

State of Oregon  
Department of Environmental Quality

Memorandum

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**Date:** May 30, 2013

**To:** Environmental Quality Commission

**From:** Dick Pedersen, Director

**Subject:** Agenda item E, Informational item: Conversion technology rulemaking  
June 19-20, 2013, EQC meeting

**Why this is important** DEQ plans to propose final rules to the commission later this summer and would like to share information about the solid waste conversion technology rules under development before the commission takes action in August.

**Background and other information** This is a general update on rulemaking progress, stakeholder involvement and current status.

The proposed rules would establish a new class of solid waste disposal site called *conversion technology facilities*, which uses chemical or thermal processes to convert solid waste to chemicals, fuels or other useful products. An example of conversion technology is using a low oxygen, high heat and pressure process called pyrolysis to convert waste tires to diesel fuel or activated carbon.

In January 2012, DEQ convened an advisory committee to help develop proposed rules to regulate conversion technology facilities. DEQ completed the draft rules and posted them for public comment in January 2013. DEQ received a number of comments and decided to extend the rulemaking timeline to consider revisions to the draft rules where appropriate and to address stakeholder concerns. Key areas of concern or misunderstandings of the proposed rules include:

- Why conversion technology feedstocks meet the state definition of solid waste
- Why there is a need for a separate conversion technology permit category
- Questions about permit exemptions included in the proposed rules

**Public outreach** DEQ used an advisory committee process to help develop the proposed conversion technology rules. Fifteen committee members represented varied interests: waste conversion technology facility operators, anaerobic digestion facility operators, technology consultants, solid waste haulers, local governments, renewable energy advocates, the

public and environmental groups. In addition, DEQ consulted with two affected state agencies, the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Department of Energy, as part of this rule development.

The advisory committee met four times over seven months, and reviewed and commented on rule drafts and made important technical and practical recommendations.

**Next steps and  
commission  
involvement**

There is no request for commission action at this time. DEQ plans to present a staff report for commission review and consideration as part of the request for adoption of the conversion technology rules at the August EQC meeting.

**Attachments**

None

**Available online**

1. [DEQ's Conversion Technology Rulemaking website](#)

Approved:

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Section: \_\_\_\_\_

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