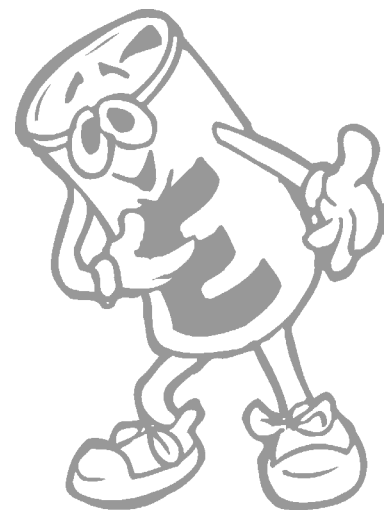
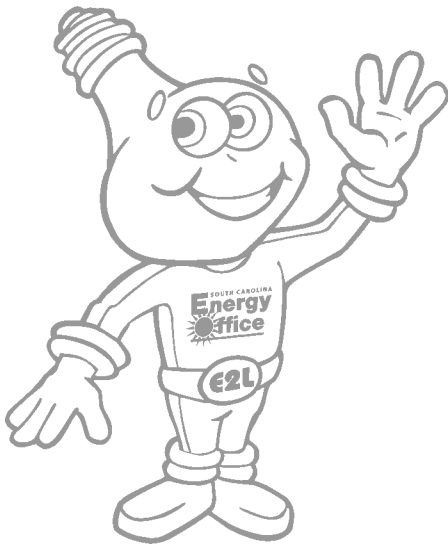


Environmental Outreach GLOSSARY



*Presented by the
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control*

DHEC and Other Environmental Web Sites

DHEC's Bureau of Air Quality
www.scdhec.net/baq

DHEC's Bureau of Land and Waste Management
www.scdhec.net/lwm

DHEC's Bureau of Water
www.scdhec.net/water

DHEC's Division of Health Hazard Evaluation
www.scdhec.net/eqc/admin/html/healthhaz.html

DHEC Environmental Quality Control
www.scdhec.net/eqc

DHEC's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management
www.scdhec.net/ocrm

DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling
www.scdhec.net/recycle

S.C. Energy Office
www.state.sc.us/energy

S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control
www.scdhec.net

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov

U.S. EPA Explorer's Club
www.epa.gov/kids

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Glossary of Environmental Terms

Have you ever heard of a MRF (pronounced murph)?

Or wonder what ambient air was? How about runoff? Or biomass? Just what is an ebb tide?

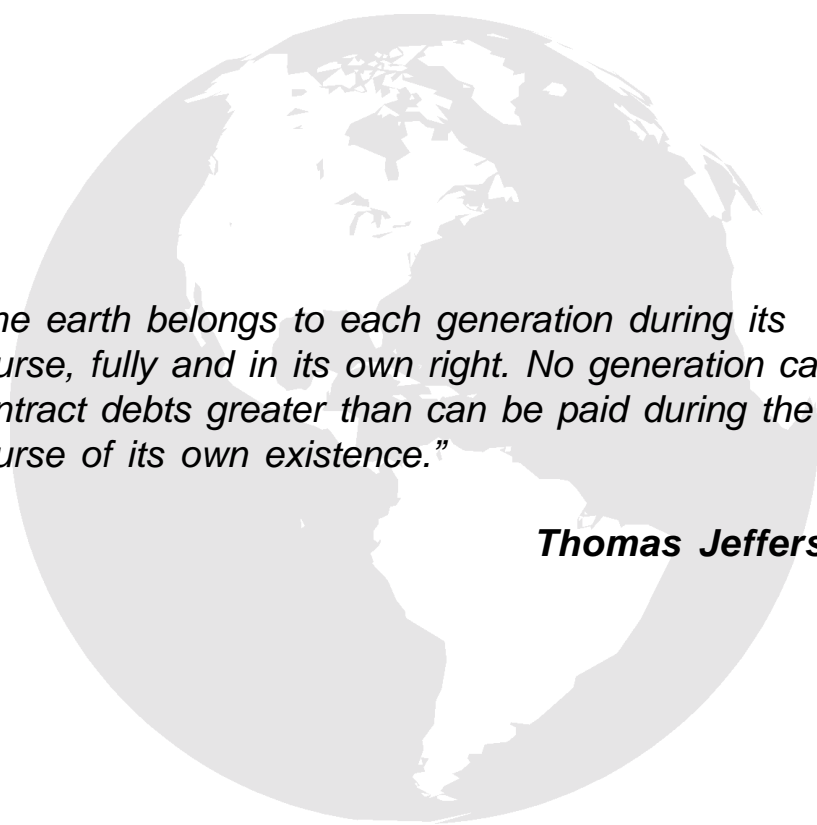
You can find out the definitions to these and other environmental terms in the “Environmental Outreach Glossary.” The glossary is designed to give general definitions of the more commonly used environmental terms. It is offered as part of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control’s overall environmental education and outreach programs, which includes “Action for a cleaner tomorrow: A South Carolina Environmental Curriculum Supplement.”

The definitions do not constitute DHEC’s official use of terms for regulatory purposes. Specific legal definitions of some words may be found in various South Carolina laws and regulations.

Anyone with suggestions for future editions should write to: DHEC’s Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201, call **1-800-768-7348** or e-mail the Office at **cheslerl@columbu34.dhec.state.sc.us**.

This glossary is a publication of the DHEC’s Environmental Outreach Workgroup. For more information on any of the publications and programs offered by DHEC’s Environmental Outreach Workgroup, call **1-800-768-7348**.

March 2001



“The earth belongs to each generation during its course, fully and in its own right. No generation can contract debts greater than can be paid during the course of its own existence.”

Thomas Jefferson

A

accretion - An increase in size. Beaches accrete as more and more sand washes ashore than is removed by waves and tidal action.

acidity - The quality, state or degree of being acid.

acid anhydrides - Oxides produced by burning nonmetals that, when combined with water, form acids. As gases, acid anhydrides may dissolve in rain to form acid rain.

acid rain - Caused by emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. When fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas are burned, many substances are emitted into the air. Sulfur dioxide and nitrogen compounds that contribute to air pollution travel through the air and react with each other in sunlight to form secondary pollutants such as sulfuric acid and nitric acid. When these acids fall to earth with rain, it is called acid rain. Also, snow, hail, rain or fog that has a low pH resulting from pollutants in the air, especially sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides.

active solar energy - Energy from the sun used to generate electricity and to produce liquid or gaseous fuels. Active systems include hydroelectric energy, solar thermal energy conversion, biomass, ocean thermal energy conversion and satellite power systems.

advance disposal fee (ADF) - A fee charged at the time of purchase. The funds usually go to support recycling and reduction programs.

advertising - Communications designed to help sell or promote a product or concept.

advertisement - A public notice.

aerate - To expose to the circulation of air, as in aerating a compost pile.

aerobic - Able to live and grow in the presence of free oxygen. Aerobic bacterial decomposition results in the conversion of organic wastes to compost.

airborne - Carried by or through the air.

air pollution - The contamination of the atmosphere by pollutants from industry, fuel exhaust and other pollution creating processes. The five primary air pollutants are carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen compounds, particulate matter and sulfur dioxide.

air quality index - A guide used to show the amount of air pollutants in the outside air as well as to provide information about possible health effects.

air quality monitoring - The observation or testing to measure pollutants in outdoor air.

air quality standards - The maximum concentration of pollutants allowed by laws or regulations during a specified time in a defined area.

alkaline - The opposite of acidic. Basic. Having a pH greater than 7.

alkalinity - Relating to, containing or having the properties of alkali. Having a pH greater than 7.

alternating current (AC) - An electric current with its direction reversed at regular intervals. Electric current in the U.S. alternates with a frequency of 60 hertz, or cycles per second. Some European countries use 50 hertz.

alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) - A vehicle that uses non-petroleum-based fuel, such as compressed natural gas or ethanol.

altitude - The height of something measured in relation to a reference level, such as above the earth's surface.

aluminum - A light, strong, silver-colored metal made mostly of bauxite ore. One of the most common materials accepted for recycling.

amber glass - A term used by the glass industry to refer to brown glass.

ambient air - Outside air.

America Recycles Day - A day held nationally every November 15 to celebrate the importance of recycling and buying recycled. Events are held throughout the country. People are asked to sign challenge cards, pledge to recycle and buy recycled. Contests and prizes are held on the state and national level. DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling is part of the statewide committee that plans events and contests in South Carolina.

ampere (AMP) - Unit used to measure electric current. It is proportional to the quantity of electrons flowing through a conductor past a given point in one second.

anaerobic - Able to live and grow only in the absence of free oxygen; anaerobic decomposition of organic wastes by bacteria results in the production and release of methane gas.

animal waste conversion - The process of obtaining gas or other materials from animal waste.

anthracite coal - Hard coal generally found deep in the earth. Used as a fuel in household heating systems; produces almost no smoke when it burns.

aquifer - An underground geologic formation in which the cracks in rock, sand, soil or gravel are filled with water.

area source - A source of air pollution not emitted from industrial stacks or vents such as fireplaces, wood stoves and gasoline-powered lawn equipment.

asbestos - A mineral made up of long, thin fibrous material. Asbestos may be harmful to human health by causing asbestosis (a lung disease), heart disease, immune system damage, lung cancer and stomach cancer.

aseptic packaging - Packaging used to make drink boxes, usually single-serve containers for juice. The boxes are made of aluminum foil, plastic and paper.

ash - The primary residue left after something is burned.

ash monofill - A specially constructed landfill to be used only for disposing ash from various types of incineration.

atmosphere - The gaseous envelope surrounding the earth.

atom - The smallest particle of an element that has the characteristics of that element.

B

bale - A large block of recyclables held together with plastic strapping.

baler - A machine that compacts waste materials, usually into rectangular bales. Balers often are used on newspaper, plastics and corrugated cardboard.

barrel - A unit used to measure petroleum that is equal to 42 gallons.

barrier island - An offshore island composed primarily of sand. Barrier islands provide protection from the sea for marsh and mainland areas.

base cup - The high density polyethylene (HDPE) plastic base sometimes found on plastic soft drink bottles made of polyethylene terephthalate (PET).

baseline - A line established at the crest of the primary oceanfront sand dune.

base load - The minimum demand on an electric or gas utility over a given period of time. In electricity, measured in kilowatts or megawatts.

beach/dune system - Land from the mean high-water mark of the Atlantic Ocean landward to the 40-year setback line. See *setback line*.

beach renourishment - The artificial establishment and periodic renourishment of a beach with sand. The renourishment is done to be compatible with the beach in such a way as to create a dry sand beach at all stages of the tide.

best management practices - A technique that is determined to be the most effective, practical means of preventing or reducing pollution.

bimetal container - A container made out of two metals. The body of the can is typically steel while the lid is aluminum. Examples include fruit, vegetable and soup cans.

bioaccumulation - Concentration of chemicals in the fatty tissues of living organisms, which may move up the food chain over time.

bioconversion - A general term describing the conversion of one form of energy into another by plants or microorganisms. An example is the digestion of solid wastes or sewage sludge by microorganisms to form methane.

biodegradable - Capable of being broken down by microorganisms into simple, stable compounds such as carbon dioxide and water.

biodiversity - The vast diversity of plants and animals on earth.

biogenic emissions - Air pollution from natural sources such as trees, shrubs and other vegetation.

biomass - Forms of matter that come from living things that can be burned to generate energy.

bituminous coal - Soft coal. It is younger and of lower heat value than anthracite coal. Bituminous coal is the chief fuel in plants that generates electrical energy with steam.

body copy - The text of an advertisement.

boiler efficiency - The ability of a unit to convert a form of energy (gas, oil or coal) to heat energy at the highest possible rate.

bottle bill - A law requiring deposits on beverage containers. Proponents of this legislation believe that bottle bills encourage recycling. Opponents believe it is an unfair burden placed on an industry and does not improve recycling rates. South Carolina does not have a bottle bill.

bottom ash - The ash produced from incineration that must be disposed in a landfill.

British thermal unit (Btu) - The amount of heat needed to increase the temperature of one pound of water 1 degree Fahrenheit.

broadsheet - A term for 18th century newspapers.

broadside - A single sheet of music.

brown goods - Bulky household items that are difficult to recycle. Examples include mattresses and furniture.

buffer strip or zone - Strips of grass or other erosion resistant vegetation between a waterway and an area of more intensive land use.

building orientation - The arrangement of a building in relation to sun exposure, prevailing winds and so on. It affects heat loss and gain in a building and is an important consideration for passive solar energy.

bulkhead - A retaining wall designed to retain fill material, but not to withstand wave force on an exposed shoreline.

Bureau of Air Quality - The bureau of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control charged with permitting and monitoring air quality and educating the public about clean air.

Bureau of Land and Waste Management - The bureau of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control charged with permitting and monitoring land use and solid waste management and educating the public about waste management policies.

Bureau of Water - The bureau of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control charged with implementing the Clean Water Act and preserving and protecting South Carolina's water resources and aquatic environment.

buy-back center - A place to sell recyclable materials.

buy-back programs - Programs that buy recyclables from the public.

buy recycled - Purchasing products made from or that contain materials with recycled content.



car pool - A group of people who agree to travel together in one car to their place of work, study or other destination in order to save money and gasoline and to improve air quality.

carbon - A nonmetallic element found in some inorganic and all organic materials. Occurs naturally as diamonds and graphite.

carbon dioxide (CO₂) - A common, colorless, odorless gas formed by respiration, combustion and decomposition; comprises 0.03 percent of air.

carbon monoxide (CO) - A gas that you cannot see or smell. It is produced whenever something is burned incompletely or when something is burned in a closed area. CO is toxic to all humans and animals. It also is the most commonly inhaled poisonous substance and is a common indoor air pollutant.

carcinogen - A substance that can cause cancer.

cardboard - A kind of paper that is thicker, heavier and more rigid than other papers. It is known as paperboard within the paper industry and includes corrugated boxes and boxboard (such as cereal boxes).

Carolina Bay - An elliptically shaped depression containing fresh water wetlands. All Carolina Bays are aligned in a northwest southeast direction. They are found only in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

Carolina Recycling Association (CRA) - A non-profit organization established to promote recycling through education. The CRA, a joint operation of North Carolina and South Carolina,

publishes a newsletter, offers a resource library and sponsors workshops, conferences and seminars throughout the year.

catalytic converter - A device used to reduce air pollution from vehicle exhaust.

caulking - The filling of cracks with a solid material to inhibit air flow. Caulking of windows and door frames helps to conserve energy.

caution - In labeling household hazardous materials, caution means be careful. The product should be used with care.

cell - An area in a landfill where solid waste is disposed of each day.

Center for Waste Minimization (CWM) - A service offered by the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control to help industries and businesses reduce waste and prevent pollution.

chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) - Any of various compounds comprised of carbon, hydrogen, chlorine and fluorine that were once used as coolants for refrigeration and air conditioning as well as in some products like aerosol hair spray. CFCs are harmful to the ozone layer.

cinquain - A form of poetry with five lines.

circuit - The complete path traveled by an electric current.

Clean Air Act - Originally passed in 1963 and amended in 1970, 1977 and 1990 to give the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) the responsibility of setting air quality standards for each air pollutant.

clean fuels - Low-pollution fuels like ethanol or compressed natural gas (CNG) that can replace traditional fuels.

Clean Water Act (CWA) - Originally passed in 1972, it regulates discharges of pollutants to waters of the U.S.

climate - Weather conditions such as temperature, precipitation and wind that are typical in an area or region.

closed-loop recycling - A system in which materials are continually recycled into the same product. Examples include aluminum cans and glass bottles.

cloud - A visible mass of very fine droplets of water or particles of ice in the atmosphere above the earth's surface.

coal - A solid, combustible, organic hydrocarbon formed by the decomposition of vegetable material without free access to air.

code - A system of symbols given certain meanings, such as the numbering codes given to plastic packages to indicate the material type.

cogeneration - Use of a single fuel source, such as coal or natural gas, to produce steam to operate machinery and, at the same time, to generate electricity.

combustibles - Materials from the waste stream that can be burned.

combustion - Burning of coal, wood or other material accompanied by the release of energy in the form of heat and light. Combustion is a major contributor to air pollution.

commercial waste - Waste material that originates in wholesale business establishments, office buildings, stores, schools, hospitals and government agencies. Also known as retail waste.

commingled recyclable materials - A mixture of several recyclables in one container.

compliance - The full implementation and observance of state and federal requirements, standards and regulations.

compost - The product resulting from the decomposition of organic materials such as yard waste. Compost can be used as a soil conditioner.

composting - The conversion of organic materials to humus by microorganisms. Composting is an effective solid waste management method for reducing the organic

portion of waste, including lawn clippings, leaves, kitchen scraps and manure.

compost pile - A place, such as an outside pit or bin, set aside for composting waste.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Liability and Compensation Act (CERCLA) - Passed by Congress in 1980 and usually referred to as Superfund, a fund to help pay for the management and cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

compressed natural gas (CNG) - A highly compressed form of natural gas. This fuel can be used in place of gasoline to power specially retrofitted vehicles.

concentration - In chemistry, the amount of a specified substance in a unit amount of another substance.

condensation - The process by which a substance changes from its gaseous state to its liquid state.

conductor (electrical) - A material capable of carrying an electrical current.

conservation - The planned management of natural resources to prevent loss, destruction or waste.

consumer - A person who buys goods or services.

consuming/consumption - Buying and using goods or services.

contaminants - Compounds that pollute, making the original substance impure or unusable.

contamination - The process of making the original substance impure or unusable.

convenience centers - See *recycling centers*.

conversion - Can refer to the use of one energy source to produce another, such as gas used to produce electricity.

cooling season - The hottest months of the year.

corrosive - In hazardous waste labeling, corrosive means that a product may eat through other items, such as its container.

corrugated paper - Paper or cardboard manufactured in a series of wrinkles or folds or into alternating ridges and grooves.

cover material - The soil used to cover solid waste in a landfill.

cradle-to-grave - A system that manages solid waste from creation to disposal. In product design, it refers to its creation from raw or recycled materials through manufacturing, use, consumption and disposal.

criteria pollutants - Pollutants for which there is a National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). These pollutants include ozone, lead, particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide.

critical area - Coastal waters, tidelands, beach/dune systems and beaches.

crumb rubber - Rubber that has been ground into small pieces.

cullet - Clean, generally color-sorted crushed glass used to make glass products.

cumulus - A type of cloud that is fluffy and flat based.

curbside collection - A recycling program where recyclable materials are collected from homes or places of business by municipal or private parties for transfer to a designated collection site or recycling facility.

custodian - A person responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of a facility.

cycle - A repeated event or sequence of events.

D

danger - In household hazardous materials labeling, danger means that exposure or unsafe use may cause injury, illness or death.

database - A collection of data or information arranged for computer access.

decompose - To break down into component parts or basic elements; decomposition of organic waste materials by bacteria is an essential life process because it makes essential nutrients available for use by plants and animals.

degradable - Can be decomposed, or broken down, such as yard wastes in a compost pile.

deinking - A process by which most of the ink, filler and other materials are removed from waste paper before using it to manufacture new paper.

demolition debris - Waste materials produced during construction or remodeling including items such as used lumber, masonry, gypsum wallboard, shingles and insulation.

DHEC (The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control) - DHEC was created in 1973 when the State Board of Health and the Pollution Control Authority merged. DHEC is responsible for protecting the state's environment and the health of South Carolinians.

detinning - A process by which the thin tin coating is removed and recovered from steel cans.

dewater - To remove the water from waste.

diamante - A form of poetry shaped in the form of a diamond.

dilute - To make thinner or weaker as by mixing or dispersing.

dioxin - A group of compounds that are extremely toxic.

direct current - An electric current that flows in only one direction through a circuit, as from a battery.

disinfection - The process of treating water with chemicals or other means to kill microorganisms.

dissolved oxygen (DO) - The amount of free oxygen dissolved in water. Concentrations less than 5 parts per million can limit aquatic life. Low DO is generally due to excessive organic matter present in water as a result of inadequate waste treatment and runoff from agricultural or urban land.

distillates - The liquid condensed from vapor in distillation.

distribution - The act or process of distributing electric energy from convenient points on the transmission or bulk power system to the consumer. The power lines that carry electricity to a home are distribution power lines.

distribution system - A series of pipes that carry clean drinking water from the water treatment plant to individual homes, schools and businesses.

diversion rate - A measure of the amount of waste being diverted from the municipal solid waste stream, either through recycling or composting.

do-it-yourselfer - A term for people who choose to change their own motor oil. These people are the focus of campaigns to get people to recycle their used motor oil.

double-glazed window - Two panes of glass, factory-sealed together with a small air space between them. This is more energy efficient than a single-glazed window.

DOT - The acronym for the U.S. Department of Transportation.

drinking water - The water resources considered available and drinkable.

drop-off - A method of collecting recyclable materials where individuals take their recyclables to a designated collection site.

drop-off center - A designated site in the community where individuals may bring recyclables. See recycling center.

dry fallout - Acids that fall to the earth.

dump - An open, unmanaged, illegal disposal site used instead of a permitted landfill.

dumpster - A large container to keep waste until it is collected by the trash hauler. Dumpsters often are used by stores, apartment buildings and restaurants.

E

Earth Day - Held on April 22 each year to promote awareness of environmental issues, the first Earth Day was in 1970.

ebb tide - An outgoing tide.

ecology - The scientific study of the relations of living things to one another and to their environment.

ecosystem - A system made up of a community of living things and the physical and chemical environment in which they interact.

editorial - An article published expressing the opinions of its editors and publishers.

effluent - Solid, liquid or gas waste that can enter the environment as a by-product of a chemical or biological process.

electric cooperative - A group of persons who have organized a joint venture, owned by its members, for the purpose of supplying electrical energy to a specific area.

electric demand - The requirement for electricity to be delivered by a system at a given instant, or averaged over any designated period of time, expressed in kilowatt or other suitable units.

electric resistance heat - Electric resistance heat works by using a metal element to convert electric current into heat. Virtually all of the energy in the electricity ends up as usable heat, but, as a whole, this system is inefficient and expensive due to heat losses during transmission. These units can be installed on a baseboard or a wall or can be portable.

electricity - The flow of charged particles (electrons) through a conductor.

embedded energy - The total amount of energy an item uses during its lifetime.

emissions - Discharges into the atmosphere from sources such as industrial stacks or vents, residential chimneys, motor vehicles, locomotives and aircraft.

emission standard - The maximum amount of an air pollutant legally permitted to be discharged from a single source.

end users - A business or manufacturer that takes recyclable materials and converts them into new products.

energy - The ability or capacity for doing work by a body or a system. The measurement of the total heat in a system. Heat can be converted between a number of forms, including light, motion, electricity and warmth.

energy audit - Examination of a building, original drawing, energy history and usage patterns to identify energy saving opportunities.

energy conservation - The practice of extending the useful life of the earth's energy resources through wise and efficient management.

energy efficiency - Making energy consuming devices work with less energy.

energy recovery - Recovering energy from waste. For example, used oil is burned to generate heat that produces electricity.

energy shortage - The situation that occurs when the supply of fuel is not great enough to satisfy the demand for energy.

entropy - A measure of the capacity of a system to undergo spontaneous change.

envelope - The exterior structure of a building (roof, exterior walls and floor).

environment - All the conditions, circumstances, and influences surrounding and affecting the development or existence of people or other living things.

environmental impact - A positive or negative effect on an environment.

environmental justice - The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and incomes with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental policies, programs, laws and regulations.

enviroshopping - The practice of making purchasing decisions based on a commitment to preserving the environment. Enviroshopping includes buying recycled products, products with a minimum of packaging and products that are not harmful when manufactured and can be recycled.

EPA - The acronym for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It is the federal agency of the U.S. government that sets environmental protection and enforcement standards. The EPA was created in 1970 and serves the entire country through its regional offices. South Carolina is in Region IV. The agency's headquarters is in Washington, D.C.

erosion - The wearing away of rock or soil by the gradual detachment of soil or rock fragments by water, wind, ice and other mechanical and chemical forces.

estimate - To make a judgment.

estuary - A protected coastal body of water in which fresh flow meets salt water tide. Examples include marshes, mudflats, water and sand shoals.

ethanol - A colorless liquid that burns to produce water and carbon dioxide. The vapor forms an explosive mixture with air and may be used as a fuel in vehicles. Ethanol is a type of alcohol and is most easily produced by the fermentation of carbohydrates from agricultural products such as corn.

eutrophication - The aging process by which lakes are fertilized with nutrients. Eutrophication of a lake normally contributes to its slow evolution into a marsh or bog. Human activities also may accelerate the aging process.

evaporation - The process by which a substance changes from its liquid state to its gaseous state.

E-waste - Electronic waste such as televisions and computers.

exponential function - In math, expressed in terms of a designated power.

F

fecal coliform bacteria - A variety of organisms common to the intestinal tracts of people and animals whose presence in wastewater is an indicator of pollution and potentially dangerous bacterial contamination.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) - The federal agency that supervises and regulates business competition by investigating unfair or harmful trade practices, such as misrepresentation in advertising.

ferrous metals - Metals that are predominantly composed of iron.

fertilizer - A material such as compost or a chemical compound added to soil to increase its fertility.

fiberfill - Thin hair-like fibers of PET plastic used to insulate jackets, sleeping bags and other materials we use to stay warm.

filter - A porous substance through which a gas or liquid is passed in order to remove its contaminants.

finished water - Water that has been processed for drinking at a water treatment plant.

finite - Being of limited quantity. Finite commonly refers to non-renewable energy sources, such as fossil fuels.

fission - The splitting of a heavy atom into two parts, releasing large amounts of heat energy and one or more neutrons.

flake - Small bits of recycled PET bottles that are easier to melt in the recycling process.

flammable - Capable of igniting easily and burning quickly.

floatation deinking - A process in paper recycling where the ink is floated off paper with water.

fly ash - Small particles of ash and soot which are collected by pollution control devices during the incineration of solid wastes.

fog - Water vapor that has condensed to fine droplets lying in cloud-like masses close to the ground.

food chain - A succession of organisms in a feeding chain in which food energy is transferred from one organism to another as each consumes a lower member and is, in turn, preyed upon by a higher member.

fossil fuels - Coal, oil, natural gas and other combustible materials originating from geologic deposits of ancient plant and animal life. Fossil fuels are a nonrenewable energy source.

fuel cell - A device in which fuel and oxygen are combined to produce chemical energy that is converted directly into electrical energy.

fusion - A nuclear reaction involving the combination of smaller atomic nuclei into larger ones with the release of energy. This process is also called a thermonuclear reaction because of the high temperature required to initiate it.

G

garbage - Another word for solid waste, particularly household waste.

gas - One of the states of matter in which a substance has no fixed form or volume and takes the shape of its container.

gasification - The conversion of a solid fuel, such as coal, to a gas. The gas can then be used as a source of heat to produce electric power, or can be broken down into liquid fuels such as gasoline.

gasohol - A mixture of 90 percent gasoline and 10 percent ethanol, which can be used as a replacement for pure gasoline in cars.

gasoline - A liquid mixture of light hydrocarbons produced by refining crude oil. Used chiefly as a fuel in internal combustion engines.

generating capacity - The capacity of a power plant to generate electricity. Generating capacity is usually measured in megawatts (MW).

generation - The act or process of producing solid waste.

generator - A device that converts mechanical energy into electrical energy. For example, the energy from falling water or steam may be used to spin a turbine that turns a coil of wire in the presence of a magnetic field that produces an electric current.

geology - The study of the earth.

geothermal heat pump - The movement of heat stored in the earth into a home during the winter and the transfer of heat out of the home and into the ground during the summer. This heat is transferred through a series of sealed, underground pipes.

glassphalt - A highway paving material in which recovered ground glass replaces some of the gravel in asphalt.

glazing - Another term for glass used in windows.

GOFER (Give Oil For Energy Recovery) - The used oil recycling program of Santee Cooper, a state owned utility in South Carolina.

greenhouse effect - The trapping of heat on the surface of the earth.

Green Seal - One of the first companies in the United States to award an environmental seal to products that meet certain environmental requirements.

Grinding of the Greens - A statewide Christmas tree recycling project. Information may be obtained from local Keep America Beautiful affiliates and recycling coordinators.

groin - A structure designed to retard beach erosion by trapping littoral drift. Groins are usually perpendicular to the shore and extend from the shoreline into the water far enough to accomplish their purpose. See *littoral drift*.

groundwater - Water beneath the earth's surface that moves between soil particles and rock; supplies wells and springs. In many places, these are used for drinking water.

growth rate - The rate at which something grows.

H

habitat - A place where a plant or animal normally lives; part of an ecosystem.

haiku - A form of poetry consisting of three lines of five, seven and five syllables each.

hazardous - Dangerous.

hazardous substance - Substances such as chemicals that, if used improperly, may be dangerous to human health and/or the environment.

hazardous waste - Waste that may pose a threat to human health or the environment. The disposal, transportation and handling of hazardous waste is regulated by federal law.

headline - Words set at the head of a passage or page to introduce.

heat - Added energy that causes substances to rise in temperature, fuse, evaporate, expand or undergo any of various other related changes.

heat gain - Movement of heat from a warmer object to a colder one (Mass X Change in Temperature X Specific Heat = Heat Gained or Lost).

heat pump - A device that transfers heat from a cooler area to a warmer one by the expenditure of mechanical or electrical energy. In residential heating-cooling systems, a heat pump is a device that absorbs heat from the outside air and pumps it into the house, and inversely operates as an air conditioner for cooling. Most electric heating and cooling systems for new homes are heat pumps.

heating season - The coldest months of the year.

heavy metals - Natural elements such as lead, mercury, cadmium and nickel.

high density polyethylene (HDPE) - A plastic resin commonly used to make milk jugs, detergent containers and base cups for plastic soda bottles. The standard plastic code for HDPE is #2.

high-grade waste paper - The most valuable waste paper in the marketplace. High grade waste paper can be substituted for virgin wood pulp in making paper. Examples include letterhead stationary and computer paper.

horsepower - The power needed to lift 500 pounds one foot high in one second (746 watts).

household hazardous materials (HHM) - Materials found around the home, usually in small

amounts, that can harm people or the environment. Examples of household hazardous materials include paint, pesticides, cleaning supplies and batteries. Household hazardous materials are not regulated as hazardous materials by South Carolina law, but are considered part of the municipal solid waste stream. Because of the nature of household hazardous materials, they should be stored properly and disposed of separately from solid waste.

human-made - Made by people.

humus - Organic material consisting of decayed vegetable matter that provides nutrients for plants. A natural, rich, soil conditioner that is the result of composting.

HVAC - Heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems.

hydrocarbons - A compound such as methane that is composed of hydrogen and carbon and vaporizes at normal temperatures. Found in automotive petroleum products, they can harm aquatic life and impair water quality.

hydroelectricity - Electric energy produced by a turbine generator powered by falling water.

hydrology - The scientific study of the distribution, circulation and properties of the waters of the earth.

ignitable - In hazardous waste labeling, ignitable means that products may catch fire easily.

impermeable - Not allowing a liquid to spread or flow through.

impervious - Incapable of being penetrated, as by water.

incineration - The burning of waste.

incinerator - A furnace for burning garbage or other refuse. A waste-to-energy incinerator burns waste to produce useful energy. Incinerators are federally regulated.

industrial scrap - Waste generated during manufacturing operations.

industrial waste - Waste that results from industrial processes, including factories and treatment plants.

infiltration - Passing through or accumulating gradually.

ingestion - To take food in by swallowing.

inorganic - Things that are not made from plants and animals and do not contain the element carbon; most inorganic compounds are derived from mineral resources.

insulation - Any material that provides a high resistance to the flow of heat, sound or electricity from one surface area to another. Building insulation helps prevent hot air from entering buildings in warm weather, and hot air from escaping buildings in cold weather.

integrated solid waste management - The complementary use of a variety of practices to manage solid waste safely and effectively. Integrated waste management techniques include source reduction, recycling, composting and landfilling.

intertidal zone - The area between high and low tide.

inversion - In the atmosphere, a layer of warm air that lies over a cooler air mass. An inversion traps pollutants close to the earth's surface.

J

joule - The International System unit of energy equal to the work done when a current of 1 ampere is passed through a resistance of 1 ohm for 1 second.

K

KAB - An abbreviation for Keep America Beautiful, a national, non-profit, public education organization dedicated to improving waste handling practices in American communities.

kilowatt (kW) - A unit of electric power that is equal to 1,000 watts or about 1.34 horsepower.

kilowatt hour (kWh) - A common unit of electric power consumption equal to 1,000 watts of power used for one hour of time; equals 3,413 Btus.

L

lampoon - A satirical piece found in print.

landfill - A large, outdoor site for the burial of solid waste.

landfilling -The disposal of solid waste at permitted facilities in a series of compacted layers on land with daily covering of the waste with soil. Fill areas are carefully prepared to prevent risk to public health and the environment.

large quantity generator - Industries or other entities that generate more than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month.

leachate - Rain water or other liquid that has percolated through solid waste and has extracted possibly hazardous dissolved or suspended materials from it. Leachate must be collected and treated to prevent it from contaminating ground and surface water.

lead-acid battery - Any battery that consists of lead and sulfuric acid, has a capacity of six volts or more and is used as a power source. A car battery is an example of a lead-acid battery.

life-cycle analysis - A process that examines a product from raw materials, manufacturing, transportation and disposal cycles of its life.

life-cycle costs - The total operating cost of a system (such as a school building) figured year-by-year over the entire life of the project. This total includes the initial cost of construction as well as future energy and maintenance costs.

limited supply - In terms of natural resources, resources that are not available in unrestricted amounts. In many areas even renewable resources are considered to be in limited supply.

liquid - One of the states of matter in which the substance takes the form of its container, has the ability to flow and has a fixed volume.

litter - Waste thrown away in an inappropriate place; improperly stored waste that has escaped from its container; misplaced solid waste. Littering is against the law in South Carolina.

litterbug - A person who litters.

littering - The act of intentionally or carelessly discarding solid waste in an inappropriate place.

litter prevention - Activities and programs designed to encourage people not to litter.

littoral drift - The movement of sand, up and down the beach, by means of waves or currents.

load - The power and energy requirements of users on the electric power system in a designated area or the amount of power delivered to a given point.

logo - An identifying statement or logotype.

loose insulation - Small pieces of insulation that are blown into place.

low density polyethylene (LDPE) - A plastic used in shopping bags and garbage bags. The standard plastic code for LDPE is #4.

M

mandated recycling - Programs that by law require certain recycling practices or results.

manifest - A detailed shipping form required for all hazardous waste shipments.

manual separation - The sorting of recyclables from other waste by hand.

market - The area of economic activity in which buyers and sellers come together and where the forces of supply and demand affect prices.

marine debris - Trash or litter in the water.

marsh - A saltwater or freshwater wetland characterized by grasses and sedges. No trees grow in marshes.

materials recovery facility (MRF, pronounced 'murf') - A facility that sorts and processes collected recyclables for end users.

matter - Anything that takes up space and has weight.

mechanical separation - A process in which recyclables are separated by various machines using, for example, magnets or air.

megawatt - A unit of electrical power equal to 1,000 kilowatts or 1 million watts.

meteorology - Science that deals with the atmosphere and physical processes that cause weather patterns.

meter - A device used for measurement.

methane - The major component of natural gas.

methane gas - A colorless, odorless, flammable and explosive gas produced by decomposing garbage and other organic materials.

methanol - A colorless, flammable liquid, used as an antifreeze, a solvent and a fuel. Methanol is a type of alcohol. Methanol is the liquid form of methane.

microorganisms - Animals or plants of microscopic size.

mixed paper - Waste paper of various kinds and quality. Examples include stationery, notepads, manila folders and envelopes.

mixed waste - Unsorted waste from businesses or homes.

mobile source - A source of air pollution such as cars, trucks, buses and airplanes.

monitor - To keep track of or supervise. An electronic device that records or controls a system. An air monitor records the type and amount of pollution in the air.

motor - A machine which converts electrical energy into mechanical energy.

MRF - See *materials recovery facility*.

mud flat - A muddy area without standing vegetation that is covered with water at high tide. The activities of minute plants and animals make mud and sand flats the most productive of estuarine communities.

mulch - A protective layer around plants to prevent evaporation. Yard waste that is chipped into small pieces and used in landscaping. It is not decomposed like compost.

municipal solid waste (MSW) - The combined residential and commercial solid waste generated in an area. MSW includes paper, cans, bottles, food scraps, yard waste and other items. Industrial process waste, agricultural waste, mining waste and sewage sludge are not MSW.

municipal solid waste landfill - Any landfill, publicly or privately owned, that receives household waste. The landfill may also receive other types of solid waste, including commercial waste, non-hazardous sludge and industrial solid waste.

N

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) - Laws or regulations that establish the

concentration limits for criteria pollutants in outside air.

natural gas - An odorless, colorless, tasteless, non-toxic, clean-burning fossil fuel. Natural gas is largely methane, a naturally occurring hydrocarbon that can also be produced synthetically as by coal gasification. At times, natural gas also contains ethane, propane, butane, pentane, helium and hexane.

natural recycling - A process by which organic material decomposes in nature, such as leaves decomposing in a forest.

natural resources - Valuable, naturally-occurring items such as plants, animals, minerals, water and air that are used by people to help make things such as energy, food, clothing and buildings.

newsprint - An inexpensive paper made from wood pulp or recycled paper and used primarily for newspapers.

NIMBY - An acronym for 'not in my back yard,' an expression of opposition for the siting of a waste facility near or in a community.

nitrogen - A colorless, tasteless, odorless element that, as a gas, is relatively inert. Nitrogen makes up 78 percent of the atmosphere by volume and occurs as a constituent of all living tissues.

nitrogen cycle - The continuous, cyclic progression of chemical reactions in which atmospheric nitrogen is compounded, dissolved in rain, deposited in the soil, assimilated and metabolized by bacteria and plants and returned to the atmosphere following decomposition.

nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) - A major pollutant. NO₂ also is part of smog and acid rain. It comes from the burning of fossil fuels, with the main sources being cars, trucks and power plants.

non-attainment area - A region or area that fails to meet the national standards for one or more of the criteria air pollutants.

nonbiodegradable - Does not degrade or break down in a compost pile.

nonferrous metals - Metals such as aluminum, copper or brass that contain no iron.

nonhazardous - Not considered dangerous.

nonpoint source pollution - Contamination or water pollution that comes from many diffuse sources rather than a specific point such as a factory discharge pipe.

nonrecyclable - Cannot be recycled.

nonrenewable resources - Natural resources which, because of their scarcity, the length of time required to form them, or their rapid depletion, are considered finite in amount, such as petroleum, coal, natural gas and copper.

nuclear energy - Energy that can be produced by changes in the nucleus of an atom, as by fission of a heavy nucleus or by fusion of light nuclei into heavy ones with accompanying loss of mass.

nuclear reactor - A facility where energy is derived from fission.

nuclear waste - Radioactive waste generated from the production of nuclear energy. Nuclear electric power plants produce nuclear waste.

nucleus - The center of an atom made of protons and neutrons.

O

observation - The noting and recording of facts and events.

Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling - An office established by the S.C. Solid Waste Policy and Management Act of 1991. The office is non-regulatory and non-enforcement. It is responsible for public awareness and education, technical assistance and grant funding to local governments, public and private schools,

colleges and universities regarding solid waste management issues.

off-peak - Energy supplied during periods of relatively low system demands, such as during the nighttime hours.

offshore sand bar - The mound of sand that blocks a direct wave attack towards the shore and provides sand to barrier islands and beaches.

oil - Any of the various kinds of greasy, combustible substances obtained from animal, vegetable and mineral sources. Oils are liquid at ordinary temperatures and can be dissolved in certain organic solvents, but not in water. Petroleum is the most common form of oil.

on-line networks - Computer-based information services that provide immediate access to data.

open dump - A large open area where trash is illegally thrown. These areas are also called illegal dumps.

organic - An object containing the element carbon, such as plants and animals. Made from living organisms.

organic waste - Discarded living material such as yard and food waste.

ozone - A very reactive molecule made up of three oxygen atoms. Ozone can be either good or bad, depending on where it is. Ground-level ozone occurs near the earth's surface in the troposphere and is harmful to our lungs and to the environment. The ozone layer, 10-35 miles above the earth's surface in the stratosphere, protects us from the sun's harmful rays.

P

packaging - The wrapper, container or plastic film used to protect, identify and advertise a product.

paperboard - Heavyweight grades of paper commonly used for packaging products like cereal boxes. Paperboard is different from corrugated cardboard.

paper stock - Waste paper that has been sorted into different grades.

particulate matter - Small solid particles, like dust or liquid droplets, that are suspended in the air.

parts per billion - A proportion in which one unit per billion is measured.

parts per million - A proportion in which one unit per million is measured.

passive solar energy - A means of capturing, storing and using heat from the sun without the use of pumps and controls.

pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) - A program that promotes waste reduction by charging for waste disposal based on the weight or volume of the material. It works on the premise that the more you throw away the more you pay. In addition, the more you recycle the less you throw away and less you pay. Also known as variable rate.

payback period - The time it takes for an energy-efficiency project to save more money than it costs.

peak load - The maximum amount of power delivered during the stated period of time. The term is sometimes used to describe that portion of the load above the base load.

per capita - Per unit of population, per person.

percolate - To pass or ooze through, as liquid percolates through a landfill.

permeable - Capable of being passed through, such as soil, which is permeable by water.

pervious - Able to be passed through. Permeable.

pesticide - Any substance designed to kill living organisms, including insects (insecticides), plants (herbicides), fungi (fungicides), rats and mice (rodenticides), and bacteria (germicides).

petroleum - A natural, flammable, liquid hydrocarbon mixture found principally beneath the earth's surface and processed to make gasoline, natural gas, naphtha, fuel and lubricating oils. Also called crude oil.

pH - A numerical measure of the acidity of a substance, ranging from very low pH values such as 3 (vinegar) through 7 (neutral) to high values like 10 (lye).

phosphorous - One of the primary nutrients required for the growth of aquatic plants and algae. Phosphorous is often the limiting nutrient for the growth of aquatic plants.

photochemical reaction - A chemical reaction in the atmosphere that is triggered by sunlight. Pollutants often are created by photochemical reactions.

photosynthesis - The biological combining of chemical compounds in the presence of light to produce organic substances such as sugar. Radiant energy from the sun is captured by green plants and converted into chemical energy during photosynthesis. Photosynthesis uses carbon dioxide and water and releases oxygen. See *synthesis*.

photovoltaic - The process by which radiant energy from the sun is converted into electric energy.

pipeline - The tubular arrangement for the transmission of natural gas and oil from the well to the customer. The pipe is wrapped and coated for protection against corrosion, especially since it usually runs underground. About half of all natural gas and oil is moved by pipeline. There is enough pipeline in the U.S. to reach beyond the moon.

plankton - Plant and animal organisms, generally microscopic, that float and/or drift in great numbers in fresh or salt water.

planned obsolescence - Designed to be useful for a specific period of time, such as paper plates and cups which are designed to be used and thrown away.

plastic - A material made from hydrocarbons known for its light weight and durability.

plume - Visible emissions from a smokestack or chimney.

point source pollution - A type of water pollution that results from discharges in receiving water from easily identified points.

poison - A substance that, through its chemical action, usually kills, injures or impairs a living thing.

political cartoon - Cartoon illustrations created to make a statement about politics.

pollution - Harmful substances deposited in the air, water, or on land, leading to contamination of the environment.

pollution prevention - The reduction of waste and its associated pollution at the source by material substitutions or process modifications that generate less hazardous waste or less waste.

polyethylene - A common plastic used to make plastic bags (LDPE standard plastic code #4) and milk bottles (HDPE standard plastic code #2).

polyethylene terephthalate (PET) - A plastic commonly used to make soft drink bottles and other food packaging like ketchup and salad dressing bottles. The standard plastic code for PET is #1.

polypropylene (PP) - Plastic material that is used to manufacture dairy tubs, lids and straws. The standard plastic code for PP is #5.

polystyrene (PS) - A lightweight plastic material often used in food service. Polystyrene products include trays, plates, bowls, cups and hinged containers. The standard plastic code for PS is #6.

polyvinyl chloride (PVC) - Plastic material used to manufacture piping, food and cosmetic containers. The standard plastic code for PVC is #3.

pore space - Tiny spaces between each grain of soil, sediment or within rock that can be filled by air or water.

post-consumer materials - Recovered materials collected from consumer oriented recycling collection system or drop-off center.

post-industrial - Scrap material generated as a result of an industrial manufacturing process.

power grid - A network of electrical power lines and associated equipment used to transmit and distribute electricity.

power outage - The discontinuance or temporary loss of electrical power.

power plant efficiency - That percentage of the total energy content of an electric power plant's fuel that is converted into electrical energy. The remaining energy is lost to the environment as heat. Always less than 100 percent of the original energy available.

precipitation - Water that falls as rain, snow, sleet or hail.

pre-consumer materials - Recovered materials obtained from manufacturers, such as cutting scraps from printers. Waste generated before the product reaches the consumer.

precycle - To reduce waste at the source by changing buying habits.

primary materials - Virgin or new materials, such as wood pulp and iron ore, used in making products.

profit - The margin or portion of the price paid for a product that is in excess of the company's expenses.

propane gas - A colorless gas found in natural gas and petroleum and widely used as a fuel.

public service announcement (PSA) - A commercial message broadcast for public good at no or reduced cost.

pulp - A soft, moist, sticky mass of fibers made up of wood, straw, etc., and used to make paper and paperboard.

pyrolysis - A chemical change caused by an increase in temperature.

R

R-value - The ability of materials to restrict the flow of heat. The higher the R-value, the better the insulating quality of the material.

radioactive - Characteristic of some materials exhibiting spontaneous emissions of alpha, beta or gamma rays from unstable nuclei. Materials that are radioactive can be hazardous to humans and other living organisms.

radioactive waste - Waste material which is hazardous because of the radiation it emits.

rain - Water that condenses from atmospheric vapor and falls to earth as drops.

reactive - In hazardous waste labeling, reactive means that a product may explode.

recharge - To fill, as water seeps into the ground to fill aquifers and groundwater supplies.

recyclable - Products or materials that can be collected, separated and processed to be used as raw materials in the manufacture of new products.

recycle - To collect, separate, process and market materials so they can be used again.

recycled content - The amount of a product's weight or package's weight that is composed of materials that have been recovered from waste. Recycled content may include pre-consumer and post-consumer materials.

recycling center - Drop-off sites that accept recyclables. Some sites also accept household garbage providing a one-stop service.

Recycling Market Development Advisory

Council (RMDAC) - The council, which was established in the S.C. Solid Waste Policy and Management Act of 1991, is responsible for developing and improving markets for recycled materials in South Carolina. The council has 14 members representing the public and private sector who are appointed by the Governor and is housed at the S.C. Department of Commerce.

reduce - To lessen in amount. Reducing trash is a major solid waste management goal.

refining - A series of processes that improve the usability of a raw fuel.

refurbish - Repair and make useful.

refuse - A general term for solid waste materials, also called garbage or trash.

refuse-derived fuel (RDF) - Fuel derived from the incineration of municipal solid waste.

regulation - A rule used to prescribe requirements for the protection of the environment and public health.

renewable - Energy resources that can be replenished, such as sunlight, water, geothermal heat and biomass.

renewable resource - A natural resource derived from an endless or cyclical source (e.g., sun, wind, trees, fish); with proper management and wise use, replacement of these resources by natural or human-assisted systems can be approximately equal to their consumption.

reprocessing - To process again. Re-refining used oil into new oil is a form of reprocessing.

re-refining - To refine again. Used oil that is reprocessed into new oil products is considered re-refined.

reservoir - A body of water stored for future use.

residue - The remainder of something after the removal of a part.

resin - In plastics manufacturing, the different compounds used to create the different forms of plastic.

resource - A supply of something that can be used or drawn upon. Something that can be used to make something else such as wood into paper, bauxite ore into aluminum, old bottles into new ones and sand into glass.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) - Passed in 1976 and amended in 1984, it requires that new landfills be built with safeguards to reduce the potential of pollution.

resource recovery - The burning of solid waste to produce energy. The processing of solid waste to make refuse-derived fuel. The extraction and use of materials or energy from the waste stream. The taking of usable materials out of solid waste, usually through high-technology processes.

retrofit - To furnish with new parts or equipment not available at the time of manufacture.

reuse - The use of a product more than once for any purpose. Examples include using a butter tub as an alternate food container or reusing a coffee can to hold nuts and bolts.

runoff - The portion of rainfall, melted snow or irrigation water that flows across land and eventually runs into streams. Runoff may pick up pollutants from the air or land and carry them to receiving waters.

S

Safe Drinking Water Act - A rule originally passed by Congress in 1974. Its purpose is to make sure that drinking water supplied to the public is clean and safe. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets the national drinking water standards and grants those states that meet certain criteria the ability to manage their own public drinking water.

salt water intrusion - A process whereby salt water enters an area that once contained only groundwater.

sanitary landfill - See *municipal solid waste landfill*.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act - The Act, also known as SARA Title III that requires the release of information regarding toxic chemicals.

scrap - Waste with some value, particularly material left over from construction or manufacturing suitable for reprocessing.

seawall - A special type of retaining wall along the beachfront that is designed to withstand wave force. Building of seawalls is prohibited.

Secchi disk - A device used to test the clarity of water.

secondary materials - Used materials, such as waste paper or scrap metal, handled by dealers and brokers.

sediment - Soil, sand and minerals washed from land into water, usually after rain. Sediment piles up in reservoirs, rivers and harbors, destroying fish-nesting areas and holes in which animals live. It also clouds the water so that needed sunlight may not reach aquatic plants.

sensitive groups - Those who are at greater risk from the harmful effects of air pollution, like children and people with respiratory diseases such as asthma, chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

septic tank - Underground storage tanks for waste from homes having no sewer line to a treatment plant. Waste goes directly from the home to the tank where organic waste is decomposed by bacteria and the sludge settles into the bottom. The waste then flows out of the tank into the ground through drains. The sludge is periodically pumped out of the septic tank.

setback line - The line landward of the baseline, established at a distance of 40 times the annual erosion rate. See *baseline*.

sewage - Mostly liquid waste, including human waste, which is transported away by sewers and purified in a sewage treatment plant.

sewage sludge - The muddy sediment left after sewage has been processed.

sewer system - Pipes that carry sewage away from homes to sewage treatment plants.

short-term impact - Immediate circumstances.

sinkhole - A natural depression of land formed by the collapse of an underlying cavern roof.

small quantity generator - A small business, school, hospital or other entity that generates less than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month.

smog - A mixture of air pollution, principally ground-level ozone, produced by chemical reactions in the air of smog-forming chemicals. Smog can harm health, damage the environment and cause poor visibility.

soil - The top layer of the earth's surface.

solar cell - An electric cell that converts radiant energy from the sun into electrical energy using the photovoltaic process.

solar collector - Something that collects the sun's rays to produce heat. Most solar collectors are boxes, frames or rooms that contain these parts: clear covers that let in solar energy; dark surfaces inside, called absorber plates, that soak up heat; insulation materials to prevent heat from escaping; and vents and pipes that carry the heated air or liquid from inside the collector to where it can be used.

solar home - A home designed to use solar energy for heating and cooling.

solar energy - Radiation energy from the sun falling upon the earth's surface.

solar panel - A battery of solar cells.

solid - Any substance that takes up space and has a definite shape and volume.

solid waste - Trash and garbage. In the S.C. Solid Waste Policy and Management Act of 1991, solid waste is defined as any garbage, refuse, or sludge from a waste treatment facility, water supply plant or air pollution control facility; and other discarded material. It also includes solid, liquid, semi-solid or contained gaseous material resulting from industrial, commercial, mining and agricultural operations and community activities.

Solid Waste Disposal Act - A federal law passed in 1965 and amended in 1970 that addresses waste disposal methods, waste management and resource recovery.

solid waste management - The handling, processing and disposal of all solid waste.

solid waste stream - Anything that we throw away.

soot - A fine, black powder formed by combustion or separated from fuel during combustion.

source reduction - Another term for waste reduction. Behavior that deliberately reduces waste through educated consumer choices and disposal.

source separation - Separating recyclable materials at the source, such as at home or office.

source water - Untreated water from a river, stream or lake that is used to produce clean drinking water.

S.C. Pollution Control Act - A law that makes it illegal for any person to "throw, drain, run or allow to seep or otherwise discharge into the environment" any type of pollutant.

S.C. Solid Waste Policy and Management Act of 1991 - The first comprehensive law dealing with solid waste management in South Carolina. The law established a policy of promoting solid waste reduction, recycling and reuse of materials before landfilling or incineration. It set a goal of reducing the amount of solid waste being received at municipal solid waste landfills and incinerators by 30 percent, calculated by weight, by May 1997. It also set a goal of recycling 25 percent, calculated by weight, of the total waste stream by May 1997.

S.C. Used Oil Partnership - A public-private partnership formed in May 1992 to increase public awareness about the importance of proper disposal of used oil, filters and bottles. The partnership consists of DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, Santee Cooper, the S.C. Department of Transportation and the S.C. Petroleum Council.

spit - Shifting that accumulates on the down drift end of a beach or barrier island as a result of the current.

stagnant - Not moving or flowing, motionless.

states of matter - Three different forms (solid, liquid and gas) in which one substance can occur dependent upon temperature.

static - Staying at the same level.

stationary (or point) source - A non-mobile source of air pollution such as a power plant or manufacturing facility that emits air pollution.

steam - The vapor that forms when water is heated to the boiling point. Jets of steam are able to drive the pistons in a piston engine or turn the blade of a turbine.

storm door - An additional door with an air space between it and the existing door.

storm drains - Gutters and underground pipes that carry storm and runoff water away from streets.

storm water runoff - Water that flows downhill to a stream, lake or ocean. The flowing water usually carries soil, plant nutrients, pesticides, urban litter and other residues.

storm window - An additional window with an air space between it and the existing window. Storm windows will cut in half the heat that passes through windows in a house.

Subtitle D - The non-hazardous waste section of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Subtitle D provides specific information about landfill design, operation and closure.

sulfur dioxide (SO₂) - A major pollutant and a major part of smog and acid rain. SO₂ comes from the burning of coal and oil. The main sources are power plants.

Superfund - A large federal trust fund for cleaning up hazardous waste sites considered dangerous. Part of CERCLA.

surface area - A measurement of a rectangle or square that equals the length multiplied by the width.

surface water - Surface waters include streams, rivers, ponds, lakes and reservoirs. All fresh water that is not absorbed into the earth (becoming groundwater) or returned to the atmosphere as part of the water cycle is considered surface water. Only about .02 percent of all water on earth is surface (fresh) water.

suspended solids - Solid materials that hang free in a liquid.

sustainability - The practice of not taking from the earth those things that cannot be replaced.

sustainable development - The ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. An environmental protection strategy designed to protect the earth's resources.

swamp - An area fed by streams or springs that is flooded most of the year. Swamp vegetation prevents downstream floods and is a natural purifier of organic waste.

swash zone - The narrow zone on the foreshore where water rushes up and back on the beach.

synthesis - The combining of separate elements or substances to form a whole.



temperature - The degree of hotness or coldness of an object (a measure of energy).

therm - A unit of natural gas fuel with a heat value of 100,000 Btus.

thermodynamics - The physics of the relationships (dynamics) between heat (thermo) and other forms of energy.

thermostat - An automatic device for regulating the temperature of a heating and cooling system.

throwaway life style - A phrase describing modern life with many disposable products and short-lived goods.

tin can - A steel can with a thin, tin coating. Also known as a bimetal can.

tipping fee - The price individuals, communities and trash haulers pay to dispose of their waste at a landfill.

tons per day (TPD) - Used as a measurement of the solid waste disposal rate at a landfill, incinerator or materials recovery facility.

topographic maps - Maps that show the physical features of a region.

topography - Detailed description or representation of the physical features of a region.

top soil - The top layer of soil containing valuable nutrients.

toxic - Poisonous.

Toxic Air Pollutants (TAPs) - Many different air pollutants that are thought to have serious health and environmental effects.

Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) - Information from industries about releases of toxic substances above a specified quantity into the environment.

toxicity - The degree of danger posed by a toxic or poisonous substance to animal or plant life.

trade publications - Magazines and newspapers written specifically to professionals working in a single industry.

transfer station - A facility where waste is removed from small collection vehicles and loaded onto larger transport vehicles.

transformer - A device which can increase or decrease the voltage of an alternating current.

transgressive barrier island - A barrier island lacking dune or stable vegetation. Storm waters wash over the island causing it to change shape dramatically. An unstable island.

transmission - The act or process of transporting electric energy in bulk from a source or sources of supply to other utility systems. It is done at high voltage to reduce loss.

transpiration - To give off water vapor containing waste products.

trash - Material considered worthless, unnecessary or offensive that is usually thrown away.

TSDs - An acronym for treatment, storage and disposal facilities. These are facilities that are permitted to handle hazardous wastes.

turbidity - A measure of the amount of material suspended in water.

turbine - A rotary engine powered by a jet of steam or fluid. It can be used to power a generator for electricity production.

U

UBC - An acronym for used beverage container, usually plastic soda bottles and aluminum cans.

used motor oil - Motor oil that has been used in an engine and is considered to be waste. This oil can be recycled.

V

vapor - A substance in the gaseous state that is ordinarily a liquid or solid.

variable rate - See *pay-as-you-throw*.

vermicomposting - The production of compost using worms to digest organic waste.

vinyl (V) - A common type of plastic used to make shampoo bottles and other containers. The standard plastic code is #3.

virgin materials - Any basic material for industrial processes that has not previously been used. Another term for raw materials. Examples include timber or metal ore.

volt - Unit of force which moves electrical energy through power lines.

volume - The amount of space an object can occupy. Solid waste may be measured by weight or volume.

W

warning - In household hazardous products labeling, warning means a stronger risk than caution, use with added care.

waste - Anything which is discarded or not considered useful.

waste assessment - The review of processes to identify options that will result in either the generation of less waste or the productive recycling of materials that would otherwise be added to the waste stream.

waste audit - An inventory of the amount and type of solid waste that is produced at a specific location.

waste exchange - A program that helps companies offer some of their hazardous waste by-products to other companies that may be able to use these wastes in their business.

waste minimization - The reduction of the amount of waste generated by pollution prevention methods or recycling of by-products that would otherwise be added to the waste stream.

waste reduction - An important waste management strategy that encourages people to generate less trash through practices such as reuse, recycling and buying products with less packaging.

waste stream - All waste generated in an area or a facility.

waste-to-energy plants - Facilities that burn solid waste, gases or chemicals to produce energy.

wastewater - Water that has been used either in the home or to manufacture a product and that requires treatment and purification before it can be used again.

water - A molecule containing one oxygen atom and two hydrogen atoms.

water cycle - A series of naturally occurring events in which water is changed from a liquid to a gas (evaporation), rises into the atmosphere above the earth, is condensed into a form of precipitation and falls back to earth. The water cycle also includes transpiration of water by plant life.

water meter - A device which measures the amount of water flow.

Water Pollution Control Act - Passed in 1972, the act directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to set water quality standards and regulate water pollution.

watershed - The geographic region within which water drains into a particular body of water.

water table - The depth or level below which the ground is saturated with water.

water treatment plant - A facility where source water is cleaned and disinfected to meet Federal Safe Drinking Water standards.

water vapor - Water in its gaseous state.

waterways - Navigable bodies of water, such as a river.

watt - A metric unit of electrical power. The product of voltage and current (amps).

weather-stripping - Material which reduces the rate of air loss by making sure that all windows and doors fit their frames tightly.

weight - The amount that a thing weighs. Solid waste may be measured by weight or volume.

well - A deep hole dug down in the ground to obtain water or other substances.

wetlands - Areas covered with water for periods long enough to support plants that thrive in wet soils. The areas may include bogs, swamps, marshes and wet meadows, but it is a misconception that all wetlands have standing water throughout the year. Many wetlands may be seasonally dry or lack noticeable vegetation during certain seasons.

wheeling - Transmission of electric power by a utility over its transmission lines for another utility.

white goods - Appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, water heaters, washing machines, dryers and air conditioners.

windmill - A machine for doing work using the energy of the wind.

worm castings - Worm manure.

X-Y-Z

yard waste - Grass clippings, shrub prunings, leaves, tree branches and other discarded material from yards and gardens.