

# Talking... TRASH

The Newsletter of the SWANA Florida Sunshine Chapter

Summer 2025



October 10-11 | The Westin Lake Mary  
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# Letter from the President

August 2025

I hope you're all staying safe and cool as we move through another Florida summer. This one has been especially intense with record-breaking heat across Florida. Tampa reached an actual air temperature of 100° for the first time ever with a feels like of 117°! Fun fact, the hottest temperature ever recorded in Florida was in Monticello, Jefferson County on June 29, 1931, at a blistering 109°. So, be careful out there, whether you're out in the field collecting and managing waste, operating heavy equipment at a landfill or waste to energy plant, monitoring gas collection systems, or working in a transfer station, your safety is top priority. Please continue to take precautions against heat-related illness: hydrate frequently, take breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas, and look out for one another. Heat stress is real, and we all play a role in keeping each other safe.



Beyond the heat, let's also stay vigilant in our daily operations. Waste collection and facility work come with their own risk—from traffic hazards to equipment handling. Let's keep safety front and center, not just in policy, but also in practice.

On a brighter note, I want to thank everyone who made the 2025 Summer Conference in Orlando such a success. The turnout was fantastic, with almost 300 attendees. The sessions were insightful, and the networking was energizing. It's clear that our chapter continues to lead with innovation and collaboration.

Looking ahead, we're excited for the 2025 SWANA International Road-E-O, coming to Seminole County on October 10-11. This event is a great opportunity to celebrate the skill and professionalism of our mechanics, truck, and heavy equipment operators. I encourage you to get involved, whether as a participant, volunteer, or supporter. It's a great way to spend a Saturday for the family!

Finally, mark your calendars for the 2026 SWANA FL Winter Conference, scheduled for February 2-4, 2026, at the Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort in Fort Myers. Our hardworking programming committee will be starting discussions with the Hinkley Center for Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste Management to bring you a program packed with updates on the cutting-edge solid waste research being performed across Florida. It's a great opportunity to connect with researchers, learn about emerging technologies, and explore how academic insights are shaping the future of our industry.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our industry and to the communities we serve. Stay safe, stay engaged, and I look forward to seeing many of you this fall and winter.

Sincerely,

Jason Timmons  
SWANA FL President

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# Why You Should Care about the Groundwater at Your Landfill

Fauve Herron, EI

When managing landfills, people often treat groundwater monitoring as a compliance requirement, a box to check and file. If that is all you are doing, you are missing a major opportunity to gain insight into your landfill. Groundwater is more than a regulatory requirement; it is one of the most powerful tools for understanding your landfill's performance and



*Access to reliable monitoring infrastructure enables consistent data collection, allowing for the interpretation of long-term trends and the uncovering of patterns tied to operational infrastructure changes.*

health. If you are not using your groundwater data to learn about your facility's health and behavior, you are not getting the full value of your monitoring program.

## Your Landfill's Feedback System

Groundwater monitoring is more than just sampling and reporting. It is your landfill communicating what is happening beneath the surface, below the waste mass, around containment systems, and through the natural geology of the region. Those communications, often in laboratory data, flow patterns, or elevation changes, build a narrative about site conditions.

Groundwater monitoring acts as your landfill's feedback system, telling you whether the system is doing its job, highlighting subtle shifts before they become serious issues, and providing quantifiable evidence about the effectiveness of recent operational or engineering changes.

## Diagnosing Your Site's Health

You already have a mental checklist for assessing your landfill's performance. Are leachate volumes within expected ranges? Are downchutes undermined? Is the gas collection doing its job?

While these are important questions, they are mostly surface-level indicators of a landfill's performance and health. Groundwater data gives you the subsurface analysis you cannot see with a site walk. Groundwater monitoring can help answer questions like:

- Is the liner system functioning properly?
- Has the recent increase in rainfall influenced groundwater trends?
- Are there seasonal patterns that correlate with site activity?

## Early Warnings Mean Fewer Emergencies

The most expensive problems at a landfill are the ones you do not see coming. An early warning is such a valuable concept in solid waste management. Minor changes in indicator parameters like chloride, specific conductance, or a volatile organic compound can be the first sign the landfill system is under stress. These signals often appear months

before serious issues manifest. If you are watching the trends, not just exceedances, you can spot potential problems before they grow.

Early detection opens the door to targeted actions—regrading slopes, adjusting leachate pump activation levels, refining filling practices. These small adjustments are less costly than site-wide corrective actions or long-term remediation.

## Making The Data Useful and Not Just a Report

To get more out of your groundwater monitoring program, try to incorporate the following into day-to-day operations at the landfill:

- *Establish consistent data review practices:* Set time aside to analyze the data.
- *Visualize trends:* Use charts, contour maps, or GIS tools to detect patterns over time.

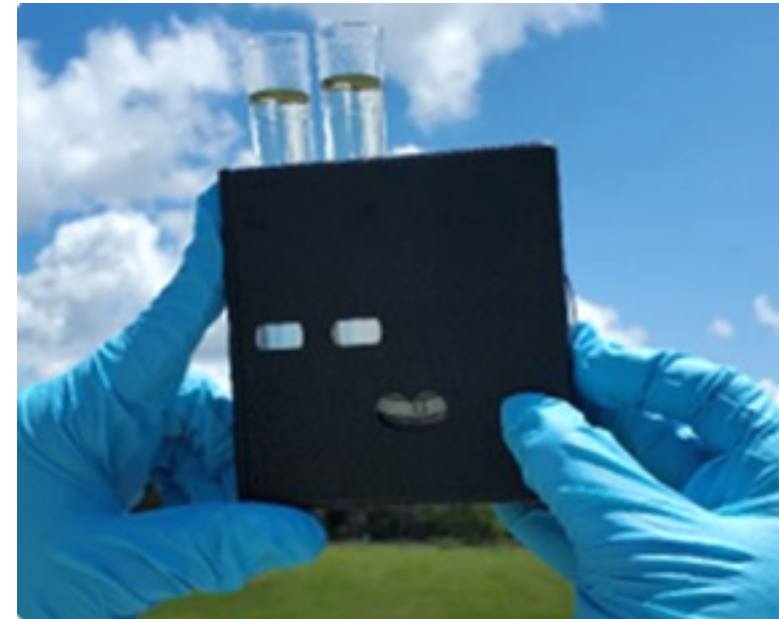


*A well-designed monitoring network supports spatial and vertical data review, helping translate data into meaningful site narratives that reveal potential impacts, system inefficiencies, or maintenance needs.*

- *Look beyond parameters:* Consider the laboratory data alongside groundwater elevations, flow directions, and seasonal shifts.

- *Loop in operations:* Connect what you see in the data with what is happening on the ground: recent construction, rainfall, or operational changes.

Incorporating these steps does not mean you have to become a groundwater expert overnight. Landfill technology tools like eTools and RMC help you collect, monitor, view, and manage data to help facilities operate more efficiently. These tools make it easy to spot trends or conditions that help continually gauge operational health and spot exactly where and when you need technicians to investigate. It is about asking questions, using available technology, and encouraging collaboration to understand the landfill's overall health.



*Field measurements offer real-time insight into subsurface trends and provide early warning signs that can guide deeper data review and site diagnostics.*

## Turning Monitoring into Management

The most successful landfill managers consider groundwater data to be part of their landfill performance toolbox. Like compaction records, tonnage receipts, or gas system metrics, groundwater monitoring shows how well your systems are functioning.

Groundwater monitoring does not take center stage. It is steady, methodical, and easy to overlook amid the more visible parts of landfill operations. That quiet consistency is exactly what makes it valuable. With every sampling event, you add to a long-term record that reveals what is working, what is changing, and where your attention needs to be.

Rather than treating your groundwater system as background noise, bring it into focus. Use it as a tool for operational insight, planning, and performance evaluation. So, the next time you get your groundwater

sampling results, do not just file them away. Read between the lines. Your groundwater is trying to tell you something. Are you listening?

*Fauve Herron, EI, is a Project Professional with SCS Engineers. She can be reached at [fherron@scsengineers.com](mailto:fherron@scsengineers.com).*

## Check Out the SWANA FL Store

Our [online store](#) provides members with the opportunity to purchase a variety of quality shirts and hats with the SWANA FL logo. Get your apparel today and represent the chapter at your next business meeting or show your SWANA FL pride at our upcoming chapter events!



# Be Storm-Ready: How Municipalities and Contractors Can Prepare with Grapple Trucks

Each year, storm season tests the resilience and readiness of communities, particularly in regions prone to hurricanes, tornadoes, and severe weather events. While emergency response efforts often focus on power restoration and infrastructure repair, an equally critical aspect is managing the sheer volume of debris that storms leave behind.



*BTR grapple truck.*

Preparing in advance for debris cleanup is not just recommended—it is essential. One of the most effective strategies municipalities and contractors can implement is securing access to grapple trucks before disaster strikes. These vehicles, equipped with hydraulic knuckle booms and powerful claws, are designed to handle large volumes of vegetative and bulky storm debris with speed and efficiency.

## Why Grapple Trucks Are Vital for Storm Cleanup

After a major weather event, traditional sanitation vehicles and crews are quickly overwhelmed. Streets are blocked with tree limbs, damaged furniture, and construction materials. Grapple trucks excel in these environments, offering rapid removal of debris while reducing strain on local labor and infrastructure.

Unlike standard dump trucks or manual crews, grapple trucks:

- *Improve safety* by minimizing the need for workers to handle hazardous debris by hand.

### Tip #1: Secure Equipment Before the Season Starts

The biggest mistake many agencies and contractors make is waiting until after a storm hits to secure equipment. By then, demand has skyrocketed, and availability is scarce. Advanced rental agreements for grapple trucks—whether short-term or seasonal—ensure your operation is not left scrambling for resources.

Work with an expert to forecast needs based on previous years' cleanup data and current risk assessments. Having equipment on standby or pre-positioned can shave days, if not weeks, off your recovery timeline.

### Tip #2: Build a Scalable Debris Management Plan

A single grapple truck can remove tons of debris daily—but its impact multiplies when integrated into a

broader plan. Successful cleanup strategies often involve:

- *Predefined staging zones* for debris sorting.
- *Route mapping* to prioritize critical infrastructure and high-density areas.
- *Training crews* on safety protocols and grapple operation (even if outsourced).

- *Mutual aid agreements* with neighboring jurisdictions.

Preparedness is not just about having trucks available—it is about knowing how and where to use them effectively.

### Tip #3: Use Data to Plan Smarter

Historical storm data, floodplain maps, and vegetation density models can help predict where and how much debris may accumulate. Municipalities



*Grapple truck removing debris.*

can use this data to determine how many grapple trucks will be needed and where they should be deployed for maximum efficiency.

Additionally, GPS-enabled grapple trucks can provide real-time tracking and logging of debris volume and pickup locations—useful for FEMA reimbursement documentation and operational oversight.

### Tip #4: Do Not Overlook Post-Storm Demand

Even once the initial cleanup is complete, secondary waves of debris—like damaged drywall or flooring from flood-affected homes—can emerge weeks later. Having a phased rental plan that allows for extended grapple truck use during this period can make the difference between a rushed job and a thorough recovery.

### A Key Component

Storm preparedness is no longer optional—it is a core responsibility of public and private sector leaders in waste and infrastructure management. Grapple trucks are not just a cleanup solution; they are a key component of any serious emergency response plan.

Planning ahead, securing resources early, and integrating grapple trucks into a broader debris strategy can ensure faster, safer, and more cost-effective recovery for communities.

*BTR provides reliable grapple truck rentals to help communities and contractors stay ready year-round. For more information, call (813) 261-0820, e-mail [bt-sales@bigtruckrental.com](mailto:bt-sales@bigtruckrental.com) or visit [www.bigtruckrental.com](http://www.bigtruckrental.com).*

## Join the new SWANA Florida Sunshine Chapter LinkedIn Group!

We are excited to have you join us. We will be posting news, updates, and information about Florida solid waste and look forward to providing you with connections and opportunities to grow your network.

<https://lnkd.in/gXBYRUj3>



## Advertising Opportunities Available

It's not too late to reserve a space in the Fall/Winter issue of Talking Trash.

## Job Openings

Post an employment notice on the SWANA FL website and in the YP newsletter for FREE!

Email [info@swanafl.org](mailto:info@swanafl.org) or visit [www.swanafl.org](http://www.swanafl.org) for more information.

# What Landfill Operators Should Know About RNG Technologies

Jason Pennypacker

As a landfill operator, you are most likely aware of all the industry activity focused on upgrading landfill gas to renewable natural gas. Perhaps you have an existing legacy beneficial use project generating electricity or directly sending landfill gas to an end user in an industrial process. Back in the day, these were the best uses of landfill gas, generating respectable returns for the investment you made in your gas collection system. Or perhaps you missed those windows of opportunity because the volume of landfill gas generated at the time did not attract much attention from developers gathering the lowest hanging fruit.

Now, “The Times, They Are a-Changin” (Bob Dylan)

According to the EPA, landfills are responsible for contributing 16% of all U.S. methane emissions. As technologies such as satellite imaging measuring methane emissions evolve, the industry can expect even more pressure (pun intended) to increase the collection efficiencies of landfill gas collection systems ([www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/methane-emissions](http://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/methane-emissions)). Landfill operators will be expected to increase financial investments and implement new solutions to meet these expectations.

Each new challenge also creates new opportunities. Economic, environmental, and social pressures are driving the industry towards next generation solutions. Government policies responding to an awareness of the impact of fossil fuels on climate change and energy independence are promoting investment in alternative energies. One of

these newer energies is renewable natural gas.

Functionally, renewable natural gas is a low-carbon drop-in replacement for fossil fuel natural gas. Every unit of landfill gas energy upgraded to renewable natural gas displaces an equivalent unit of higher carbon fossil fuel natural gas. Renewable natural gas derived from landfills can be used



Every WAGABOX® unit uses a proprietary low-pressure cryogenic distillation process.

to heat homes, for transportation, and industrial processes. It can use existing infrastructure that is already serving existing customers.

That sounds great, but isn't landfill gas a “dirty gas?” Isn't it very expensive to clean up the landfill gas so that it can be injected into a pipeline, or the local gas distribution system? Doesn't it take a lot of landfill gas to support an RNG project? The short answer to these questions is “no.”

## Why is it Difficult to Upgrade Landfill Gas to Renewable Natural Gas

When a contemporary gas collection system applies vacuum to the well field system, air gases, such as nitrogen and oxygen, are introduced into the waste mass. These air gases combine with the landfill gas, which

is composed of methane and carbon dioxide. Residual contaminants such as VOCs, H<sub>2</sub>S, and other chemicals are also collected in the landfill gas. Natural gas system operators have strict guidelines to adhere to requiring high percentages of methane and limiting the other contaminants and components found in landfill gas.

Each landfill operator must determine the appropriate level of vacuum their system can handle to optimize the amount of landfill gas collected to achieve compliance and odor control objectives. However, achieving these targets often reduces the landfill gas quality needed by legacy technologies, making upgrading landfill gas to renewable natural gas difficult.

## The First Generation of Landfill Gas Upgrading

Although upgrading landfill gas to renewable natural gas might be seen as a newer solution, there

are landfills in the U.S. that have been doing this for more than 40 years. The pioneers of this industry adapted technology from the oil and gas industry and applied this technology to landfill gas upgrading.

One of the most difficult components to remove from methane is nitrogen. The reason for this is that a nitrogen molecule is approximately the same molecular size as a methane molecule. Legacy technologies allow the inert nitrogen molecule to pass through the upgrading process with the energy containing methane molecule. Until recently, landfill gas upgrading technology only used membranes, solvents, and media filled pressurized vessels to separate the unwanted components of landfill gas from the valuable energy.

There are thermodynamic principles limiting these legacy technologies from accepting landfill gas with higher levels of nitrogen that are often present when a landfill is applying the appropriate level of vacuum to achieve the highest compliance and odor control metrics.

One commonly used technology is Pressure Swing Adsorption, or “PSA”. PSA systems can be designed using either a Kinetic Process or an Equilibrium Process. In either case, the separation of nitrogen from methane is performed based on differences in pressure and specialized media.

A challenge with using PSA is that these systems are sized to accept around only 10% nitrogen. If the landfill gas exceeds this limit, a PSA system must reduce cycle times and recycle the product gas back through the system to achieve the desired outlet quality. These responses to higher nitrogen increase electrical consumption, which is the highest input cost in upgrading landfill gas. Another approach is to increase the amount of methane in the waste gases that do not become product gas, which reduces the overall methane recovery, increases site emissions, and reduces the amount of revenue the facility can generate.

Another technology, although less common, is the use of polymeric membranes to separate nitrogen from methane. These membranes separate nitrogen from methane based on their molecular sizes in a pressurized environment.

Using these legacy technologies creates challenges for a landfill operator committed to incorporating the best landfill gas collection practices. Unless a landfill is fully closed and capped, as I stated before, air gases are introduced into the landfill gas as vacuum is applied. This is especially true at the working face, where much of the methane is released into the atmosphere.

These legacy technologies typically require landfill gas to contain more than 50% methane and less than 10% nitrogen. Over the years, there have been

several new technologies introduced that have incrementally improved the ability to process slightly lower quality landfill gas into pipeline quality renewable natural gas.

## The Next Generation of Landfill Gas Upgrading

Cryogenic distillation uses these same principles of thermodynamics; however, separation of methane from nitrogen is achieved based on temperature instead of pressure. At very low temperatures, methane will liquify before nitrogen. This allows methane to be separated and accumulate in the bottom of a vessel while the nitrogen remains in a gaseous state. This separation occurs regardless of the amount of nitrogen in the landfill gas. This technology is designed to accept the typical gas composition fluctuations that occur in landfill gas.

Cryogenic distillation of landfill gas can occur at either low or medium pressure. Although separation occurs at approximately the same temperature in both systems, the process steps are very distinct. Medium pressure systems cannot accept oxygen, or an explosive gas mixture can result; therefore, it requires its removal through the addition of upstream oxygen removal equipment. This introduces the need for an additional water removal step, which is a byproduct of removing oxygen. There is also a requirement to add additional compression to reach medium pressure prior to entering the cryogenic process, further increasing the electrical consumption.

## Low Pressure Cryogenic Distillation

Ten years ago, a new technology was introduced for landfill gas upgrading to solve this dilemma. In fact, this technology applies a gas separation process that has been used for more than 100 years to produce medical and industrial gases. This technology is known as Low Pressure Cryogenic Distillation. Low Pressure Cryogenic Distillation has many advantages over medium pressure cryogenic distillation or traditional PSA systems.

Low Pressure Cryogenic Distillation can simultaneously remove nitrogen and oxygen from landfill gas. These systems can accept landfill gas containing up to 30% nitrogen and still achieve pipeline quality requirements. No additional compression is needed after the initial compression to remove carbon dioxide, which results in the lowest electrical consumption compared to the other technologies.

Due to its ability to accept and separate the normal levels of oxygen in landfill gas, an oxygen removal unit is typically not required for most pipeline specifications. This reduces process steps, the associated equipment, and the overall footprint of the facility, while simultaneously increasing the overall uptime of the facility.

As landfill operators balance obligations to maintain regulatory compliance, meet increasing expectations to avoid unnecessary methane emissions, and reduce odor nuisances, it is important to consider solutions to use future landfill gas generation that can also support these objectives that are critical to the daily landfill operations. With the right solution, it is possible to sustainably and profitably achieve all of the obligations discussed.

*Jason Pennypacker is Project Development Director at Waga Energy. He is a recognized landfill gas to energy expert. He has spent nearly 20 years developing and constructing landfill gas beneficial use projects throughout the US. Currently, Jason is responsible for identifying and developing new projects using the patented Wagabox® technology.*

*If you are interested in learning more about RNG in Florida, reach out to Corina Sheridan, Waga Energy's Project Development Director in Southeast Region, at [Corina.sheridan@waga-energy.com](mailto:Corina.sheridan@waga-energy.com).*

*Article originally posted on SWANA's website at <https://swana.org/news/blog/swana-post/swana-blog/2025/04/16/what-landfill-operators-should-know-about-rng-technologies>.*

# Epic Success in Orlando: Our Biggest Conference Yet

The 2025 SWANA FL Conference wrapped on a high note at the Hilton Orlando, July 20-22 ... and it was one for the books. We welcomed a record turnout with nearly 300 attendees and a bustling expo floor featuring 40 exhibitors. Over three days, participants packed the rooms for presentations, swapped ideas in hallway conversations, and leaned into dedicated networking breaks to deepen existing relationships and spark new ones across the industry. A highlight was Monday night's dinner at TodoVos, where a lively mariachi band set the tone for an evening of fun and connection. Thank you to our speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, and everyone who joined us—your energy made this our biggest and most engaging conference yet.

Congratulations to our award winners:

Distinguished Service  
**City of Lakeland**

Distinguished Service  
**Polk County**

Distinguished Service  
**Angelina Ruiz, Waste Advantage Magazine**

Rising Star  
**Caleb Gonzalez, Lee County**

Lifetime Achievement Award  
**Sam Levin, S2Li**

The chapter also awarded two \$2,000 scholarships. Congratulations to Emma Timmons (USF) and Dalena Nguyen (UF)!



## Member and Committee News

### Florida Legislature Unanimously Passes HB 295, Governor Issues Veto: A Landmark Step Toward Modernizing Florida's Recycling Efforts Stalled

In a decisive and forward-thinking move, the Florida Legislature unanimously passed House Bill 295 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan, signaling a strong bipartisan commitment to strengthening the state's recycling and sustainability practices. Sponsored by the late Representative Joe Casello and paired with Senator Lori Berman's Senate companion bill, SB 200, this landmark legislation represented a critical turning point in how Florida addresses waste management and environmental responsibility. However, despite unanimous legislative support, the bill was ultimately vetoed by Governor Ron DeSantis, delaying its implementation.

HB 295 would have directed the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop a comprehensive statewide waste reduction and recycling plan by July 1, 2026. The legislation established a clear framework for the plan, including minimum criteria to guide the process, and mandated the creation of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide input and expertise. This collaborative model was intended to ensure that diverse perspectives—from industry leaders and environmental experts to local governments and community stakeholders—would shape the plan's development.

The bill mandated that Florida's new recycling plan incorporate clear recycling goals grounded in sustainable materials management principles. It also required targeted strategies for increasing waste diversion, along with a comprehensive three-year plan focused on advancing recycling education and outreach, supporting local governments in their recycling efforts, and fostering the



development of robust markets for recyclable materials.

To maintain transparency and legislative accountability, DEP would have been required to submit a final report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, detailing final recommendations of the TAG. This report was designed to serve as a roadmap for implementing policies promoting a more sustainable and circular economy in Florida.

HB 295 built upon critical groundwork laid by the Florida Recycling Partnership Foundation, a key advocate for advancing recycling initiatives statewide. The Foundation convened a statewide Recycling Workgroup, bringing

together leaders from the public and private sectors, including SWANA, to identify practical strategies for improving Florida's recycling rate. The workgroup's recommendations, previously submitted to DEP, served as a foundation for the agency's preliminary report to the Legislature—many of these same recommendations would have been revisited and refined by the TAG.

The passage of HB 295 represented more than just a legislative milestone—it was intended as a visionary commitment to environmental stewardship and long-term sustainability. By taking a data-driven, inclusive, and actionable approach, Florida was poised to better manage waste, recover valuable materials, and reduce strain on landfills and natural resources.

Despite the Governor's veto, stakeholders across the spectrum—from municipalities and recyclers to environmental advocates and businesses—continue to advocate for a shared vision of a cleaner, more resilient Florida. The conversation around HB 295 has laid important groundwork for future legislative efforts aimed at innovative solutions, measurable progress, and an enduring commitment to preserving Florida's environment for future generations.

*Keyna Cory is the Executive Director for the Florida Recycling Partnership Foundation. The Foundation's mission is to educate policymakers, business leaders and the public about the benefits of recycling and how to recycle right. She can be reached at [Keyna@flrecycling.org](mailto:Keyna@flrecycling.org).*



### FORCE Corner – Florida Organics Recycling Center for Excellence (FORCE)

#### Organics Resources: Education and Events

Prepared by Miriam Zimms, FORCE Technical Manager, Kessler Consulting, Inc. (KCI)

Interested in learning more about organics recycling in Florida? Visit the FORCE website link [here](#), and click on the **EDUCATION** page in the top navigation bar. There you will find a variety of resources and links to support learning about organics recycling in Florida. Whether you're a facility owner or operator, public or private sector entity looking to buy or sell material, or a researcher or educator in Florida this page provides valuable information on composting, food waste reduction, and sustainable practices across the state. Explore tools, programs, and educational materials designed to raise awareness and promote effective organics recycling for a healthier Florida.

Stay up to date on organics recycling events! Visit the FORCE website link [here](#), and click on the **EVENTS** page in the top navigation bar. There you'll find a regularly updated list of conferences, webinars, trainings, and other events related to organics recycling happening throughout the United States.

Whether you're a composting professional, policymaker, student, or simply passionate about sustainability, this page connects you with opportunities to learn, network, and engage with the growing organics recycling community. Stay informed, get involved, and help support a more sustainable future.

FORCE's mission is to provide a framework to promote organics recycling and serve as an educational clearinghouse of information for the Florida organics recycling industry and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

*Miriam Zimms is the FORCE Technical Manager and Director of Programs for Kessler Consulting, Inc. For more information, visit [www.kesconsult.com](http://www.kesconsult.com).*

*To visit the Education and Events page, go to [Education - FORCE \(floridaforce.org\)](#) or [Events - FORCE \(floridaforce.org\)](#).*

### Kessler Consulting Welcomes New Team Member Focused on Community-Centered Solid Waste Solutions



Kessler Consulting, Inc. is proud to welcome Kathleen Hunt, PhD, PMP, to our team. Kathleen brings 15

years of experience in sustainability program management, stakeholder engagement, and circular solid waste planning. Her work in North Carolina, Iowa, and Utah has given her a strong understanding of designing waste diversion programs that advance local circularity, workforce development, and equity goals. She will support projects focused on outreach and engagement, zero waste and solid waste master planning, and developing strategic, equitable solutions that build public trust and increase diversion outcomes.

Below, Kathleen shares her perspective on why meaningful community participation is vital to solid waste consulting:

“Designing an effective solid waste management system requires more than engineering expertise and operational planning. Achieving sustainability, cost efficiency, and long-term success depends on meaningful community participation at every stage. By engaging residents and stakeholders early and often, consultants build trust, foster equity, and create the collective impact needed to develop solutions that are practical, inclusive, and embraced by the people they serve.

Solid waste systems exist to serve people, and people are integral to how those systems function. Consulting efforts that overlook community input risk developing plans that look good on paper but fail in practice. Community participation provides critical insight into the lived realities, needs, and constraints of system users. Residents, businesses, and stakeholders can identify barriers agencies might not see, such as inconvenient bin placements, unclear signage, cultural considerations, or affordability challenges.

## Member and Committee News

Listening to these perspectives helps consultants design services and programs that people are more likely to adopt and support. Community engagement is not just a compliance step, it is also a strategic investment. When residents help shape waste systems, they become advocates for them, supporting policy changes, rate adjustments, and infrastructure improvements when needed. This builds public trust, enhances system resilience, and ensures plans remain relevant as community needs evolve.

Meaningful participation also lays the groundwork for collective impact. Complex challenges like solid waste management are best addressed when stakeholders from all sectors work together toward common goals. This means residents, businesses, local governments, haulers, processors, and consultants aligning around shared objectives, coordinated strategies, and clear measures of success. Strategic participation drives equitable outcomes by ensuring plans address the needs of all residents, including historically underserved or

marginalized groups. Equity-focused engagement leads to solutions that are practical, widely supported, and just, avoiding unintended burdens or disparities in service quality and cost.

As consultants, we are not only technical experts, we also facilitate solutions that work for people. Beyond operational analysis or diversion modeling, we create structured opportunities for dialogue, build consensus, and translate community insights into actionable strategies. By fostering shared ownership of decisions and guiding communities through complex planning, we enable progress toward a cleaner, more resilient future for all.”

KCI is excited to have Kathleen’s expertise and community-centered approach as we continue supporting clients in developing solid waste systems that are effective, equitable, and sustainable.

*Kathleen Hunt, Kessler Consulting, Inc (KCI), can be reached at [khunt@kesconsult.com](mailto:khunt@kesconsult.com).*

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## Volunteers and Sponsors Needed

The 2025 SWANA International Road-E-O is headed to Florida — and we’re rounding up contestants, volunteers, and sponsors to make it a success! Open to 1st and 2nd place chapter winners, this event promises big competition with a touch of Florida wildlife flair — from gator-tough skills to panther-fast precision.

[Schedule](#)

[Additional Details](#)

[Register Now!](#)



**2025 SWANA International**  
**ROAD-E-O**

October 10-11 | The Westin Lake Mary

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HOSTED BY SEMINOLE COUNTY  
Solid Waste Management

Register online at <https://cvent.me/7vYG02>

### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

By actively supporting this event, your organization will benefit by strengthening its prominence as a leader in the solid waste industry and by increasing your network of contacts and established partners within SWANA.

ALL sponsors will receive the following benefits:

- Your logo on event signage/banners, promotional materials and the SWANA FL website
- Lunch on competition day
- Special recognition during the awards banquet

#### SPONSORSHIP LEVELS:

- Diamond Sponsor** (\$4,000) – also includes recognition on participants’ competition t-shirts; space at competition sites to display products or equipment; four awards banquet tickets; and up to two minutes to address attendees during banquet
- Ruby Sponsor** (\$3,500) – also includes recognition on participants’ competition t-shirts; space at competition sites to display products or equipment; four awards banquet tickets
- Platinum Sponsor** (\$3,000) – also includes recognition on participants’ competition t-shirts; space at competition sites to display products or equipment; three awards banquet tickets
- Gold Sponsor** (\$2,500) – also includes recognition on participants’ competition t-shirts; space at competition sites to display products or equipment; and two awards banquet tickets
- Silver Sponsor** (\$2,000) – also includes recognition on participants’ competition t-shirts; and two awards banquet tickets
- Bronze Sponsor** (\$1,500) – also includes recognition on participants’ competition t-shirts

#### IN-KIND DONATIONS:

- Water, sodas, coffee, donuts, bagels, juice, chips, ice, etc.
- Breakfast meal, lunch meal, etc.
- Trash and recycle containers, portable toilets, golf carts/ATVs, bleachers, etc.
- Shirts, hats, etc.
- Other ideas welcome

Questions? Contact Crystal Bruce at [info@swanafl.org](mailto:info@swanafl.org) or 727-940-2393.

**Sponsorship Deadline: September 5, 2025**

## Talking Trash Newsletter

### Editor in Chief

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Crystal Bruce

## Upcoming SWANA FL Events

**2025 SWANA  
International Road-E-O**  
October 10-11  
Lake Mary, FL

**2026 SWANA FL  
Winter Conference**  
February 2-4  
Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort

**2026 SWANA FL  
Summer Conference**  
July 19-21  
Signia by Hilton Bonnet Creek

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