

# WASTE NEWS

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## Panelists seek ways to spread the word

By Allan Gerlat

KANSAS CITY, MO. — Many obstacles remain to putting industrial byproducts to use, officials agree. But the biggest challenge right now might be just getting the word out.

In its third year, the Byproducts Beneficial Use Summit has made good progress in addressing the barriers to putting those materials to reuse, said officials at the 2004 meeting. But the group needs to do a better job of educating others, many pointed out.

"There's a pressing need to put all this information in one place," said Elizabeth Olenbush of Foundry Industry Recycling Starts Today, speaking at the group's industry/regulator roundtable discussion. With computer technology as it is today, it would be easy and inexpensive to compile a site containing information such as successful applications of byproducts. "This would not only help the states but also (industry) professionals. Unless we all come together, we're going to have the same discussions 10 years from now." Later, Jennifer Griffith of the Northeast Waste Management Officials Association proposed expanding their existing online database toward that end.

The summit, held Nov. 8-9 in Kansas City, was put on by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Marketing for the conference was handled by Waste News.

Susan Mooney of the EPA Re-

vinced the material is a product and not solid waste. The tangible benefit often is not immediately apparent. "It's not a bean. My boss can't count it," Cronin said. Another barrier he deals with is lack of time for such issues. "But I

"We all share the same goal. We're all dedicated to preserving our resources."

But mistrust between industry and regulators continues. In the session's question and answer portion, a member of the audience asked what kind of progress there's been regarding trust. Cronin said it depends on the byproduct. With materials such as organics, he said, "I'm afraid I'm going to have to be fairly skeptical. I think industry tries to dispose of things ...that may cause harm."

One person suggested companies would engender more trust if

they hired a qualified outside consultant to help in the process. Said LaFarge's Watson: "If we can demonstrate that environmentally we want to do the right thing, the regulators will have better chance of trusting us."

Added Jansen: "We have to hold each other accountable within our industries."

CEOs now are being held more responsible for a company's behavior. "I think it's fortunately changing the way we do business," he said. ■

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**THE LINEUP:** Panelists at the Byproducts Summit included, from left, William Thacker, National Council for Air & Stream Improvement; Joseph Cronin, Kansas Department of Health and Environment; Thomas Jansen, American Coal Ash Association; and Mary Setnicar, U.S. EPA Region 5.

gion 5 agreed with Olenbush. "We're trying to help our state colleagues understand what's going on," she said. "I see that as a critical role."

State regulatory agencies are key, said William Thacker of the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement. Byproducts promoters need to provide information that will make state agencies comfortable in approving byproducts uses.

But byproducts reuse advocates face obstacles other than information dissemination. Joe Cronin works for the Department of Health and Environment for Kansas. The state is one of many where officials need to be con-

spend as much time on it as I can because I think it's the right thing to do."

Representatives from industry at the conference expressed similar sentiments. "I think industry really needs to take an active part in this," said David Watson of cement maker LaFarge North America. At his company, "It's a worldwide objective to use materials." But there are obstacles for industry as well, and one is inconsistency between states on byproducts rules such as moving material from state to state. "We shouldn't have a limitation on the regulation to do that."

Added Thomas Jansen of the American Coal Ash Association,

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