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How Green is Metropolitan Nashville?

THE METRO COUNCIL

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A MEMBER OF  
COMMUNITY SHARES

# PALE LIME

This was a constant refrain during the meetings of the 'Green Ribbon Committee' who would point to rankings of 'Green Cities' which had no (zero) cities in the southeast in the top 100. *Being the greenest city in the southeast is like being the healthiest person in the Intensive Care Unit.* BURNT supports the 'Green Ribbon Committee' as an innovative environmental effort which surpasses any effort by the three previous mayors. Our concern is that this will be a mostly public relations feel good effort.

## “Green Ribbon Committee—16 Goals and 71 Recommendations”

**December 2009** [HTTP://WWW.NASHVILLE.GOV/GREEN/DOCS/DECEMBER09UPDATE.PDF](http://www.nashville.gov/green/docs/december09update.pdf)

A FEW COMMENTS—

---THE GOAL OF ALL **DAVIDSON COUNTY STREAMS OFF THE EPA 303-D LIST** IS VERY AMBITIOUS AND LAUDABLE

---**OPEN SPACES** ARE VERY IMPORTANT *YET THE 13 ACRES OF THE FORMER THERMAL PLANT REMAINS BEHIND AN 8 FOOT FENCE WITH BARB WIRE ON TOP..* REPORTS OF GIFTING THIS TO THE SOUNDS FOR A BASEBALL STADIUM FOR 71 GAMES ANNUALLY WILL PERMANENTLY CLOSE THIS PART OF THE RIVER

----**RECYCLING AND WASTE REDUCTION—** WILL METRO CONTINUE TO RELY ON **FALSE AND FABRICATED SOLID WASTE FIGURES** TO REACH SOLID WASTE REDUCTION GOALS? [SEE REVERSE] IRONICALLY, FABRICATED FIGURES USED IN DECEMBER 2009 SOLID WASTE REPORT WILL HAUNT METRO BECAUSE YOU CAN ONLY FAKE THE BASE LINE FOR SO MANY YEARS [SEE BERNIE MADOFF] .

-----**GREEN HOUSE GASSES—**WE DID NOT SEE ANY CONSIDERATION OF THE **CONSIDERABLE GREEN HOUSE GASSES CREATED BY LANDFILLING 800,000 TONS OF METRO SOLID WASTE** —WHEN WILL THIS BE CONSIDERED

-----**SOLID WASTE—**WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY **METRO IS NOT INFLUENCING STATE SOLID WASTE 'REFORM' TO MAKE COMPOSTING THE PRIMARY METHOD OF DISPOSAL** BAND AIDS OF MORE CURBY AND TRASH RECEPTACLES DO NOT CUT IT.

-----**ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE—**WHO BENEFITS FROM THESE REFORMS? PORTIONS OF NORTH NASHVILLE HAVE A RATE OF INFANT MORTALITY THAT RIVALS THE POOREST NATIONS IN AFRICA..

**WE WISH THE GREEN RIBBON COMMITTEE WOULD MEET AGAIN IN PUBLIC** **EVALUATE THIS REPORT**  
THE NEXT STEP-- A TIGHT FOCUS ON METRO'S NEARLY \$2 BILLION BUDGET TO MAKE VENDORS GREEN

**PLEASE SEE REVERSE FOR ANALYSIS OF METRO'S SOLID WASTE FIGURES—**

**IF THIS IS GREEN IT MUST BE DOLLAR BILL GREEN**

**BURNT**     “Analysis of False Metro Nashville [and State] Solid Waste Numbers”  
30 December 2009

The Metro Nashville Department of Public Works issued the report in December 2008 which was written by two engineers--one local and one out of state. The key page in the 65 page report [at one time on-line under Metro Public Works] described the waste stream and alleged 421,405.46 tons of public and private sector waste were recycled/composted out of a total Municipal Solid Waste Stream [including Construction and Demolition waste] of 1,287,077.00 tons in year 2007 taken from the 2007 Metropolitan Nashville Annual Progress Report submitted to the State. These figures have been protested vigorously to multiple Metro and State agencies. The indicators the Waste Stream figures are false---

1. the numbers were broken down to the hundredth of a ton [20 pounds] in a 1,287,077.00 million ton waste stream--for example--128,001.17 tons of ferrous metals or 46,328.58 tons of corrugated cardboard. This is impossible and fraudulent misrepresentation.
2. The *only* firm numbers in the State of Tennessee solid waste are what is reported by the landfills back to the local governments on amount of waste landfilled by the county. However, only gross tonnage is reported not the type and classes of waste. Occasional audits have found these numbers to be inaccurate which may allow landfills to pack in more waste although fully paid by the haulers.
3. The primary basis of the of the claimed 421,405.46 tons of “Total Public and Private Sector Recycling” are eleven handwritten, faxed reports from large companies to Metro Public Works which were neither challenged or analyzed--simply added together. It does include a claimed diversion from Construction and Demolition Waste of 40,870.00 tons. NOTE There is a number 75,403.32 tons for “MULCH” which is primarily NES tree trimmings. .
4. The entire supposition that someone is tracking different elements in the composition of the waste stream is completely untrue. These numbers are manufactured out of whole cloth. The ‘State Solid Waste Task Force’ comprised mostly of local solid waste managers as part of State solid waste reform, voted unanimously the local reports on solid waste to the State do not reflect reality. Nashville is simply one example of false figures forming state solid waste policy.
5. We have written numerous letters to Public Works, the Mayor, Purchasing, Metro Legal, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, and the State Architect and Engineering Board.

**What Does It Matter--**

- A. This false information is the basis of public policy. It creates an impossible base line to measure future recycling and diversion
- B. Tennessee landfills are very unhealthy because we landfill materials such as organic food waste and yard waste which should be composted. Landfills create dangerous methane gas and polluted water which contribute to very high rates of infant mortality in Tennessee.
- C. Solid waste reform needs the leadership of Nashville but these false figures indicate everything is fine with Metro solid waste.

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