Our basic motto is: **„The best waste is the waste that has never been produced“**.

Our activities are focused on prevention, minimization, sorting collection and recycling of waste. We point out problems connected with burning and landfilling of waste. We are aware of certain amount of waste which can not be recycled and the only way of recovery is to burn it to produce energy (energetic recovery) using the best available technologies to mimimize detrimental effect on the environment.

To meet these goals we provide public education at schools, as well as information kiosks during the environmentally focused events. We often participate at the Earth Day events organized for the kindergartens and primary schools. Besides, we do research in this field, e.g. separate collection economy in municipalities, public opinion polls etc. We also monitor legislation, make comments and point out problems. We communicate with legislators to reach improvements.

Enhancement of the economic environment of separate collection in municipalities

Nowadays the separate collection in Slovak municipalities represents an economic burden. It leads to a weak developement of collection and reuse of municipal waste. Because of higher costs of collection systems and poor financial support from the industry, majority of municipal waste is landfilled. Landfilling is the cheapest solution for majority of municipalities, but we consider this state unsustainable.

We support such a setting of the waste management (mainly the legislation) which proclaims that waste is worth separating. Responsibility for waste must be carried more by the industry, because it is a primary waste producer. „Pay as you throw“ principle must be put into practice at all levels of the waste management. Waste management systems in municipalities must stimulate prevention and separation: the inhabitants who separate and produce less mixed waste will pay less.

Deposit of one way beverage containers

We consider a deposit of one way beverage containers (mainly PET bottles and beverage cans) to be a very important way to decrease littering. Simultaneuously, pure secondary raw material is obtained by the deposit system. This system has much more higher effectiveness than the best separate collection systems.

Experiences from other countries showed that the deposit systems can collect 70 – 90 % of beverage containers, while separate collection systems can collect 20 – 40 % only.

In Slovakia, estimated recovery rate of PET bottles is 40 %. The rest (60 %) is burned, landfilled and littered.

The best operation of the deposit systems is when they are not imposed by state authority, but they are designed by beverage industry. However, to compel beverage industry to deposit, strong Ministry of the environment is needed, which sets high limits for material recovery of the beverage containers. If industry does not meet them, strict sanctions will be imposed, e.g. rapidly higher tax for sold beverage containers in Norway (if recovery rate is under 25%, the tax is almost sixfold higher than if recovery rate is 95%). It it clear that reaching the limits is possible only by the deposit system, so beverage industry must design it and operates it.

There is no or slight increase of beverage price due to deposit – up to 1%. Unredeemed deposits are important part of financing the deposit system costs. Environmental benefit of the deposit system is enourmous.

The deposit system is running in most countries worldwide:

USA – deposit system for one way containers has been introduced in 11 states, e.g.: California, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon and others

Canada - deposit system for one way containers has been introduced in 11 provinces, e.g.: Ontario, Québec, British Columbia, Alberta, Nova Scotia and others.

In Europe the deposit system for one way containers exists in 9 countries: Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Germany, Estonia, Croatia and the Netherlands.

For more information about the deposit system look at:

www.bottlebill.org

www.container-recycling.org

Biowaste

Biowaste comprises the largest volume of municipal waste (40 – 60 %), so it is important to deal with it. Biowaste causes a lot of problems when it is landfilled, e.g. it fills uselessly the space of a landfill, and it also contributes to dangerous leachate and methane production. Therefore biowaste, but also paper, wood and other biodegradable materials, make landfilling dangerous for climate change, too.

On the other hand, biowaste is a raw material for very valuable product – compost. Compost improves soil quality (e.g. humus content, humid capacity and nutrient content) and it creates better environment for plants growth.

Our activities are aimed at diverting biowaste stream from landfilling to recovery via:

- home composting – at the households and in residential districts of small villages
- industry composting – at town and agglomeration level
- anaerobic digestion – at town and agglomeration level

For more information look at: www.bioodpady.sk

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