



May 6, 2020

The Honorable Governor Tony Evers
115 East- State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
1 West Wilson Street
Madison, WI 53703

RE: COVID-19 testing for waste resource management workers-critical infrastructure workers

Dear Governor Evers & Secretary-Designee Palm:

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW), Solid Waste Association of North America-Badger Chapter (SWANA) and the Wisconsin Counties Solid Waste Management Association (WCSWMA). These three organizations represent the men and women from across this state who work to protect human health and the environment every day and especially now during this public health emergency.

In the *Safer At Home* declaration of March 24, 2020, Section 13.v indicates “waste pick up and disposal” as essential businesses. As such, waste resource management professionals have continued their work operating collection routes through neighborhoods large and small, sorting collected recyclables along tightly packed assembly lines and conducting the many tasks of operating landfills, transfer facilities and composting operations. They have steadfastly shown up for work, despite the dangers of COVID-19.

There is no question that we support prioritizing the healthcare sector for COVID-19 testing supplies. Clearly their needs far outweigh all others. However, as testing becomes more available and abundant we urge you to **provide COVID-19 testing resources to Wisconsin employers that are engaged in waste resource management activities**. Early and frequent testing will help us ensure we have a healthy workforce so that we may continue our mission of protecting human health and the environment. It will give us a powerful tool in “flattening the curve”, keeping workers safe and keep the industry running.

All too frequently waste resource management workers are invisible to the public. Waste is magically collected from the curb and taken to far off facilities for management. We give not a second thought to the noble human beings taking on the task of your garbage. Please, during these extraordinary times, do not allow waste resource management workers to remain invisible; help them and our communities by providing COVID-19 testing options for them.

With our sincere best regards,

Meleesa Johnson
President-AROW

John Welch
President-SWANA

Gerry Neuser
Chair-WCSWMA

Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin is a professional association, with members from local government, businesses and non-profit groups, which provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services.

Contact: President Meleesa Johnson, (Marathon Co. Solid Waste Director), meleesa.johnson@co.marathon.wi.us 715-573-3165

Solid Waste Association of North America- Badger Chapter has more than 200 members in Wisconsin, providing information, training programs, and networking opportunities to solid waste professionals and sharing ideas and solutions to better manage municipal waste.

Contact: President John Welch, (Dane Co. Waste & Renewables Dept. Director), 608-267-8815 Welch@countyofdane.com

Wisconsin Counties Solid Waste Management Association works with all counties to promote effective and environmentally sound waste management systems and resource recovery efforts.

Contact: Chair Gerry Neuser, (Manitowoc County Public Works Director), 920-683-4307 GerryNeuser@co.manitowoc.wi.us