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**CARVER
COUNTY**

July 22, 2026

Brian Martinson
Environment and Natural Resources Policy Analyst
Association of Minnesota Counties
125 Charles Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103-2108

Subject: Public Comment on the Draft Minnesota Resource Management Report

Dear Mr. Martinson:

On behalf of Carver County Environmental Services, thank you to the Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA) for coordinating county input on the draft Minnesota Resource Management Report (RMR) and preparing comments for submission to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

Carver County commends the MPCA and its partners for developing a comprehensive report that provides a strong framework for advancing waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and organics management across Minnesota.

General Support

Carver County supports the RMR's statewide, systems-based approach to resource management. We agree with the report's emphasis on waste prevention and reuse, expanding recycling and organics services, strengthening end markets, and improving equitable access. As the report moves toward implementation, we encourage the MPCA to clearly identify priorities, responsible parties, funding sources, and realistic timelines.

Comments and Recommendations

1. Prioritize Prevention and Reuse

Prevention and reuse remain the most cost-effective strategies for reducing waste and conserving resources. Carver County has successfully used MPCA grant funding to establish programs including the Reclaim-It Program, Southwest Metro Lending Library, and Fix-It Clinics. These initiatives have diverted usable materials from disposal while increasing public awareness of repair and reuse.

We encourage continued state investment through grants, technical assistance, model program resources, and opportunities for counties to share successful practices, particularly with rural and underserved communities.

2. Expand Organics Collection and Processing

Organics remain one of the largest components of Minnesota's waste stream, yet access to collection and processing remains limited. Carver County supports expanding organics infrastructure and recommends that the MPCA:

- Revise compost facility permitting requirements to reduce unnecessary barriers while maintaining environmental protections.
- Provide grants for collection equipment, infrastructure, and startup operating costs.
- Support consistent statewide education and labeling to reduce contamination.
- Encourage regional partnerships among counties, cities, haulers, and processors to improve efficiency.

3. Implement Extended Producer Responsibility Effectively

Carver County supports Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging, paper products, batteries, electronics and other materials that create significant local costs.

Successful EPR programs should provide adequate funding for collection, processing, education, administration, and contamination reduction while maintaining convenient public access. Programs should recognize existing county investments, establish clear performance standards, provide counties with meaningful participation in implementation, and allow flexibility for differing local conditions. State requirements should not create unfunded mandates or shift additional costs to counties.

4. Improve Data and Measurement

Reliable statewide data is essential for evaluating progress and guiding future investments. The MPCA should establish standardized definitions, reporting methods, and performance measures while providing counties with practical tools and financial assistance to improve data collection.

The report should also recognize prevention and reuse outcomes that traditional recycling metrics do not capture. The MPCA should work with counties to develop practical methods for measuring and reporting reuse activity statewide.

5. Strengthen Education and Public Engagement

Public education is essential to the success of waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and organics programs. Counties serve as trusted sources of information for residents and need sustained support to conduct effective outreach. Carver County recommends that the MPCA:

- Provide ongoing funding for local education and outreach.
- Develop consistent statewide messaging while allowing local flexibility.
- Support innovative outreach tools, school programs, digital resources, and community partnerships.
- Establish practical methods for evaluating education and outreach effectiveness.

Conclusion

Carver County appreciates SWAA's leadership in coordinating county feedback on the RMR and respectfully requests that these recommendations be incorporated into SWAA's comments to the MPCA.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with the MPCA, SWAA, local governments, service providers, and community partners to advance Minnesota's waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and organics recovery goals.

Sincerely,

Brad Hanzel

Brad Hanzel
Environmental Services Manager