in industry leadership and professional organizations. He previously served as Chair of the Recycling Association of Minnesota and as President of the Solid Waste Administrators Association.

Michael Bennett is relatively new to the recycling world. After spending 20+ years in the human services/education world, Michael is using his non-profit management experience in the area of waste diversion at Recycling Association of Minnesota.

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Lunch

We encourage everyone to stop by our conference sponsors tables during lunch!

12:30 – 1:15 p.m.

Chronic Wasting Disease Overview and Wildlife Health Update

Dr. Mary Wood, Wildlife Veterinarian | MN Department of Natural Resources

This session will provide an overview of chronic wasting disease in cervids, the current status in MN and recent changes to surveillance and disposal regulations. Dr. Wood will also touch briefly on other diseases seen in MN wildlife.

Dr. Mary Wood is a wildlife veterinarian with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. She provides expertise in wildlife disease recognition, diagnosis, and management across Minnesota's terrestrial and aquatic programs. Her work spans disease surveillance, research collaboration, wildlife capture and immobilization training, and policy contributions at the wildlife-domestic animal-human interface.

1:15 – 2:00 p.m.

2025 MPCA Grant Funded C&D Regional Transition Plans

JoAnn Blomme, Land and Resources Management Director | Chippewa County

Katie Benes, Environmental Services Director | Itasca County

Dustin Hauschild, Environmental Administrator | Lincoln County

Chris McConn, P.E., Solid Waste Director | Otter Tail County

The Future of C&D

JoAnn will be giving an update on how the C&D Grant process went in Chippewa County. You will learn about the good, the bad and the ugly!

JoAnn Blomme is a veteran employee of 35 years in the Land & Resource Management department for Chippewa County and recently promoted to Director. Her work was primarily in Water Planning – which has grown to being part of two watershed partnerships, Septic Systems, and education and outreach. Being a small department, she also assisted in Planning & Zoning and Solid Waste. As of recent - doing it all.

Itasca Area Construction and Demolition Waste Management Planning

Itasca County received a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency grant to develop a regional construction and demolition waste plan in order to reduce landfill reliance and expand reuse, recycling, and material tracking.

Katie Benes works for the residents of Itasca County as the Director of Environmental Services. As Director, her responsibilities include administering the County's planning and zoning regulations, solid waste program, septic program, shoreland program, and more. She started with Environmental Services in 2018 and has found it to be a place where there is always something to learn. Benes grew up in Grand Rapids, returning to the area after college to be close to family, the lakes, and a community she loved.

Southwest MN Seven County C&D Planning Partnership

Lincoln County was the lead agency in the SW MN 7 county C&D Planning Grant. Will discuss the process from where we thought we would be going when applying for the grant to where we ended up.

Dustin Hauschild has worked at Lincoln County since 2001. He transitioned from Highway Engineering to the Environmental Office in 2019. The Environmental Office oversees the Ag Inspector, AIS Program, County Drainage Systems, Feedlots, Planning & Zoning, Septic Systems, and Solid Waste.

Region 4 Demolition Waste Planning

Chris McConn graduated from Michigan Technological University for Environmental Engineering. He is a licensed engineer with over 20 years of practice consulting. For the past 8 years, he has served as the solid waste director for Otter Tail, Todd, and Wadena Counties and executive director for the Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste Authority.

2:00 – 2:15 p.m.

Break & Sponsor Displays

2:15 – 3:45 p.m.



MPCA Update

Kirk Koudelka, Assistant Commissioner for Land Policy and Strategic Initiatives | MN Pollution Control Agency

Korey Southerland, Division Director, Resource Management and Assistance Division | MN Pollution Control Agency

Mallory Anderson, Packaging EPR Program Coordinator | MN Pollution Control Agency

Heidi Ringhofer, Solid Waste Services Director | MN Pollution Control Agency

Kirk Koudelka was appointed assistant commissioner for land policy and strategic initiatives in May 2012. Prior to that, Kirk served as the legislative director at the MPCA. He led the agency's legislative efforts for 2011 through 2014 legislative sessions in both roles.

Korey Southerland has been with the Division Director of Resource Management and Assistance Division at MPCA since June 2026. Prior to this, Korey spent four years as a Regional Manager with the State of Minnesota and held various environment-related positions in Idaho and Washington. Korey holds a B.S. in Geography from UND, and a Master's in Environmental Science from Washington State University.

Mallory Anderson leads implementation of the new Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act, which requires producers to fund a statewide program that will result in all packaging being refillable, reusable, recyclable, and/or compostable by 2032. Prior to the agency, she worked in solid waste and policy for Hennepin County where she supported the business recycling program, including the food waste requirements.

Heidi Ringhofer has worked with local and state government on solid waste programs for all of her career. She has a strong foundation in understanding and implementing solid waste programs and logistics. Her favorite area of solid waste programs is composting, it is a lot like baking a loaf of bread.

3:45 p.m.

Reminders & Adjourn for the Day

4:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Social Activities

Golf Scramble

4:30-6:30 pm, Angushire Golf Course (224 Waite Ave S, St. Cloud, MN 56301).

Nature Walk

4:30-6:30 pm, Munsinger Gardens (1515 Riverside Dr. SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304).

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Dinner On Your Own

6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

MPCA Packaging EPR Draft Needs Assessment Drop-In Public Meeting

Rox-Gophers Room

Please note: This is a MPCA-sponsored event. SWAA members are welcome to attend.

7:30 p.m.

Bonfire Social

Friday, September 25

7:00 – 7:55 a.m.

Breakfast

Celebration Room

7:55 – 8:00 a.m.

Welcome & Announcements

Rox-Gophers Room

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.



Fix-It Clinics

Emily Barker, Executive Director | ReUse Minnesota

Amy Degerstrom, Executive Director | Stearns History Museum

Ann Marie Johnson, Community Engagement | Stearns History Museum

Reuse Minnesota has been leading the launch of fix-it clinics in five regions around Greater Minnesota. The session will share successes and lessons learned, as well as touch on technical assistance available for others looking to start clinics of their own.

Emily Barker (she/her) has served as the Executive Director of Reuse Minnesota since August 2021. Her role is to lead the organization, build partnerships, and support the reuse sector throughout Minnesota. Previously, she was a solid waste specialist for the City of St. Louis Park and worked two and a half years at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Amy Degerstrom has been with the Stearns History Museum for 7 years, serving as Executive Director since 2023. She has more than 20 years in the museum field, working in Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. She received her MA in Art History and Museum Studies from The Ohio State University.

8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Districts 1-5 Updates/Best Practices (15 Minutes Each)

9:45 – 10:00 a.m.

Break & Sponsor Displays

10:00 – 11:15 a.m.

Districts 6-10 Updates/Best Practices (15 Minutes Each)

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Legislative Update

Brian Martinson, Environment & Natural Resources Policy Analyst | Association of Minnesota Counties



Brian Martinson is the Environment & Natural Resources Policy Analyst for the Association of Minnesota Counties. In that role, he also serves as government relations staff to the Solid Waste Administrators Association, Minnesota Association of County Planning and Zoning Administrators, Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers and Minnesota Association of County Agriculture Inspectors. Brian has a strong background in state legislative and policy work with previous work as a Minnesota Senate staff member and Director of State Government Affairs for an agriculture cooperative.

12:00 p.m.

Thank You & Adjourn

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Women in Waste: Post-Conference Networking

Vikings Room

Female and nonbinary SWAA members are invited to connect after the conference over refreshments and conversation. Meet and mingle with others driving change in the waste and recycling industry.