Introduction

Objectives:

- Present a 30-year perspective of the WTE industry
- Ask three key questions
- Offer three challenges going forward
Industry Perspective

1970s

- An industry born in the United States
- 1973 Arab oil embargo presented business opportunity
- PURPA had public support for energy independence
- Tax credits fueled a boom
- Impossible without political and public support

Industry Perspective (con’t.)

1980s

- Expansion, setbacks, and opposition
- Refuse-derived fuel plant failures
- European mass burn market presence
- Vicious attacks on each other in public - tarnished image
- High temperature chloride corrosion failures - industry wide
Industry Perspective (con’t.)

1980s (con’t.)

- Dioxin emission discoveries - industry wide
- Became more vulnerable to political and activist attack
- Pass-through air pollution control changes mandated - after contracts awarded
- Became perceived as enemy of recycling - lost public support

1990s

- Rally and response
- Some industry cooperation - led by IWSA
- Dioxins minimized
- Technical problems addressed
- Integrated waste management strategy to restore public acceptance
- Concurrent new opposition
Industry Perspective (con’t.)

- 1990s (con’t.)
  - Major forces made it worse
    - Supreme Court decision to strike down flow control
    - Supreme Court decision to require testing of ash for toxicity
    - Plentiful landfill capacity at low cost with limited environmental restriction – lower tip fees

Industry Perspective (con’t.)

- Major forces made it worse (con’t.)
  - Clean Air Act Amendments - increased costs
  - Deregulation of power utilities - reduced energy revenues
  - Consolidations and bankruptcies
Industry Perspective (con’t.)

- 2000s
  - Full circle
  - Should be back where we started from - RPS might have replaced PURPA
  - The boom should be back - Business cycle should return
  - EXCEPT - poor public perception and lack of political support

Industry Perspective (con’t.)

- 2000s (con’t.)
  - Along with an uneven playing field
  - WTE unfairly cast as obsolete - “No more incineration!”
  - What went wrong?
  - Are we on the threshold of renewal or extinction?
Three Questions for the 21st Century

- How can we cooperate to create a new vision that communicates our strengths?
- Given a new vision, how can we improve public perception and support?
- Given a new vision and grassroots support, how can we utilize WTERT to level the playing field?

A Vision That Excites

- At eco/Technologies, we have proven that wastewater treatment sludge can be used as an air pollution control strategy
- We envision air pollution control at a profit
- We have not accepted defeat in developing new beneficial uses of ash at reasonable cost
- We envision profitable consumer products
Like ripples flowing outward, we refuse to accept the conventional wisdom. Rather, we offer:

Challenge One:

Industry, Government, and Academia Must Unite to Envision What is Possible to Contribute to Society’s Needs and Then Relentlessly Pursue the Products and Services Created
We believe that some of our products might one day reduce the cost of solar power.

We believe that some of our products might one day solve the global warming problem.

These projects are in the patent process right now.

You can’t inspire unless you dream.

Let’s dream together.

Look no further than ethanol to see what cooperatives can accomplish.

WTERT should consider leading this visioning process.
Given a vision that excites our industry, how do we communicate it?

Our industry has earned “Scars and Stripes Forever”

We have an unparalleled track record of improvement and environmental excellence

We are rugged, flexible, reliable, and resilient

We have integrated with recycling for the highest and best use of each waste product

No industry has achieved such high environmental standards or employee safety standards
Improving Public Perception (con’t.)

- Most of all, we are financeable.
- But who knows about us?
- Examples of industries becoming household names:
“Cotton – the Fabric of Our Lives”
Challenge Two:

We Must Promote Our Accomplishments and Environmental Contributions in a Way That Captures the Public’s Imagination
Improving Public Perception (con’t.)

- What does it take?
- A commitment to respect our competitors in public
- Have you ever seen Dow and Monsanto attack each other publicly?

Leveling The Playing Field

- Given a vision that excites and a means of communicating it.
- How do we professionally compare alternatives and compete fairly?
- What do we mean by uneven playing field?
Leveling The Playing Field (con’t.)

- Two examples:
  - Governmental regulation of landfills and WTE
  - Introduction of new technologies into the marketplace

Leveling The Playing Field (con’t.)

- Governmental Regulation Imbalance
  - Landfill gas given tax credit status - WTE limited incentive
  - Massachusetts moratorium on landfill lifted - WTE moratorium left in place
  - Absence of side-by-side comparisons of landfill and WTE environmental impacts by EPA
New Technologies

- Gasification companies claiming conventional WTE is obsolete
- We should always strive for improvement
- But not without the facts for side-by-side, comprehensive comparison

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Improving Public Perception (con’t.)

**Challenge Three:**

*We Must Set Standards for Fair Competition Based on Facts, Not Hype*

- Insist on objective, thorough comparison
- WTERT can play a critical role in this dialogue

Conclusion

- The WTE industry stands at a crossroads
- Capitalize on excellence to reinvent our public acceptance
- Some activists may become WTE proponents
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