

## Jeanne Norrgard

We are in a climate crisis. We are in a waste crisis. We must all, including our government and government agencies like MPCA, be held accountable for a weak response to this crisis. The time is now. We are consuming too many cheaply made products and have been conditioned to buy, buy, buy with little thought to the consequences of our actions. People with money consume way more than the poor can ever hope to consume. Then we throw our stuff out and burn our trash in incinerators sited in the poorer neighborhoods with little regard for the health of the people living there or for what our trash consists of - Reusables? Recyclables? Compostables? Batteries? Who knows? Is anyone keeping track of what is in those bags of trash? And all those plastics. Plastics are made from oil. We were conned years ago by the gas and oil industry into leaving recyclable/reusable glass containers by the wayside (Remember when peanut butter came in a glass container? Mayonnaise? Very hard to find now.) and moving to plastic, with recyclability of all those various plastics questionable at best and a source of guilt on our part if we must buy some consumable in a plastic container and it happens to be a 4 instead of a 5. Or when the server brings our glass of water with a plastic straw already in it and we can't say, no straw. Corporations are profiting at the expense of our environment, they are happy to continue doing so and government looks the other way. And our local governments earn revenue from the incinerators and count on it in their budgets. Where is their incentive to reduce waste? So much must be done, and we have no time to lose. Today, with this pending plan, we have a chance to step up. We must step up. We need a higher waste reduction target than the abysmal 5% over 20 years offered by this plan. Go Big! Why not a 50% reduction in waste by 2030? Confront our waste crisis. Involve all the players. Focus on reusing, refilling, repairing. Make throwing something in the trash that is still usable unacceptable in our society. Close the polluting waste incinerators down and remove the financial incentives to governments. Educate us on all the ways that we can help to reach our goal. Publish our efforts in language we can all understand. Give us a reason to be proud of where we are heading.