

Comments by Prof. Themelis in D-Waste page on Linked In, regarding reduction of MSW generated

Re recent discussion on waste reduction: There is no question that SOME of the waste generated in U.S. and Canada could be reduced. Both countries generate over 50% more waste per capita than Japan and other more advanced nations in northern Europe. But these nations still incinerate about 0.3 tons per capita, rather than landfill it. The situation with waste management is somewhat like that with public health: Good diet and exercise, vitamins, preventive medicine, all contribute to better health and less sickness. But despite all that, there will be some sick people who need to go to hospitals. It is obvious that advocating against hospitals will not improve public health.

It is the same situation with urban waste management: There are all kinds of means for reduction, recycling, composting but ALL human experience has shown that at the end there remains a substantial fraction that has to go to either "incinerators with energy recovery or to sanitary landfills. Environmental organizations who oppose these two means on principle, in effect are perpetuating traditional landfilling. Regrettably, the Sierra Club is spending a lot of money doing just that. NJT