



## Solid Waste Management Districts

In 1988, Ohio's legislature passed House Bill 592, an ambitious piece of legislation that significantly strengthened Ohio's 20-year-old solid waste law and that set in motion a planning process at both the local and state government levels. The overriding goals of this planning process are to ensure that there is adequate and environmentally sound management capacity for Ohio's solid waste and to increase the efforts of Ohio's communities, businesses and industries to reduce and recycle solid wastes.

House Bill 592 required the [Director of the Ohio EPA](#), with the advice of the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council (SWAC), to prepare a State Solid Waste Management Plan (State Plan) to meet specific requirements established in the statute. It also required all counties in Ohio to establish Solid Waste Management Districts (SWMDs), either independently or jointly with other counties. All SWMDs, in turn, were required to develop and implement their own solid waste management plans that comply with the goals established in the State Plan.

This document provides information regarding the structure and responsibilities of Ohio's SWMDs as well as the process SWMDs must follow to obtain an approved solid waste management plan and the contents of such a plan. Information regarding the State Plan, SWAC, and Ohio EPA's solid waste management planning program is available on a separate web page. If you are interested in learning more about those topics, please visit the [State Solid Waste Management Plan](#) page.

If you are a coordinator of a SWMD or are affiliated with a SWMD and are looking for a particular document or other information specific to SWMD operation, then please visit the [Solid Waste Management District Clearinghouse](#).

If you are interested in finding out more information regarding recycling and household hazardous waste management in Ohio and what programs are available in your county, please visit the [Recycling/Household Hazardous Waste](#) page.

## Solid Waste Management Districts

House Bill 592 required all counties in Ohio to become part of a SWMD, either jointly with other counties or individually as a single county. This requirement is found in Ohio Revised Code Sections 343.01 and 3734.52. As a result, Ohio's eighty-eight counties are organized into fifty-two SWMDs. Of the fifty-two SWMDs in Ohio, thirty-seven are single county SWMDs and fifteen are multi-county (joint) SWMDs. To see how Ohio's counties are organized into these 52 SWMDs, get "*SWMD map*" from the [documents menu](#). This map will also help you determine which SWMD you live in and should contact with your questions regarding where to take your recyclables as well as other questions regarding local solid waste management.

The primary responsibility of a SWMD is to prepare, ratify, and implement a solid waste management district plan that ensures that residents of the SWMD have access to adequate solid waste disposal capacity and that complies with the goals established in the State Plan. These goals include achievement of a 25 percent reduction/recycling rate for residential and commercial waste, a demonstration that residents have adequate access to recycling opportunities and programs, and provision of reduction, reuse, and recycling education. SWMDs are also required to meet certain goals related to the management and recycling/reduction of industrial waste (waste produced by manufacturing-type businesses).

To implement the solid waste management plan, Ohio Revised Code Sections 3734.57 and 3734.573 authorize each SWMD to levy fees on the disposal and/or generation of solid waste within the SWMD. If levied, these fees first must be ratified by the local political jurisdictions within the SWMD before they can be collected. Other funding mechanisms are also available to SWMDs, including grant funding available from the [Ohio Department of Natural Resources](#).

To learn more about the process for ratifying SWMD fees, you can download a **draft** version of the fact sheet titled [Ratification of Solid Waste Management District Disposal Fees](#). For detailed information on the revenues and expenditures of all SWMDs in the state, you can obtain a copy of the document titled *Solid Waste Management District Fee Summary*. This document contains a discussion of the types of fees SWMDs can levy as well as other types of funding mechanisms available to SWMDs. It also includes annual statements of revenues, expenditures, and account balances for each SWMD and the state as a whole. All documents are available on the [documents menu](#).

The daily activities of SWMDs are typically managed by District Coordinators. We encourage you to contact your local SWMD directly to learn more about the operation and role of your SWMD in your community as well as the recycling opportunities that are available in your SWMD (see the [SWMD Coordinators and Policy Committee Chairperson List](#)).

## **Solid Waste Management District Plans**

Each solid waste management district (SWMD) is required to develop a solid waste management district plan (SWMD plan or plan) in order to determine the solid waste management needs of the SWMD and provide an agenda for implementation of programs to meet those needs. As stated earlier, SWMD plans must achieve certain goals established in the State Plan. Typically, SWMD plans contain descriptions of the type and quantity of solid wastes generated in the SWMD, the current landfill disposal and recycling activities taking place, and descriptions of the reduction and recycling programs that will be implemented in the future. The SWMD plan may also establish the fee or other funding mechanisms that will be used to implement the plan.

Ohio Revised Code Sections 3734.54 and 3734.55 establish the process by which SWMDs obtain approved SWMD plans. The process of obtaining an approved SWMD plan is relatively lengthy and typically takes several years to complete. To learn more about your SWMD's plan, contact your local SWMD (see the [SWMD Coordinators and Policy Committee Chairpersons List on the documents menu](#)).

There are two phases in the process of obtaining an approved SWMD plan. In the first phase, the SWMD prepares a draft plan containing all of the required information and elements and submits the draft plan to Ohio EPA for review. Ohio EPA then issues what is known as a non-binding advisory opinion to the SWMD. The non-binding advisory opinion contains Ohio EPA's comments concerning deficiencies and discrepancies that are found during the review of the draft plan.

After receiving the non-binding advisory opinion, the SWMD begins phase two of the SWMD plan development process. The SWMD first makes whatever changes it determines are necessary to its plan. Next, the SWMD completes the ratification process. Ratification is the process, mandated by Ohio Revised Code Section 3734.55, that the SWMD must follow to have its plan approved by the local political jurisdictions within the SWMD. It is during the SWMD plan ratification process that members of the general public have the opportunity to comment on the SWMD's plan. To find out more about the SWMD plan ratification process, refer to the **draft** document [Ratification of Solid Waste Management District Plans](#). Following ratification, the SWMD submits its plan to Ohio EPA for a second review and ultimate approval or disapproval. If the SWMD is unable to obtain an approved SWMD plan, then there are ramifications for both the SWMD and Ohio EPA. At the extreme, Ohio EPA may be forced to write a plan for the SWMD and order the SWMD to implement that plan.

Ohio Revised Code Section 3734.56 requires SWMDs to update their plans every three or five years, depending upon the length of the period covered by the solid waste management plan. To learn more about the status of your SWMD's plan or to determine when the plan is scheduled to be updated refer to the document [SWMD Plan Update Schedule](#).