



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

April 23, 2003

Ms. Maria Zanes
President
Integrated Waste Services Association
1404 H Street, NW - Suite 220
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Zanes:

Thank you for sharing your February 14, 2003, letter from the Environmental Protection Agency recognizing Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) as a renewable energy source. We at the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) also recognize MSW as a renewable energy resource and include it in our tracking of progress toward achieving the Federal Government's renewable energy goal, established by Executive Order 13123.

Our office of Federal Energy Management Programs is charged with providing guidance to Federal agencies on eligible renewable resources. These resources include biomass resources, defined under the Biomass Research and Development Act of 2000 as: *organic matter available on a renewable or recurring basis, including agricultural crops and trees, wood and wood wastes and residues, plants (including aquatic plants), grasses, residues, fibers, and animal wastes, municipal wastes, and other waste materials.*

Executive Order guidance to agencies does include three additional requirements relative to what can be counted toward the goal: first, that the energy come from a renewable project put in service after 1990 (since the focus was on new production); second, that we would not count renewable energy that is provided to an agency as part of the general energy mix of their serving utility, such as state Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) projects (since the Federal goal is in addition to any state requirements); and third, the contract must explicitly require the delivery of renewable energy. While certain projects may be excluded from meeting the Federal Government's renewable energy goal for the reasons mentioned above, these projects still make important contributions to the overall effort to achieve increased renewable energy use and the many associated positive environmental benefits.

I hope this provides an adequate explanation of EERE's approach to MSW in the context of our Executive Order goals. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

David K. Garman
Assistant Secretary
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

