Community Engagement Strategy

Issues to Consider When Planning and Designing Community Engagement Approaches for Tribal Integrated Waste Management Programs

July 2018
Focus of the Engagement Strategy

• Community Engagement Strategy focused on Integrated Waste Management

• Guidance for American Indian/Alaska Native tribes and villages on community engagement approaches for encouraging positive behavior change

• Emphasis on quality and effectiveness, process planning, designing engagement tailored to tribal integrated waste programs, and defining the range of stakeholders affected
Community Engagement

To better involve the tribal community to achieve long-term and sustainable outcomes, processes, relationships, decision-making, and implementation of sustainable integrated waste management programs.
Principals of Community Engagement

- **Integrity:** Transparent and clear in scope and purpose
- **Inclusiveness:** Accessible and balanced and capture a full range of values and perspectives
- **Dialogue:** Promote dialogue and open genuine discussion - it should be supported by timely and accurate information, be used to weigh options, and develop common understandings
- **Influence:** Reflected in outcomes - the community should be able to see and understand the impact of their involvement
Purpose and Intended Users

- Helps users understand:
  - Importance of reaching all sectors of the community
  - Types of engagement methods and techniques
  - Steps for implementing an effective community engagement
- Intended users/audience:
  - Tribal governments and council members tasked with developing a comprehensive engagement strategy
  - Federal, state, and local governments
  - Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
  - Anyone that desires improving integrated waste management in tribal communities
  - Community empowerment champions
  - Practitioners
Reaching All Sectors of Community

• Stakeholder identification and analysis is integral to the engagement planning process
• Most successful when true partnerships exist and decision-making is shared
• Create an Advisory Committee (for more information please contact Kami Snowden, TSWAN Executive Director who can supply information on creating such a committee).
• Provides considerations for working more inclusively and engaging different stakeholder groups
Engagement Techniques & Methods

The spectrum of community engagement is generally categorized into three types:

• **Inform** – Decisions have already been made or action is required, with a need to ensure that the affected community is aware of the information or facts
• **Consult** – Requires some input, feedback or advice before part of the project or decision is finalized
• **Active Involvement** – Collaborates with stakeholder groups or the community to work through the issues and develop solutions

**Social Change:** Social events are required to generate social change. Gatherings, meetings and other social events should be considered and planned if social change is a priority.
Inform:
To Build Community Awareness

- Displays – Leaflets/Posters/Signs
- Newsletter/Tribal Newspaper/Tribal Magazines
- Hotline or 1-800 Number
- Web-based Announcements/Social Media (Electronic Media)
Consultation: To Solicit Information/Community Feedback

- Public Exhibits
- Surveys and Questionnaires
- Public Meetings
- Interviews
- Open Day or “Drop-in” Sessions

- Community Fairs/Events (Earth Day, Community Cleanup Day, etc.)
- School Visits
- Workshop or Facilitated Discussion Groups
- Waste Audits
Active Involvement: To Collaborate with the Community

- Tribal Community-Based Social Marketing
- Focus Groups
- Tribal Councils, General Councils
- Community Events, e.g. Pow Wows
- School Education and Outreach
- Elder Groups
Community Engagement Steps


• **Step 1**: Determine the Need for Community Engagement
• **Step 2**: Develop a Tribal Waste Management Advisory Committee
• **Step 3**: Define the Project Scope, Goals, and Anticipated Outcomes
• **Step 4**: Identify and Analyze Stakeholders/Community Served
• **Step 5**: Consider Engagement Techniques/Methods
• **Step 6**: Create and Implement an Implementation/Operational Plan
• **Step 7**: Monitor Progress, Evaluate the Plan, Modify (if needed)
Step 1: Determine the Need for Community Engagement

- Evaluate the current status of waste management in the community
- Determine gaps and areas that need to be addressed

Step 2: Develop a Tribal Waste Advisory Committee

- Represents a collection of individuals who bring unique knowledge and skills
- Helps identify champions to assist with building support
- Support to gain tribal governmental leader support
- Integrates the public and private sectors
- For those in need of how to accomplish an Advisory Committee, please contact Kami Snowden, Executive Director, at 509-235-6007, or by email: knowden@tswan.org for more information and aid.
**Step 3:**
Define the Project Scope, Goals, & Outcomes

- Be clear about the **scope and purpose** of the engagement process
  - Identify and/or prioritize what the needs and priorities should be?
  - Develop a consensus on a plan for waste management?
  - Create behavioral changes that lead to social change?

- A clear purpose helps identify **engagement goals**
  - Increase awareness of issues, services and opportunities
  - Increase the use of the tribal waste management/recycling program(s)
  - Educate residents on issues and/or involve them in decision-making
  - Motivate a change in behavior
  - Empower communities to identify and address their own issues

- **Anticipated outcomes** are the specific measures used to determine whether or not the goals are successfully achieved
  - Short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes
Step 4: Identify & Analyze the Community Served

• Important to identify all groups and individuals within the community that will be affected by community engagement outcomes
• Not all stakeholders will need to be engaged at the same level
• When conducting stakeholder analysis it is important to consider:
  • What are the key issues or areas of interest for the project?
  • Who are the key stakeholder groups?
  • What might be their level of interest?
  • Who are the key contacts for the groups?
Step 5: Consider Engagement Techniques/Methods & Develop Engagement Strategies

- No simple solution or “one size fits all” approach to identifying an effective engagement method
- Often be necessary to combine a range of complementary methods
- Determining the level of impact for each stakeholder group (Step 4) will allow you to identify what levels of participation (see Section 4: Engagement Techniques and Methods)
Step 6: Create and Implement an Operational Plan

• Outlines how best to engage the public in planning and project decision-making

• Elements of a community engagement plan include:
  • Project schedule with communication and public involvement timeframes (Step 2)
  • Public involvement goals and anticipated outcomes (Step 3)
  • Geographic scope of outreach (Step 4)
  • List of major opportunities for public participation or engagement (Step 5)
Step 7:
Monitor Progress, Evaluate the Plan, and Improve/Modify Plan (If Needed)

• Evaluation and monitoring is an important part of improving community engagement processes
• Review process should be built into each engagement activity
• Three areas of focus for the feedback:
  1. **Was the activity successful?** - Report on the achievements and progress of the program
  2. **What have we learned?** - Examine the community engagement process against objectives and goals
  3. **What can we do better?** - Explore ways to better meet objectives and goals
Section 6: Resources and Templates

• Provides examples, resources, and templates to assist tribes throughout the development and implementation of the community engagement process

• TSWAN, the Tribal Solid Waste Advisory Network (comprised of 32 tribes and Alaskan Native Villages throughout EPA’s Region 10), has developed numerous waste management templates and documents for any tribal use. For more information, please contact Kami Snowden, TSWAN Executive Director at 509-235-6007 or ksnowden@tswan.org.
Questions