



REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

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November 21, 2012

Board of Directors
Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission

We have audited the financial statements of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011, and have issued our report thereon dated November 20, 2012. Professional standards require that we provide you with the following information related to our audit.

Our Responsibility Under U.S. Generally Accepted Auditing Standards

As stated in our engagement letter dated September 4, 2012, our responsibility, as described by professional standards, is to express an opinion about whether the financial statements prepared by management with your oversight are fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our audit of the financial statements does not relieve you or management of your responsibilities.

As part of our audit, we considered the internal control of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission. Such considerations were solely for the purpose of determining our audit procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal control.

Planned Scope and Timing of the Audit

We performed the audit according to the planned scope and timing previously communicated to you in our meeting about planning matters on September 20, 2012.

Significant Audit Findings

Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission are described in Note 1 to the financial statements. No new accounting policies were adopted,

and the application of existing policies was not changed during 2011. We noted no transactions entered into by the Commission during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the basic financial statements were the year-end liability for compensated absences and estimated useful lives of capital assets.

Management's estimate of the year-end liability for compensated absences is partially calculated from sick time that has either vested or is expected to vest. The estimated useful lives of capital assets are based on past experience with replacement of worn assets and industry averages. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop these estimates in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the basic financial statements.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. No such misstatements were noted.

Disagreements with Management

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor's report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

Management Representations

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management's representation letter dated November 20, 2012.

Management Consultations with Other Independent Accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

* * *

This information is intended solely for the use of the Board of Directors and management of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties.

/s/Rebecca Otto

REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

/s/Greg Hierlinger

GREG HIERLINGER, CPA
DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of the State Auditor



Rebecca Otto
State Auditor

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011

Description of the Office of the State Auditor

The mission of the Office of the State Auditor is to oversee local government finances for Minnesota taxpayers by helping to ensure financial integrity and accountability in local governmental financial activities.

Through financial, compliance, and special audits, the State Auditor oversees and ensures that local government funds are used for the purposes intended by law and that local governments hold themselves to the highest standards of financial accountability.

The State Auditor performs approximately 160 financial and compliance audits per year and has oversight responsibilities for over 3,300 local units of government throughout the state. The office currently maintains five divisions:

Audit Practice - conducts financial and legal compliance audits of local governments;

Government Information - collects and analyzes financial information for cities, towns, counties, and special districts;

Legal/Special Investigations - provides legal analysis and counsel to the Office and responds to outside inquiries about Minnesota local government law; as well as investigates allegations of misfeasance, malfeasance, and nonfeasance in local government;

Pension - monitors investment, financial, and actuarial reporting for approximately 730 public pension funds; and

Tax Increment Financing - promotes compliance and accountability in local governments' use of tax increment financing through financial and compliance audits.

The State Auditor serves on the State Executive Council, State Board of Investment, Land Exchange Board, Public Employees Retirement Association Board, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and the Rural Finance Authority Board.

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

Year Ended December 31, 2011



**Audit Practice Division
Office of the State Auditor
State of Minnesota**

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introductory Section		
Organization		1
Financial Section		
Independent Auditor's Report		2
Management's Discussion and Analysis		4
Basic Financial Statements		
Statement of Net Assets	1	7
Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets	2	8
Statement of Cash Flows	3	9
Notes to the Financial Statements		10
Management and Compliance Section		
Schedule of Findings and Recommendations		18
Report on Minnesota Legal Compliance		19

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

ORGANIZATION
2011

<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Joe Wollak	Member	Benton	December 31, 2011
Felix Schmiesing	Member	Sherburne	December 31, 2011
Earl Bukowski	Vice Chair	Benton	December 31, 2011
John Riebel	Member	Sherburne	December 31, 2011
DeWayne Mareck	Member	Stearns	December 31, 2011
Leigh Lenzmeier	Member	Stearns	December 31, 2011
Don Otte	Chair	Stearns	December 31, 2011
Vince Schaefer	Member	Stearns	December 31, 2011
<u>Coordinator</u>			
Jerry Johnson			Indefinite

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Directors
Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission

We have audited the accompanying basic financial statements of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011, as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission as of December 31, 2011, and the changes in its financial position and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the Management's Discussion and Analysis be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. In accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, we have applied certain limited procedures to the Management's

Discussion and Analysis, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

/s/Rebecca Otto

REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

November 20, 2012

/s/Greg Hierlinger

GREG HIERLINGER, CPA
DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR

MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

**MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
DECEMBER 31, 2011
(Unaudited)**

The Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission's (Commission) Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) provides an overview of the Commission's financial activities for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2011. Since this information is designed to focus on the current year's activities, resulting changes, and currently known facts, it should be read in conjunction with the Commission's financial statements.

The Commission is a joint powers enterprise operation of Benton, Sherburne, and Stearns Counties, created with the intention of the Counties to cooperate in a joint venture to provide the greatest public benefit possible for the entire contiguous three-county area in planning, management, and implementation of methods to deal with solid waste in Central Minnesota.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This MD&A is intended to serve as an introduction to the basic financial statements. The Commission's basic financial statements consist of two parts: the financial statements and the notes to the financial statements. The MD&A (this section) is required to accompany the basic financial statements and, therefore, is included as required supplementary information.

The financial statements present different views of the Commission's financial activities and consist of the following:

- The statement of net assets compares the assets and liabilities to give an overall view of the financial health of the Commission.
- The statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in net assets provides information on an aggregate view of the Commission's finances. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are taken into account regardless of when the cash was received or paid.
- The statement of cash flows provides sources and uses of cash for the Commission.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Net Assets

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>	<u>Percent (%) Change</u>
Assets				
Current and other assets	\$ 616,941	\$ 660,476	\$ (43,535)	(6.59)
Capital assets, net	<u>116,332</u>	<u>134,232</u>	<u>(17,900)</u>	<u>(13.34)</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 733,273</u>	<u>\$ 794,708</u>	<u>\$ (61,435)</u>	<u>(7.73)</u>
Liabilities				
Current liabilities	\$ 64,565	\$ 63,614	\$ 951	1.49
Noncurrent liabilities	<u>12,632</u>	<u>13,873</u>	<u>(1,241)</u>	<u>(8.95)</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 77,197</u>	<u>\$ 77,487</u>	<u>\$ (290)</u>	<u>(0.37)</u>
Net Assets				
Invested in capital assets	\$ 116,332	\$ 134,232	\$ (17,900)	(13.34)
Unrestricted	<u>539,744</u>	<u>582,989</u>	<u>(43,245)</u>	<u>(7.42)</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$ 656,076</u>	<u>\$ 717,221</u>	<u>\$ (61,145)</u>	<u>(8.53)</u>

The Commission's total net assets for the year ended December 31, 2011, were \$656,076. Unrestricted net assets, totaling \$539,744, are available to finance the Commission's day-to-day operations.

Changes in Net Assets

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>	<u>Percent (%) Change</u>
Operating Revenues				
Miscellaneous	\$ 16,047	\$ 17,526	\$ (1,479)	(8.44)
Operating Expenses				
Administration and overhead	\$ 458,170	\$ 446,792	\$ 11,378	2.55
Disposal of waste	96,347	85,814	10,533	12.27
Depreciation	<u>17,900</u>	<u>18,290</u>	<u>(390)</u>	<u>(2.13)</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$ 572,417</u>	<u>\$ 550,896</u>	<u>\$ 21,521</u>	<u>3.91</u>
Operating Income (Loss)	<u>\$ (556,370)</u>	<u>\$ (533,370)</u>	<u>\$ (23,000)</u>	<u>(4.31)</u>

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>	<u>Percent (%) Change</u>
Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)				
Intergovernmental	\$ 87,025	\$ 93,351	\$ (6,326)	(6.78)
Contributions from counties	<u>408,200</u>	<u>409,505</u>	<u>(1,305)</u>	(0.32)
Total Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	<u>\$ 495,225</u>	<u>\$ 502,856</u>	<u>\$ (7,631)</u>	(1.52)
Change in Net Assets	<u>\$ (61,145)</u>	<u>\$ (30,514)</u>	<u>\$ (30,631)</u>	(100.38)

CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital Assets (Net of Depreciation)

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>	<u>Percent (%) Change</u>
Land	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ -	-
Buildings	74,232	91,083	(16,851)	(18.50)
Machinery, furniture, and equipment	<u>2,100</u>	<u>3,149</u>	<u>(1,049)</u>	(33.31)
Total Capital Assets	<u>\$ 116,332</u>	<u>\$ 134,232</u>	<u>\$ (17,900)</u>	(13.34)

CONTACTING THE COMMISSION'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This financial report is designed to provide our citizens, taxpayers, customers, and creditors with a general overview of the Commission's finances and to show the Commission's accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact the Coordinator, Jerry Johnson, 3601 - 5th Street South, Waite Park, Minnesota 56387.

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BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

EXHIBIT 1

**STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS
DECEMBER 31, 2011**

Assets

Current assets	
Cash and investments	\$ 616,941
Capital assets	
Nondepreciable	\$ 40,000
Depreciable - net	76,332
Total capital assets	\$ 116,332
Total Assets	\$ 733,273

Liabilities

Current liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 1,715
Salaries payable	13,001
Due to other governments	1,837
Compensated absences payable - current	48,012
Total current liabilities	\$ 64,565
Noncurrent liabilities	
Compensated absences payable - long-term	12,632
Total Liabilities	\$ 77,197

Net Assets

Invested in capital assets	\$ 116,332
Unrestricted	539,744
Total Net Assets	\$ 656,076

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

EXHIBIT 2

**STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011**

Operating Revenues	
Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 16,047</u>
Operating Expenses	
Administration and overhead	\$ 458,170
Disposal of waste	96,347
Depreciation	<u>17,900</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$ 572,417</u>
Operating Income (Loss)	<u>\$ (556,370)</u>
Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	
Intergovernmental	\$ 87,025
Contributions from counties	<u>408,200</u>
Total Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	<u>\$ 495,225</u>
Change in Net Assets	<u>\$ (61,145)</u>
Net Assets - January 1	<u>717,221</u>
Net Assets - December 31	<u><u>\$ 656,076</u></u>

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

EXHIBIT 3

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011
Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash Flows from Operating Activities	
Receipts from customers and users	\$ 16,179
Payments to suppliers	(168,620)
Payments to employees	(386,187)
	<hr/>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	\$ (538,628)
Cash Flows from Noncapital Financing Activities	
Intergovernmental	\$ 87,025
Contributions	408,200
	<hr/>
Net cash provided by (used in) noncapital financing activities	\$ 495,225
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ (43,403)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at January 1	<hr/>660,344
Cash and Cash Equivalents at December 31	<u><u>\$ 616,941</u></u>
Reconciliation of operating income (loss) to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	
Operating income (loss)	\$ (556,370)
Adjustments to reconcile operating income (loss) to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	
Depreciation expense	\$ 17,900
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable	132
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable	(89)
Increase (decrease) in salaries payable	385
Increase (decrease) in due to other governments	1,771
Increase (decrease) in compensated absences payable	(2,357)
	<hr/>
Total adjustments	\$ 17,742
Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities	<u><u>\$ (538,628)</u></u>

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission's financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is responsible for establishing GAAP for state and local governments through its pronouncements (statements and interpretations). Governments are also required to follow the pronouncements of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued through November 30, 1989, (when applicable) that do not conflict with or contradict GASB pronouncements. Although the Commission has the option to apply FASB pronouncements issued after that date, the Commission has chosen not to do so. The more significant accounting policies established in GAAP and used by the Commission are discussed below.

A. Financial Reporting Entity

The Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission is a joint powers authority between Benton, Sherburne, and Stearns Counties (the Counties) formed under a joint powers agreement entered into pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 471.59, the Joint Powers Act.

Each of the Counties is authorized and obligated pursuant to Minn. Stat. chs. 115A and 400 to provide for the management and disposal of solid waste. It is the intention of the Counties to cooperate in a joint venture to provide the greatest public benefit possible for the entire contiguous three-county area in planning, management, and implementation of methods to deal with solid waste in central Minnesota.

The Commission is governed by a Board of Directors composed of eight members. Each county is entitled to no less than two and no more than four of its own Commissioners on the Board. Population of the member counties determines how many Commissioners sit on the Board. Each member county chooses its respective members and one staff person as an ex officio (non-voting) member.

The Commission is a separate entity independent of the counties which formed it. No single county retains control over the operations or is financially accountable for the Commission. In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, the Commission's financial statements are not included as a component unit in any member

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Financial Reporting Entity (Continued)

county's financial statements. However, Stearns County accounts for all transactions of the Commission and presents the Commission as an agency fund in its financial statements.

B. Basic Financial Statements

The accounts of the Commission are organized as an enterprise fund. The fund operating revenues result from exchange transactions associated with the principal activity of the fund. Exchange transactions are those in which each party receives and gives up essentially equal values. Nonoperating revenues, such as intergovernmental revenues and contributions from counties, result from nonexchange transactions or incidental activities. The Commission's net assets are reported in two parts: (1) invested in capital assets and (2) unrestricted net assets. The Commission first utilizes restricted resources to finance qualifying activities.

C. Measurement Focus and Basis of Accounting

The Commission's financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recorded when earned, and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenue as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider have been met.

D. Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets or Equity

1. Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents include all cash and pooled investments. The Commission's cash is pooled and invested with Stearns County. The County obtains collateral to cover deposits in excess of insurance coverage.

2. Receivables

All receivables are shown net of an allowance for uncollectibles.

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

D. Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets or Equity (Continued)

3. Capital Assets

Capital assets, which include property, plant, and equipment, are reported in the financial statements. The Commission defines capital assets as assets with an estimated useful life in excess of one year and with an individual cost of more than \$1,000. Such assets are recorded at historical cost or estimated historical cost if purchased or constructed. Donated capital assets are recorded at estimated fair value at the date of donation.

The costs of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend assets' lives are not capitalized.

Major outlays for capital assets and improvements are capitalized as projects are constructed. Interest incurred during the construction phase of capital assets is included as part of the capitalized value of the assets constructed. During the current period, the Commission did not have any capitalized interest.

Property, plant, and equipment of the Commission are depreciated using the straight-line method over the following estimated useful lives:

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Years</u>
Furniture	7
Equipment	5
Buildings	15

4. Compensated Absences

The Commission uses Stearns County's non-union personnel policies regarding paid leave. Paid leave is granted in varying amounts based on employee length of service. Unused accumulated paid leave is paid to employees in varying degrees upon termination based upon the severance option chosen by the employee.

Earned but unpaid vacation, vested sick leave, and sick leave expected to vest are shown on the statement of net assets as compensated absences. Unvested sick leave is not included as a liability.

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

D. Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets or Equity (Continued)

5. Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

2. Detailed Notes

A. Assets

1. Cash

Cash transactions are administered by the Stearns County Auditor/Treasurer, who is, according to Minn. Stat. §§ 118A.02 and 118A.04, authorized to deposit cash in financial institutions designated by the County Board. Minnesota statutes require that all county deposits be covered by insurance, surety bond, or collateral.

2. Receivables

The Commission has no receivables scheduled to be collected.

3. Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the year ended December 31, 2011, was as follows:

	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Capital assets not depreciated				
Land	\$ 40,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,000
Capital assets depreciated				
Buildings	\$ 456,337	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 456,337
Machinery, furniture, and equipment	28,532	-	-	28,532
Total capital assets depreciated	\$ 484,869	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 484,869

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

2. Detailed Notes

A. Assets

3. Capital Assets (Continued)

	Beginning Balance	Increase	Decrease	Ending Balance
Less: accumulated depreciation for				
Buildings	\$ 365,254	\$ 16,851	\$ -	\$ 382,105
Machinery, furniture, and equipment	25,383	1,049	-	26,432
Total accumulated depreciation	\$ 390,637	\$ 17,900	\$ -	\$ 408,537
Total capital assets depreciated, net	\$ 94,232	\$ (17,900)	\$ -	\$ 76,332
Total Capital Assets, Net	\$ 134,232	\$ (17,900)	\$ -	\$ 116,332

B. Liabilities

Changes in Long-Term Liabilities

Long-term liability activity for the year ended December 31, 2011, was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Due Within One Year
Compensated absences	\$ 63,001	\$ -	\$ 2,357	\$ 60,644	\$ 48,012

3. Pension Plans - Defined Benefit Plans

A. Plan Description

All full-time and certain part-time employees of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission are covered by defined benefit pension plans administered by the Public Employees Retirement Association of Minnesota (PERA). PERA administers the General Employees Retirement Fund, which is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer retirement plan. The plan is established and administered in accordance with Minn. Stat. chs. 353 and 356.

General Employees Retirement Fund members belong to either the Coordinated Plan or the Basic Plan. Coordinated Plan members are covered by Social Security, and Basic Plan members are not. All new members must participate in the Coordinated Plan.

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

3. Pension Plans - Defined Benefit Plans

A. Plan Description (Continued)

PERA provides retirement benefits as well as disability benefits to members and benefits to survivors upon death of eligible members. Benefits are established by state statute and vest after three years of credited service (five years for those first eligible for membership after June 30, 2010). Defined retirement benefits are based on a member's average yearly salary for the five highest-paid consecutive years of allowable service, age, and years of credit at termination of service.

Two methods are used to compute benefits for Coordinated and Basic Plan members. The retiring member receives the higher of a step-rate benefit accrual formula (Method 1) or a level accrual formula (Method 2). Under Method 1, the annuity accrual rate for a Basic Plan member is 2.2 percent of average salary for each of the first ten years of service and 2.7 percent for each year thereafter. For a Coordinated Plan member, the annuity accrual rate is 1.2 percent of average salary for each of the first ten years and 1.7 percent for each successive year. Using Method 2, the annuity accrual rate is 2.7 percent of average salary for Basic Plan members and 1.7 percent for Coordinated Plan members for each year of service.

For General Employees Retirement Fund members whose annuity is calculated using Method 1, a full annuity is available when age plus years of service equal 90. Normal retirement age is 65 for members hired prior to July 1, 1989, and is the age for unreduced Social Security benefits capped at age 66 for Coordinated Plan members hired on or after July 1, 1989. A reduced retirement annuity is also available to eligible members seeking early retirement.

The benefit provisions stated in the previous paragraphs of this section are current provisions and apply to active plan participants. Vested, terminated employees who are entitled to benefits but are not yet receiving them are bound by the provisions in effect at the time they last terminated public service.

PERA issues a publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for the General Employees Retirement Fund. That report may be obtained on the internet at www.mnpera.org; by writing to PERA at 60 Empire Drive, Suite 200, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103-2088; or by calling 651-296-7460 or 1-800-652-9026.

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

3. Pension Plans - Defined Benefit Plans (Continued)

B. Funding Policy

Pension benefits are funded from member and employer contributions and income from the investment of fund assets. Rates for employer and employee contributions are set by Minn. Stat. ch. 353. These statutes are established and amended by the State Legislature. The Commission makes annual contributions to the pension plans equal to the amount required by state statutes. General Employees Retirement Fund Basic Plan members and Coordinated Plan members are required to contribute 9.10 and 6.25 percent, respectively, of their annual covered salary.

The Commission is required to contribute the following percentages of annual covered payroll in 2011:

General Employees Retirement Fund	
Basic Plan members	11.78%
Coordinated Plan members	7.25

The Commission's contributions for the years ending December 31, 2011, 2010, and 2009, for the General Employees Retirement Fund were:

	2011	2010	2009
General Employees Retirement Fund	\$ 20,439	\$ 19,234	\$ 18,332

These contributions are equal to the contractually required contribution rates for each year as set by state statute.

4. Risk Management

The Commission is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft of, damage to, or destruction of assets; errors or omissions; injuries to employees; or natural disasters for which the Commission carries commercial insurance. To cover these risks, the Commission has entered into a joint powers agreement with Minnesota counties to form the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) to protect against liabilities from workers' compensation and property and casualty. There were no significant reductions in insurance from the previous year or settlements in excess of insurance for any of the past three years.

**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

4. Risk Management (Continued)

The Workers' Compensation Division of MCIT is self-sustaining based on the contributions charged, so that total contributions plus compounded earnings on these contributions will equal the amount needed to satisfy claims liabilities and other expenses. MCIT participates in the Workers' Compensation Reinsurance Association with coverage at \$450,000 per claim in 2011 and \$460,000 per claim in 2012. Should the MCIT Workers' Compensation Division liabilities exceed assets, MCIT may assess the Commission in a method and amount to be determined by MCIT.

The Property and Casualty Division of MCIT is self-sustaining, and the Commission pays an annual premium to cover current and future losses. MCIT carries reinsurance for its property lines to protect against catastrophic losses. Should the MCIT Property and Casualty Division liabilities exceed assets, MCIT may assess the Commission in a method and amount to be determined by MCIT.

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**TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011**

INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ITEM RESOLVED

Preparation of Financial Statements (06-1)

The Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission needed to broaden its participation in the preparation of its financial statements and not rely so extensively on its external auditors for financial reporting.

Resolution

The Commission provides a general ledger, income statement, and other supporting schedules necessary for preparing fund level and government-wide financial statements. The Commission has improved its understanding and preparation of underlying accounting data used in the preparation of the financial statements.

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REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

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REPORT ON MINNESOTA LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Board of Directors
Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission

We have audited the financial statements of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011, which collectively comprise the Commission's basic financial statements. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the provisions of the *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Political Subdivisions*, promulgated by the State Auditor pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 6.65. Accordingly, the audit included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

The *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Political Subdivisions* contains six categories of compliance to be tested: contracting and bidding, deposits and investments, conflicts of interest, public indebtedness, claims and disbursements, and miscellaneous provisions. Our study included all of the listed categories, except that we did not test for compliance in public indebtedness because the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission has no long-term debt other than compensated absences.

The results of our tests indicate that, for the items tested, the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission complied with the material terms and conditions of applicable legal provisions.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Directors, management, and others within the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Commission and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties.

/s/Rebecca Otto

REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

/s/Greg Hierlinger

GREG HIERLINGER, CPA
DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR

November 20, 2012

Page 19