



Justification for Attendance – HHW Facility Tours and Scavenger Hunt *NAHMMA Annual Conference*

Participation in the HHW Facility Tours and Conference Scavenger Hunt provides significant professional development and networking value for local government staff involved in household hazardous waste, recycling, solid waste, environmental health, and sustainability programs.

HHW Facility Tours

The HHW tours offer a unique opportunity to observe real-world operational practices, facility design, safety procedures, material management systems, and public education Justification Justification strategies at established collection programs. NAHMMA conferences consistently emphasize facility tours as a valuable learning experience, allowing attendees to exchange ideas directly with program operators and evaluate practices that may be adapted to improve efficiency, safety, and service delivery within their own communities. Previous conference evaluations specifically noted the value of touring HHW facilities and related collection programs.

Benefits to the local government include:

- Exposure to innovative HHW collection, recycling, and waste diversion practices.
- Identification of operational efficiencies and best management practices that may reduce costs and improve service delivery.
- Opportunities to discuss regulatory compliance, staffing, safety, and customer service challenges with experienced program managers.
- Enhanced understanding of emerging trends and technologies in household hazardous waste management.

Conference Scavenger Hunt

While recreational in format, the Scavenger Hunt serves as an organized networking activity that fosters collaboration among environmental professionals from municipalities, counties, state agencies, nonprofits, and industry partners. NAHMMA identifies networking as a critical component of its annual conference, bringing together professionals and decision-makers from local government programs throughout North America.

Benefits to the local government include:

- Building professional relationships with peers facing similar operational and regulatory challenges.
- Expanding contacts that can serve as future resources for technical assistance and program development.

- Encouraging collaboration and information exchange in an informal setting that supports stronger professional networks.
- Increasing engagement with conference participants, exhibitors, and subject matter experts.

Public Benefit

Attendance at both activities supports the employee's professional development and directly benefits the local government through improved program knowledge, exposure to proven operational practices, and stronger connections with industry and government partners. Information and lessons learned can be shared with colleagues upon return, helping to strengthen local HHW, recycling, and environmental programs while supporting continuous improvement and responsible stewardship of public resources. Overall, the tours and networking activities complement the conference educational sessions by providing experiential learning and peer-to-peer engagement that cannot be replicated through presentations alone.