

House Research Act Summary

CHAPTER: 272

SESSION: 2010 Regular Session

TOPIC: Solid waste

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Overview

Chapter 272 amends the state's solid waste hierarchy, a declaration of policy that establishes preferred methods of waste management practices to protect the environment and public health by reducing waste, recovering energy and materials from waste, and other methods.

The current waste hierarchy is, in order of preference:

- reducing waste and reusing products and materials;
- recycling;
- composting yard waste and food waste;
- resource recovery through composting or incineration of mixed municipal solid waste;
- land disposal with methane recovery; and
- land disposal without methane recovery.

Chapter 272 amends the hierarchy by expanding the third element, composting, to include source-separated compostable materials, not just yard and food waste. Source-separated compostables also include fish and animal waste; plant materials; diapers; and non-recyclable paper (such as tissues and paper towels), which in itself represents ten percent of the total waste stream. These materials must be separated by generators for composting and must be collected separately from mixed municipal solid waste.