

CONSTRUCTION WASTE MANAGEMENT

A. ISSUE:

The Memo of Understanding (MOU) on “Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings” that the Department of Veterans Affairs signed, stated that government agencies shall establish programs to “recycle or salvage at least 50 percent construction, demolition and land clearing waste, where markets or on-site recycling opportunities exist”.

B. BACKGROUND:

Construction demolition waste around the country is more than 30 percent of the total municipal solid waste going into landfills, and there is a greater effort to analyze this waste and determine how much can be recycled.

Almost all government agencies now require demolition waste from their building construction sites be recycled.

The Whole Building Design Guide website (<http://www.wbdg.org>) has a Construction Waste Management Database that contains information on companies that haul, collect, and process recyclable debris from construction projects. Created in 2002 by GSA's Environmental Strategies and Safety Division to promote responsible waste disposal, the Database is a free online service for those seeking companies that recycle construction debris in their area.

C. DISCUSSION:

Recycling and reuse of materials have long been associated with wise construction practices. Experienced contractors are now reaping the economic advantages of Construction Waste Management. Communities are also seeing the side benefits.

Recycling, reusing, and salvaging construction waste can save money. Many of the contractors that have embraced Construction Waste Management have made changes to their operations and practices to take advantage of reduced waste disposal costs and revenues derived from recycle, reuse, and salvage materials. Efforts to prevent waste, to recycle, and to use recycled-content materials on a project can help the project team earn points towards qualifying for LEED and other local and national programs.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS:

PERFORMANCE

FM will develop a master construction specification section for the management of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste materials. As part of implementing MOU discussed under "ISSUE" above, the construction contractors shall be required to (1) practice efficient waste management when sizing, cutting and installing products and materials and (2) use all reasonable means to divert construction and demolition waste from landfills and incinerators and to facilitate their recycling or reuse.

E. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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