

A Conversation with Mathy

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February 13, 2015



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A continuation of the dialog started last November at the SERDC Summit.



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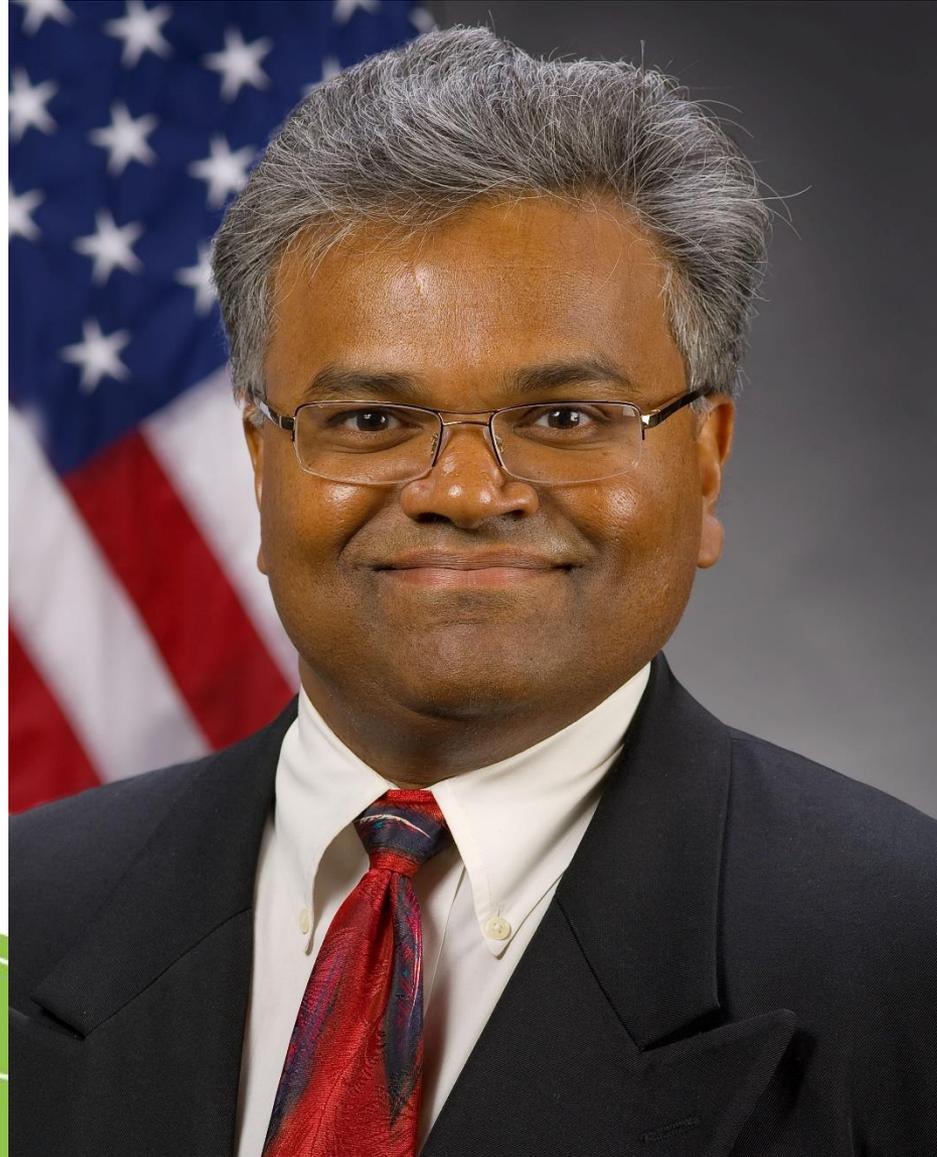


Mathy Stanislaus

Nominated by President Barack Obama, Mathy Stanislaus began as the Assistant Administrator in EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) on June 8, 2009. Mr. Stanislaus leads the Agency's land cleanup, solid waste, and emergency response programs. Mr. Stanislaus is a chemical engineer and environmental lawyer with over 20 years of experience in the environmental field in the private and public sectors.



Mathy Stanislaus



Supply/Demand

Twenty years ago there were stories in the media about warehouses of baled newspaper with no place to go. Markets were insufficient to handle the influx of material captured as many cities across the country started recycling programs in the late eighties and early nineties. But industry has responded and capacity was built. We now face the problem of idle capacity in manufacturing due to lack of sufficient recycled feedstock. The end use markets have now surpassed the collection capacity/participation of our programs. How do we now improve the supply side?



Policy

What new EPA policies will help increase the recycling capacity of state and local governments?



Labeling

Given that the majority of discards from a typical household are recyclable, as in usable by our manufacturing sector, why is it deemed “garbage?” Should it not be identified as a resource?



Measurement

EPA has had success in leading the states into better measurement of recycling activity and recyclable material lost to disposal. What specifically is the data used for, and are there any trends, and what might data be used for in the future?



Characterization

What is EPA doing to improve and expand the Waste Characterization Report and how will this help states, local governments and industry stakeholders?



Successes in Tight Budgets

With declining federal and state budgets and personnel resources, can you highlight any programs at the state and/or federal level that have been able to achieve great success with reduced support? Are there programs that other states could learn from?



Funding

What funding mechanisms can we deploy to improve recycling? We have seen private concerns come together to create the Recycling Partnership and the Closed Loop Fund. These measures, while excellent tools, are woefully short in scope of the magnitude of what needs to be done. How can the EPA help?



PAYT

PAYT (Pay As You Throw, or SMART, or unit pricing for waste collection) is difficult to implement locally, but has been shown to be a very effective tool to drive recycling participation. EPA has tools for program design. Can EPA set a mandate that by a certain date all waste collection is based on usage, as is power, gas, water, phone, cable, and sewer?



Tax Disposal?

The federal government taxes gasoline to fund infrastructure development. Why can't the EPA tax landfills and incinerators for the recyclable tonnage they dispose and use the revenue to fund recycling infrastructure?



Collaboration

How is EPA working with other agencies to collaborate on recycling issues/policies/grants?



Increase Priority

From time to time, issues arise which are priorities for EPA (PCB's, medical waste, organics, coal ash, etc.). What is needed to make recycling and landfill diversion a priority topic which rises to the same level as these other priorities?



Organics

Organics and specifically food waste seems to be an especially hot item at EPA both regionally and at headquarters right now. Why is this, and how can states become more informed of the issues?



Next Steps

What are next steps for EPA to advance recycling and what do you see as the biggest barrier and/or opportunity for doing so?



Policy (2)

Will EPA future policies have an effect on the national recycling rate?



Audience Questions



Thank you

For more information:

www.epa.gov/smm

www.serdc.org

