

STAYING IN THE LOOP



A Newsletter for Partners in Washtenaw County's Waste Knot Program
Spring 2004

Recycling Locally Makes Difference Globally

Ever wonder what affect your recycling efforts really have on the world? Waste Knot Partner Forsythe Middle School found out they saved 209 trees; 4,666 gallons of oil; 37 cubic yards of landfill space; 49,120 Kilowatts of energy; and 85,960 gallons of water during their first semester of this year.

How much has your organization saved? Check it out:

1 TON OF RECYCLABLES



17 trees

380 gallons of oil

3 cubic yards of landfill space

4,000 Kilowatts of energy

7,000 gallons of water.



Forsythe Middle School
Recycling Class

Biodegradable Products in Action



This year, the Waste Knot Ceremony led by example. The use of biodegradable cups, plates, and utensils along with the recycling and composting food waste, made this possible. Manufactured by NatureWorks PLA, their line of plastics has revolutionized the market in Europe by making their products compostable. Packaging made from NatureWorks PLA is durable, freezable, 100 percent corn-based and will degrade in industrial compost facilities.

NatureWorks PLA offers the convenience of traditional plastic packaging while reducing environmental impact. Because the products are made from renewable resources, these products use 20-50% less fossil resources than comparable petroleum based products. After their use at the ceremony, products were sent to the Arbor Hills composting facility.

Partner Spotlight: AADL Malletts Creek Branch

The Ann Arbor District Library's Malletts Creek Branch was built with the purpose to teach responsible coexistence with the natural environment. Citizens flocked to see the innovative sustainable design, which doubled circulation in just over a month.

The US EPA recognized the library for its innovative storm water technology. A vegetated roof and bioswales (vegetative patches in the parking lot made up of sandy soils) filter run-off from impervious surfaces in the area, before reaching nearby Malletts Creek.

To minimize energy consumption, floor and roof level windows operate automatically to allow cool air to enter the building and warm air to escape. A system of circulating hot water pipes embedded in the floor heat the facility.

Renewable resources such as durable cork flooring, and recycled content carpeting and shelving is used throughout the building. Salvaged butcher blocks and masonry units are used for tables and structure of the building.

Links to Energy Conservation

At the request of its members, the Waste Knot Program expanded its waste reduction criteria to energy conservation. Here are some resources to get started:



Recycle Ann Arbor's Environmental House:

www.environmentalhouse.org

2420 S. Industrial Hwy, Ann Arbor. (734) 662-6288.

Free tours, consultations, research library, and displays on energy conservation.

Rebuild America:

www.rebuild.org/index.asp

Department of Energy program offering advice and support on the best technologies available to improve their energy conservation efforts.

Building Technologies Program:

www.eere.energy.gov/building

Department of Energy guide, which gives information to implementing new energy technologies followed by success stories.

Energy Star:

www.energystar.gov

Awards program for commercial and residential energy conservation efforts. Provides performance ratings and information on proven energy management strategies.

Earth911:

www.earth911.org

Non-profit environmental education organization with general energy information such as heating, cooling, landscaping and insulation.

Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program (RETAP):

www.michigan.gov/deq
Program provides free, confidential, and non-regulatory energy assessments. 1-888-749-7886

Small Business Loans:

www.michigan.gov/deq

Loans of up to \$100,000 with a 5% (or less) interest rate to assist small businesses in retrofitting for energy upgrades and waste reduction projects.

Bio-Diesel Fuels

For over 10 years, regions around the world have been combining a processed vegetable oil and standard diesel fuel to make a hybrid called bio-diesel fuel, which can replace any diesel fuel. The vegetable oil can be from a variety of sources such as deep fryers in restaurants. G.E. Wacker, Inc. in Manchester is currently the only vendor of bio-diesel fuels in Washtenaw County.

Why Bio-Diesel fuels?

Bio-diesel is a green fuel. Bio-diesel fuels are naturally oxygenated and thus engines run cleaner, more efficiently and vehicles get greater MPG. These factors reduce soot and overall vehicle emissions belched out from the engine. The fumes from the tail pipe smell more like french fries than standard diesel fumes! Also, bio-diesel fuel is a great lubricant, which helps engines last longer and its high cetane rating improves engine operation.

Are engine alterations needed to use bio-diesel?

No engine alterations are needed. Any standard diesel engine from Volkswagen's to dump trucks can use the product.

Does it cost more?

Bio-diesel costs on average \$.17 more than regular diesel. However, bio-diesel brings savings in the long-run with higher MPG, longer periods between oil changes, and general cleaning.

Attention Businesses!



Want to recycle more than just cardboard and paper? You can with Recycle Ann Arbor's Business Recycling Service. RAA charges businesses a \$25 fee per visit. Pick up items include: fluorescent bulbs, computer equipment and monitors, pallets, Styrofoam, cardboard, and glass, metal and plastic bottles and cans, office paper, mixed paper, and corrugated boxes. In addition, RAA will automatically track your volumes recycled. Call 662-6288 ext. 119 or bnagalsk@recycleannarbor.org.

Q: What type of materials are the biggest contributors to landfill volume?

-Dennis Carmichael, Cimilus, Inc.

A: Nationwide, paper and organics are the largest components. Paper, including cardboard, contributes 31% of the landfill volume, while organics, including food and yard waste, contributes 25%.

To pitch-in, you can start composting food waste at work through either a vermi-composting bin or transporting the organics to an outside compost pile.



Q: I'd like to know if batteries are recyclable. Also, does the City of Ypsilanti hold a household hazardous waste pick up?

-Nina Mallette, Maggie's Functional Organics

A: Yes, batteries found in computers, cellular phones, camcorders, power tools laptop computers and general batteries are all recyclable .

The City Ypsilanti will hold household hazardous waste collections in select locations during Ypsi Pride Days. Until then, you can take household batteries (and car batteries) to the Washtenaw County Regional Drop-off Station located at 2950 East Ellsworth Rd. in Ann Arbor.

Q: How can I track paper pricing/values?

-Gunas Nollendorf, Domino Farms

A: The "Recycling Manager: the independent guide to secondary material prices" website at <http://www.amm.com/recman/>. You can also find this information on this link on the DEQ website.

Currently, post-consumer cardboard is work \$84/ton, newspaper is \$87/ton, and office paper is \$128/ton.

*Due to space restrictions, not all questions were able to answered. If you submitted a question and it was not addressed, please call our office.

Governor signs 11 solid waste bills

§.B. 57-Gives the DEQ the authority to stop out-of-state waste shipments that are perceived to endanger the public health or environment of Michigan.

§.B. 497-Defines beverage containers as containers for soft drink, beer, nonalcoholic carbonated drinks, beer, ale, and wine.

§.B. 498-Bans beverage containers, whole tires, oil, lead acid batteries, low level radioactive waste and hazardous waste from disposal in Michigan landfills.

§.B. 499-Requires the DEQ and state police to conduct regular and random inspections of solid waste transported for disposal in Michigan landfills.

§.B. 500-Civil fines of up to \$25,000/day for subsequent violations of new and existing solid waste disposal regulations.

§.B. 502-Requires out-of-state solid waste to have standards as stringent as Michigan's standards.

§.B. 506-Places a 2 year moratorium on the construction of new landfills in Michigan.

§.B. 557-Requires landfill operators to report annually on their available landfill capacity.

§.B. 715-Requires counties to include an enforceable program in their solid waste management plan to assure that only non-prohibited items are disposed in Michigan landfills.

H.B. 5234-Prohibits out-of-state solid waste from disposal in Michigan landfills unless it goes through transfer station for the removal of prohibited items.

H.B. 5235-Requires the DEQ to post on their website a list of materials prohibited from disposal in Michigan landfills.



Washtenaw County Comprehensive Plan

The Department of Planning and Environment is updating its Comprehensive Plan. Developing and implementing a comprehensive plan is one important aspect of fulfilling the county's responsibility to protect the general health, safety and welfare of citizens and residents. For more information and to submit your comments on the plan visit www.planning.ewashtenaw.org.

Please direct all of your questions and comments to:



Marshall Labadie, (734) 222-6889
 Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program
 P.O. Box 8645, Ann Arbor MI 48107-8645

We welcome any ideas you may have for articles.

Waste Knot Program Announcements

The Waste Knot Program would like to give a special thanks to these individuals and groups:

Dave Rettel-Onyx, Ceremony Sponsor
Washtenaw County Consortium of Solid Waste Management (WCCSM), Sponsor
Howdy Holmes-Chelsea Milling Company
Keynote Speaker
Josie Parker-Ann Arbor District Library
Highlight Speaker

We want feed back! Surveys on the Waste Knot program were distributed at the April 22 ceremony. Please contact us if you were unable to attend and would like to participate.



Please send all program inquiries to our new e-mail: wasteknot@ewashtenaw.org.

Congratulations to our 2004 Waste Knot Partners!

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