



Recycling News



* Summer 2007 *

Bureau of Waste and Materials Management

Governor's Waste Task Force Recommends Increased Recycling Efforts

Brad Wolbert, DNR

Increased recycling, product stewardship, recycling fund preservation and greater attention to the true economic costs of waste management options are among the unanimous recommendations of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Waste Materials Recovery and Disposal. The task force submitted its final report to Governor Doyle in December, culminating an 18-month effort to define a comprehensive strategy for dealing with waste reduction, recovery and disposal issues in Wisconsin.

Governor Doyle appointed the 19-member task force in June 2005 and charged it with a broad mission to review the state's approach to managing waste and scrap materials. The task force met some 15 times, viewed presentations from a variety of state and national experts and received public comment from citizens and interest groups.

The final report contains 20 interrelated recommendations, divided into five categories with the following themes:

- * minimizing environmental, economic and social costs;
- * enhancing producer responsibility for products;
- * promoting effective resource recycling and recovery;
- * promoting responsible waste disposal; and
- * promoting ecological and environmental sustainability.



At least half of the recommendations directly address recycling. Estimates presented to the task force indicated that over \$100 million in recyclable materials are disposed of in Wisconsin landfills every year. In response, the task force recommended actions to increase the recovery and recycling of numerous specific materials, including: scrap paper, organic wastes such as food and wood, construction and demolition materials, electronic devices, used oil filters and absorbents, beverage containers and unused pharmaceuticals. For example, the task force supported recent legislative efforts to ban a variety of electronic products from disposal in Wisconsin landfills and incinerators, and to make manufacturers responsible for ensuring the collection and recycling of these materials. The task force also advocated expanding the current landfilling bans on paper to encompass office paper generated at households as well as mixed paper from all generators, and recommended a new look at the feasibility of a beverage container deposit law in Wisconsin.

Other recommendations would: preserve the state's segregated recycling fund for recycling-related purposes; modify the state's basic recycling grant formula to meet the needs of responsible units more effectively and to expand the list of eligible costs qualifying for reimbursement; orient state purchasing to favor recycled products and recycling by vendors; and boost recycling at commercial properties. The report contained additional recommendations that would promote effective solid waste planning, restrict open burning

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Council on Recycling Recommends Use of Recycling Compatible Adhesives

John Reindl, Chair-Council on Recycling & John Piotrowski, Member-Council on Recycling

The Council on Recycling is a state advisory body created by the Legislature to provide advice on improving the state's recycling efforts. Members are appointed by the Governor every four years, with terms to coincide with the Governor's term of office. A recent recommendation is to promote the use of recycling compatible forms of pressure sensitive adhesives (PSAs) as a method to improve the recycling of paper by reducing the net load of "stickies" in the waste paper stream.

One Council priority has been to improve the paper recycling rate since paper is the highest volume material in local recycling programs. Council member John Piotrowski, employed by Packaging Corporation of America, began this effort by surveying paper recycling mills, and found that the major problem facing the mills was the contamination problem caused by traditional PSAs used for paper-to-paper labeling. Stickies leads to production delays and loss of material, which increases the operating costs of paper recyclers. This problem is not new – a 1975 report for EPA noted this challenge and forecast that it would increase rapidly in the future.

Luckily, Wisconsin holds a leadership role in the work on development of recycling compatible alternatives for PSAs. The U.S. Forest Products Laboratory had done work for the U.S. Postal Service in testing alternative adhesives for postage stamps to improve their compatibility with paper recycling. Additionally, standards for such adhesives had been published under the auspices of the U.S. Postal Service and promoted by the national trade association, the Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute.

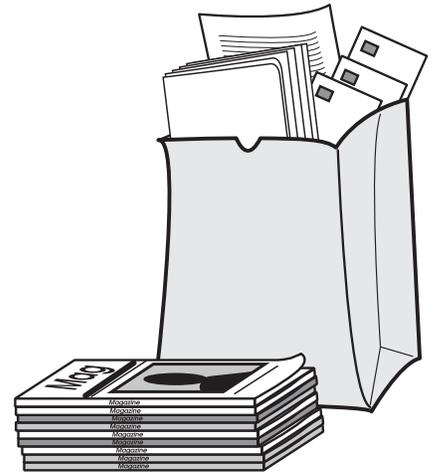
Using this information, council members drafted a resolution to recommend that all users use recycling compatible PSAs where suitable, and that the state preferentially purchase labeling products containing these adhesives.

Industry reaction to our resolution was stunning; over 40 industry representatives from across the nation attended the next council meeting. Some representatives applauded the measure, while others said that it was too ambitious. Due to concerns expressed at this meeting, a separate working group was formed under Piotrowski's leadership to develop an acceptable revision.

A series of meetings were held over the next six months. State of Wisconsin purchasing agents also joined in this effort. While the industry agreed that the U.S. Postal Service program worked well, there was uncertainty about the suitability of similar adhesives for other purposes. One paper executive gave a presentation on the problems that the recycling mills experience and estimated that national costs exceeded \$2 billion a year. All agreed that a major barrier was a "chicken and egg" situation; while adhesive manufacturers can produce recycling compatible PSAs, paper-to-paper label manufacturers do not request them because paper label consumers are unaware that recycling compatible PSAs exist and that traditional PSAs cause paper recycling problems.

Ultimately, the work group agreed upon changes to the council's resolution to encourage the purchase of recycling compatible PSAs and approved a set of recommended specifications for these materials. These can be found on the council's Web page at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/wm/recycle/council/index.htm> near the bottom.

The council's work on this issue is not finished, however. Besides forwarding this resolution to the Governor, Legislature and state agencies, the council will also be working at the national level to promote this issue. We invite everyone to also join in this effort and to help increase the paper recycling rate. ♻️



Governor's Waste Task Force Continued from Page One

and on-site burying of wastes, and improve disposal practices for wastes that cannot be recycled.

The Department of Natural Resources is examining the task force's recommendations in detail to determine how the wide-ranging ideas in the report might best be pursued. The Department's Waste and Materials Management Program briefed the Natural Resources Board and suggested an action plan that will include at least some of the task force's proposals, within constraints posed by limited budget and staff resources. Actual implementation of the recommendations will also depend on legislative activities, future state budget initiatives, and the actions of other departments and stakeholders over the next several years.

The task force included members from manufacturing industries, environmental groups, recycling organizations, waste management companies, municipal governments, the energy sector, and the construction industry. It was chaired by Arthur A. ("Tony") Vogel, Jr., an attorney with Quarles and Brady in Milwaukee. More information about the task force, including the full final report and executive summary, can be obtained at www.wasteresources.wi.gov. ♻️

DNR Update

Cynthia Moore, DNR



DNR Annual Reports

The 2006 Material Recovery Facility (MRF) Annual Reports/Self-Certification Renewals were due on March 30, 2007. Due to programming difficulties, we were unable to use the on-line reporting system initiated in 2005, but plan to have that available for the 2007 report. Dan Wehrman coordinated submittals of MRF reports and used this as an opportunity to discuss potential changes to the report form with MRF operators.

The responsible unit (RU) 2006 Annual Reports were due April 30. This year, over 800 of the 1,060 RUs were requested to submit on-line, with the option of submitting a hard copy upon request. The report period was opened in mid-March; we were unable to open the report period early in January, as originally planned, due to programming delays. However, it appears that the extra time we spent in programming was useful as we have encountered only minimal glitches since the on-line system was released. Late report submittal may affect your recycling grant or status as a DNR approved effective recycling program. RUs that have not yet submitted a report are urged to contact the regional DNR recycling specialist immediately.

The DNR took measures on three occasions this past year to enforce hauler compliance with the **hauler notification requirements**, in response to complaints forwarded to regional staff (see article on "Hauler Recycling Notification")

in this newsletter). In its enforcement process, DNR staff typically inform the appropriate RU about reports of non-compliance and encourage the RU to develop procedures that enable haulers to meet requirements.

Update on Agricultural Plastics and Compost Materials

Kate Cooper, DNR

Managing waste **agricultural plastics** surfaced as a hot topic at the 2007 Joint Winter Conference of AROW, SWANA and WCSWMA in Appleton back in February. The invited speaker, Lois Levitan, from Cornell University's Environmental Risk Analysis Program, discussed several experimental projects and prototype machines (such as the Big Foot baler) developed on the East Coast, but made it clear no recycling system exists as yet. Session moderator Roger Springman, from Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, expressed concern about the environmental harm caused by burning silage bags and other plastics and made an impassioned plea to start serious work on solutions right away. Roger has made plans to feature equipment for collecting/baling plastic at Farm Progress Days this summer.

Chippewa County's Crops and Soils Educator Jerry Clark started working on the silage bag recycling problem in 2006 and by April 2007 he organized an on-farm demonstration of cleaning equipment developed by a student at UW Madison. Local farmers collected 1,000 pounds of waste silage bags for

the demonstration. Jerry Clark also gained the cooperation of a plastics processor in Chetek to experiment with making pellets from the plastic. A Chippewa Falls company plans to experiment with using the pellets. If each step proves successful (from on-farm handling through processing and recycling into a new product), we may soon have a recycling alternative to replace open burning of silage bags.

If you have ideas for solutions or want to connect with others working on the agricultural plastics issue, contact either Roger Springman [Roger.Springman@wisconsin.gov] or Joe VanRossum [vanrossum@epd.engr.wisc.edu].

Are you interested in a) expanding **markets for quality compost**, b) reducing storm water run-off, or 3) better erosion control practices? Then mark your calendar for Sept 15. A group within the AROW Organics Workgroup has teamed up with U.S. EPA Region 5 to plan a one-day Compost Roundtable and Field Demonstration in Waukesha. The speakers coming from Texas, Iowa and Minnesota have great experiences to share, with special focus on the benefits of using compost on highway construction and roadway revegetation projects. Site work is starting this spring at the Waukesha County quarry. There will be six demonstration plots showing effective use of compost filter socks, compost berms and compost filter blankets on a road embankment. For more information, contact Kathy Powell [powellk@recyclingconnections.org] or Kate Cooper [CatherineE.Cooper@wisconsin.gov] 

DNR Inspectors to Hone in on Landfilled Recyclable Material

Brad Wolbert, DNR

DNR plan review staff conduct routine compliance inspections at all municipal solid waste landfills in the state. As part of these inspections, staff note whether prohibited items are present. Prohibited items include the landfill-banned recyclables, such as yard waste, lead-acid batteries, waste oil or materials containing waste oil and major appliances. Items such as cardboard, beverage containers, newspaper, steel cans and office paper

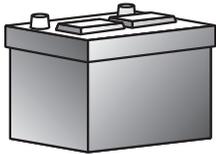
that have been separated for recycling are also prohibited from landfilling.

To reinforce the importance of minimizing the landfilling of recyclable materials, the DNR has recently modified its landfill inspection forms to ensure that inspectors note the presence or absence of recyclables at every inspection. Inspectors will work with the facility and the DNR's regional recycling specialist to follow up on

instances in which unauthorized recyclables are found. Follow-up actions may include a letter from the landfill to the hauler or generator of the material and a visit from the recycling specialist to identify ways to achieve compliance with the restrictions on disposal. The generator may be able to avoid disposal fees and increase revenue by doing a better job of separating recyclable materials, such as cardboard, and marketing them. 

DNR Responds to Complaints of Battery Overcharges

Cynthia Moore, DNR



The DNR has received several complaints involving deposits for lead acid vehicle batteries. The DNR sent the following letter in response to those complaints.



State of Wisconsin/DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor
Scott Hassett, Secretary

101 S. Webster St.
Box 7921
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7921
TELEPHONE 608-266-2621
FAX 608-267-3579
TDY Access via relay - 711

April 20, 2007

Dear sir/madam:

The DNR has received a complaint that several companies are charging more than the maximum amount specified by Wisconsin law for a deposit on the sale of a lead acid vehicle battery. A retailer who charges a deposit of more than \$5.00 on the sale of a lead acid battery is violating s. 287.18(5), Wis. Stats., and is subject to enforcement by the Wisconsin Attorney General under s. 287.91(1), Wis. Stats. Under s. 287.97, Wis. Stats., the penalty is a civil forfeiture of \$10 to \$1,000 for each violation.

This letter serves as an official reminder of the requirements of s. 287.18, Wis. Stats., regarding collection of lead acid batteries and the maximum that may be charged for a deposit. Further action may be taken against retailers who remain out of compliance. Retailers may charge a fee of not more than \$5.00 per sale of each new battery but must refund the deposit if the consumer delivers the old battery to the retailer with proof of purchase of a new one at same company. Furthermore, Wisconsin battery retailers are required to accept used a batteries in trade upon sale of a new battery.

Lead acid batteries contain toxic heavy metals that require proper handling and disposal to protect human health and the environment. Wisconsin laws prohibit the disposal in landfills or burning of lead acid batteries (s. 287.07 (1m) (a) and (b), Wis. Stats.).

Wisconsin law provides reduced hazardous waste regulatory requirements for managing waste lead-acid batteries if they are recycled. The batteries may be managed per the Universal Waste Management Standards in ch. NR 673, Wis. Adm. Code (www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/nr/nr673.pdf).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a more detailed summary of the federal Universal Waste Management Standards for batteries, on which the Wisconsin Standards are based. EPA's summary is available at www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/id/univwast/battery.htm.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Bangert

Suzanne Bangert, Director
Waste and Materials Management

Cc: DNR Regional Supervisors, Waste & Materials Management Program
Steve Sisbach, LE/5

Waste Reduction & Recycling Demonstration Grants – Applications Due August 1, 2007

Candice Sovinski, DNR

Wisconsin businesses, counties, municipalities, tribes, public entities, non-profit organizations and school districts are eligible to apply for Waste Reduction and Recycling Demonstration grant funding. The Wisconsin DNR administers this grant program. Applications must be postmarked no later than August 1, 2007, to be considered for funding that will be awarded in January 2008.

There are 2 components to this grant program.

1. Community-wide waste

reduction projects - Innovative waste reduction, reuse and recycling projects on a pilot or demonstration scale.

2. Special and hard-to-recycle waste

projects - Projects do not have to be innovative but must target special and hard-to-recycle waste materials that may significantly impact the reduction and reuse of Wisconsin solid waste. Examples of hard-to-recycle materials include electronics, plastics, glass, industrial wastes and food wastes.

This is a reimbursement program. Project sponsors pay 100 % of project costs and then seek reimbursement from the DNR. Reimbursement is made for 50 percent of the eligible project costs, not to exceed \$150,000. Applicants must match grant funding with cash or in-kind contributions. Applicants must also provide evidence of having the technical ability, experience and financial support necessary to successfully complete the project.

Since 1990, the fund has provided \$12,796,573 for 187 grants.

Further information about the grant program, including projects funded in the past, is available at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cfa/Ef/recycle/INDEX.HTM>

If you would like to discuss a project proposal, contact Candice Sovinski, Recycling Grants Manager
Email: candice.sovinski@wisconsin.gov or Telephone: (608) 264-9207
Bureau of Community Financial Assistance 

WDNR fact sheet:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/wm/publications/aneupub/WA653.pdf>

Wisconsin Focus on Energy fact sheet:

http://www.focusonenergy.com/data/common/dmsFiles/R_EP_MKFS_MercuryFactSheet.pdf

ENERGY STAR fact sheet:

http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/change_light/downloads/Fact_Sheet_Mercury.pdf

How do individuals go about recycling CFLs? First, try to buy your bulbs at a store that will take the bulbs back for recycling. That makes it very easy to recycle old bulbs when you go in for replacements. If that is not an option, look into a clean sweep program in your area. Information on the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Clean Sweep program is located at: <http://datcp.state.wi.us/arm/agriculture/pest-fert/pesticides/clean-sweep/index.jsp>

Finally, the Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory search page (www.dnr.wi.gov/markets) provides an updated list of bulb recyclers for Wisconsin residents. The directory currently lists 41 Wisconsin and 12 out of state businesses that handle fluorescent bulbs. Be aware that these businesses do charge for their services and may have specific handling requirements.

Recycling rates for CFLs need to be improved. According to a November 2004 report by the Association of Lighting and Mercury Recyclers, an estimated 70.8 percent of the mercury-containing lamps used by businesses and 98 percent of the lamps used in homes are NOT being recycled. As more households begin using compact fluorescent lamps, it becomes even more important to make sure those lights do not end up in our landfills or incinerators.

Compact fluorescent lights save energy and that creates significant economic and environmental benefits. If Wisconsin residents make sure the bulbs are properly recycled, those benefits will be even greater. 

Individuals Should Recycle Their Compact Fluorescent Lamps

John Hendren, DNR

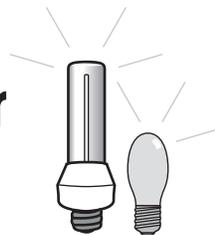
Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) have been in the news lately and for good reason. According to the U.S. EPA's Energy Star Program, CFLs use two-thirds less energy than a standard incandescent bulb, last up to 10 times longer, and save \$30 or more in electricity costs over the life of the bulb.

Large retailers have recognized their value as well. Home improvement stores are displaying the bulbs prominently in their aisles. Wal-Mart, the largest retailer in the U.S., has a goal of selling

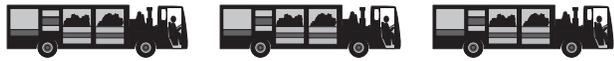
100 million compact fluorescent light bulbs each year by 2008.

Despite claims by manufacturers that "green" lamps can be safely landfilled, CFLs contain trace amounts of mercury and should be properly recycled. While the amount of mercury in each bulb is small, mercury pollutes the air and water when it ends up in landfills or incinerators.

Additional information on mercury in fluorescent bulbs, including CLFs, and disposal options can be found in the fact sheets listed below.



Hauler Recycling Notification



Eileen Hocker, DNR

The DNR Waste and Materials Management program's focus on hauler notification compliance yields promising results this year as more and more waste haulers employ innovative methods to notify their customers of recycling requirements as mandated by the Wis. Adm. Code NR 502.06.

The code says, in part, "Effective July 1, 2005, licensed waste haulers who collect and transport municipal solid wastes and recyclable materials are required to notify their clients of the need to comply with state and local recycling laws." The requirement is intended to ensure all waste generators and haulers are aware that Wisconsin's recycling laws apply equally to both residential and non-residential facilities. This includes waste and recyclables hauled out of Wisconsin for disposal or hauled by out-of-state haulers. Guidance on how to comply with these requirements is provided in the Waste Materials Management program publications Web site:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/wm/publications/aneupub/WA425.pdf>

In the effort to provide "real life" examples of how haulers are complying with the notification requirements, we interviewed several Wisconsin haulers. Their notification methods are illustrated below.

Brian Jongetjes, president of John's Disposal Service, says his sales staff verbally inform customers about Wisconsin recycling laws over the phone as they take orders for trash dumpsters. Staff read the paragraph from a form about state and local recycling laws, along with other listed statements. "It's impossible to set anyone up for a dumpster without us asking, 'what are you going to put in there?'" Because all new customers hear the same message, he can track customer notification by reviewing his new customer list.

Ed Faherty, of Faherty Hauling Service, produces recycling informational "how to" cards "Every year we print up recycling cards that RUs mail out with their taxes and other mailings," he said. "For our commercial businesses, we mail out recycling information sheets along with customers' yearly statements." Faherty says all of his recycling communications include contacts for his company and the DNR.

Bill Katzman, manager of family-owned Eagles Disposal, says his salespeople talk directly to their customers, explaining what cannot be thrown away and what must be recycled. In addition, he says the recycling policy is written directly on sales contracts for commercial businesses and on dispatch notices to residences requesting roll-off services.

These companies are indicative of a trend among many hauler services which is described by Waste Management Inc.'s spokesperson, Lynn Morgan. "We notify our customers about Wisconsin's recycling laws as part of our regular communications," she said.

Waste Management Inc. includes Wisconsin's recycling policy on its invoice statements, along with a link to the list of recyclable materials. With business customers, Morgan says Waste Management has modified its contracts to include the recycling policy statement. As businesses sign contracts, Waste Management takes that as an acknowledgement of their willingness to comply with recycling requirements.

Morgan says Waste Management has been able to comply with the hauler notification requirements with minimal disruption and minimal costs to its operations. Moreover, the returned forms with customer and new contract signatures comprise a paper trail that documents its efforts at notification compliance. The signatures are also an acknowledgement of their customers' agreement to comply with recycling requirements.

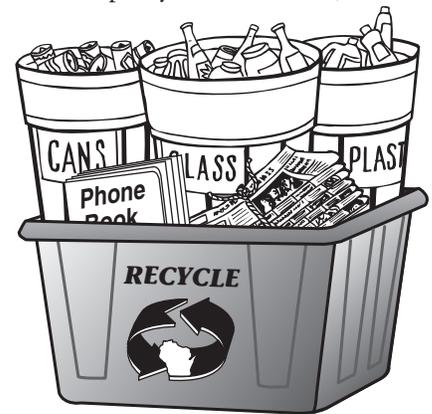
Meeting Compliance Challenges

Katzman shares it's not always easy to catch recyclables mixed in with the regular trash, but the hauler tries to keep an eye out for recyclables mistakenly placed in trash dumpsters.

When John's Disposal Service drivers encounter recyclables in their dumpsters such as tires or appliances, Jongetjes says they manually remove these items and notify their office. "Then our sales manager contacts the customer usually by phone, or with a visit, or both," Jongetjes said.

Morgan points out that the hauler notification requirements are not aimed at the majority of waste companies who are already notifying their customers about the recycling requirements. Rather, she said, the law is aimed at the occasional hauler who tells people they don't really have to recycle. "For companies like Waste Management," she said, "the law is more about how do we document what we're already doing."

Faherty says he still gets calls from a few people who don't know about the recycling requirements. But overall, he says he has "pretty high" recycling compliance. Faherty admits he sometimes struggles with pushing too hard for recycling compliance and potentially losing customers. He says he handles this through voluntary educational efforts. "I speak to about 1,000 people a year about recycling," he said. "I have college groups come out for tours. I speak to kids' groups. We show folks that recycling is easy. It works pretty well for us." 



Cooperation at its Best: Hauler Notification Success Story

Eileen Hocker, DNR

Joint business recycling inspections by the DNR's Northern region office, Oneida County Solid Waste Dept. and hauler Northern Waste, resulted in bringing two businesses into compliance earlier this year.

"While driving through the county, I noticed only one dumpster at a local restaurant," said Bart Sexton, recycling coordinator for Oneida County's Solid Waste Department. Sexton said this usually means there is not a recycling dumpster on the premises. When he stopped to investigate, he discovered that the restaurant's owner owned a second restaurant, which also did not have a recycling dumpster.

Sexton, along with Sherry Otto, recycling specialist for the DNR Northern region, returned to do an inspection at the two businesses. "While we were on inspection, I made sure the owner knew who his hauler was, which in this case was Northern Waste," Sexton explained.

Junior Howard, a collector with Northern Waste remembers the issue with the two restaurants. "We had a hard time at first, working with them to recycle," said Howard. He said the owners didn't understand the recycling requirements under state and local laws, but rather were discarding cardboard, plastics and tin along with their other trash in the one garbage dumpster. "But we supplied them with 95-gallon recycling carts," Howard said, which helped them to begin sorting their materials properly.

Currently, a month after initial inspections, Howard and Sexton report that both of the restaurants are now recycling. Sherry Otto couldn't be happier. "It's great that the hauler, Northern Waste, is working with Oneida County to bring these two businesses into compliance with the recycling rules. Hauler, RU, and DNR all working cooperatively together – who would have 'thunk' it?" Otto mused. 

Check for Outdated Numbers in Your Responsible Unit Recycling Ordinance

Percy Mather, DNR

We can all feel proud of the visible changes and improvements in the recycling program since 1994, when most responsible unit recycling ordinances were adopted. In 1995, the environmental chapters of the Wisconsin Statutes were reorganized and renumbered to become effective on January 1, 1997. The content did not change substantially, but if your municipal ordinance has not been revised since it was originally passed, you may have the older numbering system.

More recently, the administrative codes covering hazardous waste were renumbered as NR 660 through 679, Wis. Stat. Replacing the outdated citations will make it easier to locate the current state law or administrative code that is referenced in your ordinance. Pull out a copy of your ordinance and check if you have the current numbering system.

Here are the most common citations and their updated equivalent:

- * 159, Wis. Stats. ch. is now ch. 287.
 - s. 159.95 is now s. 297.95
 - s. 159.97 is now s. 297.97
- * "Postconsumer waste" is now defined in s. 287.01(7), Wis. Stats.
 - s. 144.61(5) is now s. 291.01(7)
 - s. 144.44(7)(a)(1) is now s. 289.01(17)
- * "Solid waste"
 - s. 144.01(15) is now s. 289.01(33)
- * "Solid waste facility"
 - s. 144.43(5) is now s. 289.01(35)
- * A recyclable material...for which a variance has been granted...
 - s. 159.11(2m) is now s. 287.11(2m)

* "Hazardous waste"

The definition was originally in ch. NR 181, but is now in s. NR 661.03, Wis. Adm. Code.

The household hazardous waste exemption, originally in NR 181.12(4)(a), is now in NR 661.04.

s. 144.62, is now in s. 291.05 (1) and (2) through 291.11 (3) and (4).

You can view current Wisconsin statutes online at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html>. 

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This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audiotape etc.) upon request. Please call 608/266-2111 for more information.

Articles and descriptions of programs/activities by non-DNR staff included in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and should not be construed as DNR endorsements of other organizations' opinions or programs.

For further information on any information in the newsletter, contact Cynthia Moore at Cynthia.Moore@Wisconsin.gov or by phone 608/267-7550

Graphic Design by Linda Pohlod

Recycling Competitions in Schools: Fun, Valuable, Educational

Rick Meyers, Recycling Manager, City of Milwaukee



The City of Milwaukee in partnership with Keep Greater Milwaukee

Beautiful (KGMB) created an innovative recycling competition among schools in an effort to promote recycling and to help schools implement sustainable recycling programs. The school contest was one feature of the city's participation in the national 2006 Cans for Cash City Recycling Challenge. For the third year in a row, the City of Milwaukee won \$5,000 for collecting the most aluminum cans of all the cities in the two-week national competition.

Milwaukee elementary, middle and high schools were invited to participate in the school competition that was sponsored by the city and KGMB. Twenty-three local schools competed to collect the most aluminum cans to earn money and win prizes. To support sustainable recycling programs, participating schools received a durable recycling container and bags which were theirs to keep. Providing schools with containers ensured they had the capacity to collect aluminum cans during the competition and helped facilitate their continued recycling beyond the Cans for Cash competition. The schools collected aluminum cans for two and a half months during the fall semester of 2006, and together collected over 1,550 pounds of aluminum cans, over 51,000 cans in total. Schools turned their cans into cash by taking their collections to area redemption centers, earning around \$1,000 in total for the scrap value of the aluminum. The money earned through the collections supports individual school programs and initiatives. Students learned the value of recycling and were rewarded for their recycling behavior.

In addition to receipts generated from their collections, participating schools had an opportunity to win prizes from the City of Milwaukee for the most cans collected. The school

that collected the most aluminum cans, Whitman Elementary, won a cash prize of \$500. Second and third place schools Craig Montessori School and Emerson Elementary received prizes of \$250 and \$100 respectively. All of the top 10 schools are also receiving a free school performance promoting waste reduction and recycling or an educational tour of the city's recycling facility.

While Milwaukee's competition was coordinated by the city and a local non-profit organization, similar recycling competitions could be administered by school districts or even by a single school with grade levels competing against each other. Aluminum cans were targeted in Milwaukee because of the tie-in to the national Cans for Cash competition and because of the school fund-raising potential due to the high value of aluminum. However, schools could also target paper or any other recyclables in a competition.

Think a school recycling competition is a great idea for your district or your school and want to know how to get started? Look for partnership opportunities with your local municipality, county solid waste authority, your private trash hauler or recycling service provider. All may be interested in supporting a school recycling competition and may provide sponsorship money to pay for prizes to reward the top participating schools. If you are interested in such a program for your school, you can make it happen. Recycling competitions can serve to kick-start recovery programs in schools or give a boost to existing efforts. This not only represents an opportunity for schools to save money on avoided trash disposal and through potential recycling revenue, but it also serves an important educational function, providing a forum to teach kids the importance of recycling and conserving natural resources in order to live more sustainably. ♻️

WI Be SMART Coalition Public Place Recycling Update

Toral Jha, Program Director, WI Be SMART Coalition

The Wisconsin Be SMART Coalition has developed an on-line toolkit to assist municipal agents, event planners, haulers and other interested parties with the development of waste reduction and recycling programs at "away from home" venues. The toolkit is in its final developmental stage and should be available by the time you read this article. It focuses on three sectors: festivals/fairs, sporting facilities and conference/meeting venues and highlights key steps for implementation, costs, useful resources/tool and successes throughout the state. This is an expansion of the group's existing on-line resources located at www.besmart.org/festival. With nearly 10 years of experience, coalition partners and consultants have found it is critical

that recycling and waste reduction are considered during the planning stages of an event. This "How To" manual will aid event planners in approaching this successfully.

The introduction of the toolkit is timely as Wisconsin's revised recycling rules now state that responsible units (communities responsible for recycling law education and enforcement, commonly referred to as RUs) have the authority to require recycling at all "non-residential facilities and properties." The definition of this now includes "...locations...used for special events such as, but not limited to, fairs, festivals, sports venues, conferences and exhibits." Furthermore, the Wisconsin DNR has prioritized recycling and waste reduction at

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“away from home” locations to recover a greater volume of recyclable materials. While curbside recycling programs continue to excel in the state, the state’s total recovery rate of such materials has leveled off.

The coalition will be presenting and promoting the toolkit during relevant conferences, meetings and tradeshows in 2007 and 2008. The toolkit will be available for anyone to use at www.besmart.org. As more event planners and governmental agents include recycling and waste reduction practices into the infrastructure of local festivals, sporting events and conferences, Be SMART invites them to share their successes and tips as a way to keep the toolkit fresh and relevant.

If you have any questions or to send information about your local success, please contact Toral Jha at toral@recyclingconnections.org or (866) 91-SMART x2. ♻️

Recycling Goes Better with V.A.L.U.E.

Eileen Hocker, DNR

Recycling electronics is better when done in partnerships and on a large scale. That’s what local government and non-profit agencies in southeastern Wisconsin find with a partnership known as V.A.L.U.E. (Volume Acquisition and Large Uniform Expenditures). V.A.L.U.E. is a cooperative purchasing group formed in 1991 to reduce the cost of goods and services by allowing members to combine requirements for commonly used items on one single request for bid (www.value4gov.org).

Proof of the partnership’s benefits was illustrated by Karen Fiedler, chairperson of the WI BeSmart Coalition, who approached



V.A.L.U.E. in 2005 to develop a request for proposal for computer recycling services that could be used by municipalities and schools in southeast Wisconsin. Cascade Asset Management, a southcentral Wisconsin-based computer recycling business won the contract. Over the course of a year, Neil Peters-Michaud, president and CEO of Cascade, said they collected over 900,000 pounds of electronics. Is that a lot? According to Peters-Michaud, “You bet! We were promised a high volume of items, but we really only expected about 200,000 pounds.” Participating counties in the Cascade contract included: Milwaukee, Waukesha, Columbia and Walworth.

Waukesha County, in particular, received unexpected profits through the V.A.L.U.E. partnership. Based on the electronics collected, the county was eligible for a rebate of \$7,240 from Cascade for the recycled value of county equipment. This rebate offset their recycling service costs of \$4,660 and yielded a cash surplus of \$2,580.

This year, Waukesha County gets to spread the benefits around, in a V.A.L.U.E. procedure called “piggyback pricing”. This procedure ensures that members can take advantage of the pricing arrangement negotiated by the county for shredding services in a contract agreement with Complete Shredding Services, LLC of Greenfield.

V.A.L.U.E. membership includes counties, cities, towns, villages, school districts and other non-profit agencies in southeastern Wisconsin. It is administered by an elected chairperson and treasurer and an appointed vice-chairperson and planning committee. The cost of participation is \$25 per year. It is affiliated with the Wisconsin Association of Public Purchasers Chapter of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing. Some of the goods and services it contracts for include: public pay phones, HVAC air filters, IT support services, office and computer papers, emergency medical supplies and light trucks. ♻️

Joe's Pasty Shop

Eileen Hocker, DNR



Joe’s Pasty Shop, nestled in the north woods of Rhinelander, is the newest business in Wisconsin to be certified by Travel Green Wisconsin. Owners Larry and Jessica Lapachin received their certification notice in December 2006, after having amassed 59 points on the Travel Green Wisconsin checklist. The checklist covers waste reduction, reuse, recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation and management and local community benefits. The minimum number of points required to be Travel Green certified is 30.

“This is How We Live Anyway.”

Jessica Lapachin says they compost food scraps and don’t use styrofoam or anything that’s not biodegradable. In particular, Jessica says they use Ecotainer Cups – compostable container cups made from corn. “I looked on-line and found these biodegradable cups at International Paper Foodservice Business,” she said. “They were only a couple of cents more than other cups.”

Jessica says Joe’s Pasty Shop doesn’t generate much garbage, and uses the smallest garbage receptacle for its kind of business. “It’s the same size as something you would use in your home,” she said. “And the amount of our recycling is about the same amount as our garbage. This is how we live anyway. We’re not doing anything differently than what we do at home.”

The Lapachins purchase fresh ingredients locally for all their pasties, including meat from the Potawatomi Red Deer Ranch in Laona.

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Joe's Pasty Shop Continued

Increased Business

Business has picked up since Joe's Pasty Shop became certified. "The first two weeks after an article was printed about us [in the North Star Journal, Feb. 2, '07] we had a lot of people come by who've never been here before," Jessica said.

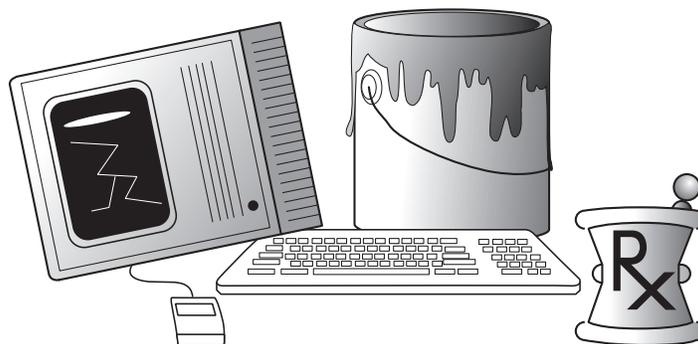
For more information on Joe's Pasty, visit their Web site at www.ilovepasties.com. Jessica is the granddaughter of Joe Barbara, the original owner of Joe's Pasty Shop in Ironwood, MI, which is widely renowned in the north woods area. Larry Lapachina is a former environmental/recycling coordinator for the Forest County Potawatomi Tribe.

Travel Green Wisconsin is a voluntary program that reviews, certifies, and recognizes tourism-based businesses that have made a commitment to continuously improve their operations in order to reduce their environmental impact. (www.travelgreenwisconsin.com) 



Formation of a Midwest Product Stewardship Council Under Consideration

Cynthia Moore, DNR



Representatives of local and state governments discussed formation of a Midwest Product Stewardship Council at the March 2007 Great Lakes/Great Plains Pollution Prevention (P2) Conference in Chicago. The goal of this council is to develop unified regional approaches on end of life product management issues common to many states in the Midwest. Pharmaceuticals, paint and electronics are some of the waste products local governments may currently spend time and money to manage properly. By working together, members intend to design more consistent programs or policies to effectively handle these waste products through shared responsibility by consumers, governments and producers.

Regional approaches applying principles of product stewardship to the management of problem waste materials are not new. States have collaborated on identifying management approaches applying these principles to used electronics, carpet, mercury-containing products, paint and thermostats and have successfully initiated implementation

of multi-state management strategies in several states. Here in the Midwest, we can point to the success of the Midwest States E-Waste Policy Initiative in working on e-waste management policy. Looking beyond the Midwest, we have examples from the Northwest Product Stewardship Council and the California Product Stewardship Council which have addressed on a number of topics at the local, regional and multi-state level.

Participants at the March conference agreed that a more formal structure among state and local governments would be helpful to move initiatives forward more quickly. Topics discussed included structure and financing of regional council, and an approach to deciding which topics to address, as well as the need for education and outreach.

To facilitate discussion among interested participants, we have established a Multi-State Product Stewardship Council (MPSC) Google group. If you are interested in this initiative, please contact Cynthia Moore [cynthia.moore@wisconsin.gov] or Garth Hickle [Garth.Hickle@state.mn.us]. 

DNR Regional Recycling Contacts as of May 2007

Here is an updated list of DNR staff contacts for waste reduction and recycling along with the counties for which they are responsible. Please feel free to call with questions or to introduce yourself.

Regional Recycling Contact	Region Address	Counties Served
NE Region		
Marcy McGrath - 920/662-5493 e-mail Marcy.Mcgrath@Wisconsin.gov FAX 920/662-5197	Northeast Region 2984 Shawano Ave. Green Bay, WI 54307-0448	Brown, Calumet, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Shawano, Waupaca
Dave Misterek - 920/424-2104 e-mail David.Misterek@Wisconsin.gov FAX 920/424-4404	Northeast Region Oshkosh Service Center 625 E. County Rd. Y Suite 700 Oshkosh, WI 54901-9731	Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Outagamie, Waushara, Winnebago
WC Region		
Paul Wiegner - 715/839-5171 e-mail Paul.Wiegner@Wisconsin.gov FAX 715/839-6076	West Central Region P.O. Box 4001 1300 Clairemont Ave. Eau Claire, WI 54701	Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, St. Croix, Trempealeau, Vernon
Vacant	West Central Region 5301 Rib Mountain Dr. Wausau, WI 54401	Adams, Marathon, Portage, Wood
NO Region		
Bob Germer - 715/635-4060 e-mail Robert.Germer@Wisconsin.gov FAX 715/635-4105	Northern Region 810 W. Maple St Spooner, WI 54801	Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, Washburn
Sherry Otto - 715/365-8982 e-mail SherylA.Otto@Wisconsin.gov FAX 715/365-8932	Northern Region 107 Sutliff Ave Rhineland, WI 54501	Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida, Price, Taylor, Vilas
SE Region		
Nancy Gloe - 414/263-8369 e-mail Nancy.Gloe@Wisconsin.gov FAX 414/263-8483	Southeast Region 2300 N. Martin Luther King Dr. Milwaukee, WI 53212	Milwaukee, Walworth, Waukesha
Liz Spaeth-Werner - 414/263-8677 e-mail Elizabeth.Spaethwerner@Wisconsin.gov FAX 414/263-8483	Southeast Region 2300 N. Martin Luther King Dr. Milwaukee, WI 53212	Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington
Ken Hein - 262/574-2142 e-mail Kenneth.Hein@Wisconsin.gov FAX 262/574-2117	Southeast Region Waukesha Service Center 141 N.W. Bartow St., Rm. 180 Waukesha, WI 53188	Counties: Kenosha, Racine
SC Region		
Percy Mather - 608/275-3298 e-mail Percy.Mather@Wisconsin.gov FAX 608/275-3338	South Central Region 3911 Fish Hatchery Rd. Fitchburg, WI 53711	Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk