

July
2013



Just Say "No" to OXO! p. 4

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Master Recycler Newsletter

School Food Waste Roundup

By Griselda Puga

During the past school year, Marion County and the Mid-Valley Garbage & Recycling Association, in collaboration with the Salem-Keizer School District, successfully developed and implemented the first year of a two year plan to introduce a food waste collection program to all schools in the district.



It's no surprise that school cafeterias generate large amounts of food waste. In Marion County, food waste accounts for 20% (by weight) of total waste disposed. It's important to teach students that many natural resources are utilized in the production of food. With some support from school staff, much of the food disposed can be converted into valuable compost.

The goal was to have all 42 elementary schools separating their food waste by the end of the (2012-13) school year.

Preparation

A standard set of operational, promotional and informational materials was developed including posters and decals containing graphics to help students easily identify the items that belong in each of the containers in school cafeterias.

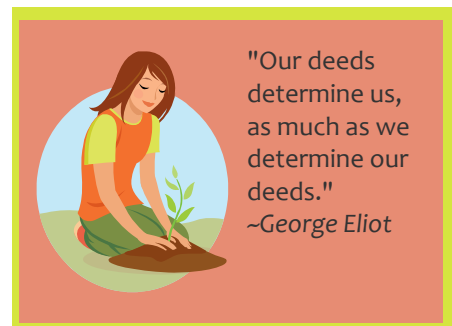


Marion County also purchased 200 green containers to help color coordinate the new waste stations and a composting video was produced to help students understand what compost is and why compost plays such an important role in maintaining a natural cycle of food production. The funny and engaging video took a little longer than expected to produce, but it was worth the

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Schools....

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wait! It will be shared with schools this summer so they will be prepared to remind or teach new students how to properly separate their food waste from the start of the year.

Implementation

After developing all of the necessary materials, it was time to start the program!



The first school visited did not have a cafeteria. Classrooms were located in clusters known as pods and each pod had a central area where the waste station was set up every day. Since the area was also utilized for other school activities, waste stations were moved after lunch was over. This set-up presented an initial challenge for us. The informational posters couldn't be displayed because there were no permanent waste stations. From this point on, it was learned that all schools were uniquely distinct.

Even if the floor plan of schools was the same, the food waste collection program was always implemented differently. School principals were given the freedom of choosing the starting date and the method of implementation. This flexibility allowed school administrators to feel more comfortable with the new program. However, it also meant that more time was spent at each of the schools.

We ended the school year with 38 out of 42 elementary schools separating their food waste. Although the project fell slightly short of the initial goal, this year's accomplishments are without a doubt something to be proud of!

It couldn't have happened without the support of all the garbage haulers who went out of their way to make the program work. All six companies in the county agreed to equip their garbage trucks with pressure washers to rinse out food waste containers after each individual pick up to ease the workload on schools.

After collection, the food waste is transported to the Pacific Region Composting facility which has special permits to allow it to compost all food waste, including meat, dairy, bones, seafood, etc. The finished compost is made available to farms, vineyards, and the public at large.



Moving forward...

The goal for the 2013-14 school year is to work with the four elementary schools remaining, then make a smooth transition first to middle schools and then to high schools. Middle and high schools will present new challenges, especially high schools where students are allowed to eat all over campus and they are also able to leave school grounds for lunch.

The goal for this type of setting is to capture all food waste from the kitchen area. We know this is a controlled environment where contamination will be minimal. Then the plan is to set up waste stations throughout the school to give students the option of separating their food waste. Once again, the program will be implemented differently in each of the schools. Ultimately, we want to get students into the habit of separating their food waste to the point where this process becomes second nature.

To view the educational video visit the Marion County Environmental Services YouTube channel:

http://youtu.be/a_BHj2-BcWI

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Griselda, Todd Irvine from MVGRA, and Kelley Cary with SKSD on the outstanding work they did planning and implementing this project!

MCES Gets Social!

We've recently added a facebook page to our outreach toolbox and we need you to help spread the word! Visit us there daily to find the latest information on waste reduction, EarthWISE businesses, water quality, invasive plants and county parks.



The more facebook users who "like" our page and "share" what we post, the bigger audience we can reach with our news and messages.

To find our page from within facebook do a search for Marion County Environmental Services. If you are not on facebook and would just like to keep up on our daily posts go to www.facebook.com/MCEnviroServices.



If you are a facebook user, please consider "liking" our page and suggest the page to other friends that live in Marion County. Just look directly below our profile info on the right hand side of the page to connect your friends with us. And remember to share the stories that grab your attention!

We also have an extensive presence on YouTube where we have uploaded and organized all our educational videos, TV spots featuring EarthWISE business and recycling programs, and other videos related to our mission. Our YouTube profile is "mcenviroservices".

Thanks for your help and see you in the social-sphere :)



We Need YOU!

Marion County Environmental Services has a sixteen member advisory council that makes recommendations to the Department on waste reduction and disposal policy issues. The Council is made up of citizens-at-large (50%) and businesses and industry representatives (50%). Members meet once per month in a formal setting to discuss policies on how to reduce both waste flow and toxicity in our county.

There are currently 8 positions available:

- ◆ 4 Citizens-at-large - layperson with a general interest in solid waste management issues.
- ◆ 1 Public Health represented position - somebody with a background in the health care or public/environmental health industry, or potentially in health education.
- ◆ 1 Community Organization represented position - somebody that represents a community organization. In the past this person came from the League of Women Voters, for example.
- ◆ 1 Chamber of Commerce representative.
- ◆ 1 Transfer Station/Compost Facility representative.



If you are interested in participating, please contact Marion County Public Works - Environmental Services at (503) 588-5169. SWMAC meetings are held monthly every 4th Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise posted.

Degradable Plastic is NOT Better for the Environment

by Patty Moore and Kate Eagles of Moore Recycling Associates, with special thanks to NAPCOR



Plastic packaging containing bio-degradable or oxo-degradable additives are marketed as an environmentally preferable alternative to conventional plastic packaging, and some brand owners and opinion leaders have embraced them. Closer inspection reveals that degradable additives provide no real environmental or societal benefit. Worse yet, they put at risk the significant investments made in the plastic recycling infrastructure. Ostensibly these additives allow the plastics to break down under certain circumstances. In reality, degradable additives are a significant threat to the plastics recycling industry and may actually be worse for the environment. Many organizations—including the Association of Oregon Recyclers—oppose the use of degradable additives in recyclable packaging. Here's why:

- ◆ Containers with degradable additives potentially contaminate the plastic recycling stream.
- ◆ Recyclability claims made by degradable additive producers are not data driven—they have not been adequately tested or supported.
- ◆ Recyclability claims may be misleading under the Federal Trade Commission Green Guides that are designed to guide marketers in the use of non-deceptive and truthful environmental attribute claims pertaining to their products.
- ◆ Degradable additive manufacturers have not demonstrated “no harm” on the life span and functionality of the products made with post-consumer plastic. Premature failure of durable products that use recycled content (e.g., carpets, transportation strapping, or pipes) has economic repercussions and poses potentially serious health and safety concerns.
- ◆ End-use market value may be negatively affected by the uncertainty related to potential degradable additive content in recycled plastic.
- ◆ Degradable additives are impossible to detect either visually or with existing recycling technology, so once they are in the recycling stream they cannot be sorted out.
- ◆ Containers with degradable additives run counter to key principles of sustainability and environmental stewardship.

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Products made with oxo-degradable plastic are virtually indistinguishable from their traditionally made counterparts

Degradable Plastic (cont.)

- ◆ Promoting degradation of packaging that would otherwise be recycled wastes energy—much of the energy used to create a plastic package is conserved when that package is recycled, but lost when the package degrades.
- ◆ Packaging with degradable additives is not suitable for composting, even industrial composting; and if the degradable additive packaging does break down, it does not add nutrient value to the compost.



Marketers go to great effort to paint these products as “green.”

- ◆ Items containing degradable additives do not reduce litter or marine debris—the products with additives take significant and variable time to break down, so impact on litter is minimal; when plastics with degradable additives do break down, they break into small plastic particles that may be even more problematic for marine life than plastic packaging itself.
- ◆ Degradable additives generate methane—a powerful greenhouse gas—when they break down. Using recycled plastic instead of virgin reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2011, the US recycled more than 1.6 billion pounds of post-consumer PET, another billion pounds of other plastic bottles, 1 billion pounds of post-consumer plastic film, and just under a billion pounds of other non-bottle rigid plastic, all through an extensive infrastructure

of domestic handlers, processors, reclaimers and end-users. This infrastructure depends on quality post-consumer materials that command good market value. Additives with unknown consequences put the entire system at risk, without providing any environmental or economic benefits. Please join us in opposing the use of degradable additives until proponents prove they do not threaten plastics recycling or recycled products.

For more information on degradable additives: www.napcor.com/PET/degradableadditives.html

For a copy of AOR’s policy:

www.aorr.org/degradable_additives.html?utm_source=AOR+Contact+List&utm_campaign=734025dad3-AOR_Listserve_111611&utm_medium=email/

One Final Word From Oregon DEQ:

Oxo-degradable plastic bags

One alternative to conventional plastic (polyethylene) bags are “oxo-degradable” plastics. These are typically conventional plastic blended with an additive that causes the plastic to degrade when exposed to oxygen and/or sunlight. Proponents of these bags claim they reduce problems associated with litter. Based on its most recent review of information, DEQ does not support this technology, at this time, for several reasons. First, it appears that these types of plastics, if placed in landfills, could increase landfill methane emissions as they degrade; methane is a potent greenhouse gas. Second, polyethylene requires significant resources to produce; designing a product to degrade guarantees that those resources are totally and irrevocably wasted after a single use. Third, DEQ has significant concerns that these oxo-degradable plastics, if mixed with other plastics and recycled, could cause the products subsequently made from the recycled plastics to degrade, thereby damaging the viability of plastics recycling. Finally, DEQ has not yet seen convincing evidence that oxo-degradable plastics actually degrade in the marine environment.

~From www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/wasteprevention/bags.htm

Operation Green Fence Update

From the *Resource Recycling* Newsletter -an interesting look at the impact the China's Green Fence policy is having within its own borders.

Scrap recycling firms in North America and Europe aren't the only ones feeling the pressure from China's Green Fence. Many in China's informal recycling sector have resorted to illicitly trading recyclable commodities as the ongoing enforcement action takes its toll on material supplies.

An investigation by The Christian Science Monitor reveals that many of China's small, informal processors are finding operating conditions increasingly difficult. The crackdown on the import of scrap materials not meeting strict quality control and contamination standards has resulted in widespread shortages of material for these types of processors.

According to the Monitor, this may be by design. With approximately 800,000 tons of scrap material seized since the enforcement began in February, Chinese customs officials are attacking the contamination problem from both the supply and demand side of scrap. Larger, more modern processors of recyclable materials rely on cleaner streams of materials to operate effectively. However, China's large informal recycling sector is notorious for processing scrap plastics and metals by hand, burning away contamination and dumping waste products in local water supplies. These informal recyclers typically buy cheap supplies of materials with high levels of contamination. By cutting off the supply of this material, the Chinese government is attempting to drive many of these processors out of business, eliminating future demand for cheap, low-quality material and encouraging the growth of a modern recycling infrastructure.

In the short run, however, the ongoing enforcement has given rise to a black market trade in recyclable material. The material shortage has dramatically increased the prices of scrap in China, and many processors of all sizes now resort to an underground trade in material – both approved and unapproved by customs. Larger processors have more capital and resources to bargain with, forcing smaller operators to either diversify the types of materials they accept, or get out of the business all together.

Throughout 2012, many in China have become increasingly upset over high-profile seizures of scrap material shipments that contain high percentages of foreign plastic resin types, metal contaminants or moisture in scrap paper shipments. Late in 2012, a new political administration made the decision to enforce scrap material import regulations enacted several years earlier. Operation Green Fence is reportedly scheduled to run through November of this year, although many processors on both sides of the Pacific are convinced that the tougher standards are here to stay.

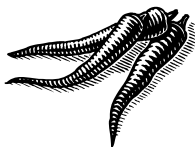


TASTY TIDBITS

10 uses for old spices

Spices too outdated for flavorful cooking? Here are some ideas to give them one more life:

1. *Freshen your carpet.* - Mix an assortment and sprinkle before you vacuum.
2. *Repel bugs.* - Block holes they use.
3. *Make scented soap.* - Makes a great gift!
4. *Make watercolor paint.* - Mix deep colored powders with water.
5. *Repel animal pests.* - Sprinkle hot spices around your garden.
6. *Add to your laundry.* - Black pepper will help keep colors bright.
7. *Make scented candles.* - See #3.
8. *Toss them on your grill.* - It will release any remaining volatile oils.
9. *Deodorize your drawers.* - Place in sachets.
10. *Grow them!* - Try planting old whole spice seeds.



Transformations



David Suzuki, world-renowned Canadian geneticist and host of the long-running documentary series *The Nature of Things* recently sat down to interview

with staff of the International Living Future Institute before he offered up the keynote speech at their conference in May.

The Institute featured the story in their latest issue of *Trim-Tab*, a beautiful and insightful quarterly online magazine that regularly transcends its green building roots to delve more broadly into humankind's relationship to our environment. Check it out at the link below and see what Suzuki has to say!

<http://living-future.org/trimtab/cascadia>

Bike Tubes Live On

Bicycle manufacturer Trek and outdoor retailer REI are making it easier for U.S. cyclists to recycle their used tire tubes, partnering with a Seattle-based bag and accessory company in an effort to collect 1 million of the rubber products by the end of next year.

To feed the recently formed "bike tube recycling network," REI, Trek and independent bike shops will collect tubes from consumers and then send them on to Alchemy Goods, which re-uses rubber to craft messenger bags, belts, wallets and other items. Alchemy points out bicycles bought in the last year alone will produce 26 million discarded tubes over the next two years.



O—S—Used!



Looking for a great deal on office supplies, furniture, electronics, housewares, sport equipment or even a car? OSU holds regular surplus sales for just about anything you may need! The program is self supported and last year returned over \$500,000 back to OSU coffers. Public sales are held every Wednesday, and on the first Saturday of the month:

1st Saturday : 8 am-12 pm
1st Wednesday : 5:30-7:30 pm
All other Wednesdays: 12-3 pm
Sales are located in the Property Services Building on the OSU Campus at 644 SW 13th St. (on the corner of 13th St. and A Ave.).

1st Saturday : 8 am-12 pm

1st Wednesday : 5:30-7:30 pm

All other Wednesdays: 12-3 pm

Sales are located in the Property Services Building on the OSU Campus at 644 SW 13th St. (on the corner of 13th St. and A Ave.).

<http://surplus.oregonstate.edu/public/osused>

Help Boost Reuse

The Reuse Alliance

needs your support to garner the official designation of October 20th of each year as "National Reuse Day".



The purpose of National Reuse Day will be to promote the social, environmental and economic benefits of reuse and encourage more people to join the movement toward a cleaner environment and greener economy.

National Reuse Day will be the only nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging Americans to buy, use or donate reusable, reclaimed and re-manufactured products. Having a national day will help encourage millions of Americans to improve their reuse habits at home, school and work.

For more information, go to: www.nationalreuseday.org

Job Openings:

Senior Program Educator - Washington County

Provides public information and education for Washington County's solid waste and recycling programs, will provide information to and serve as liaison with the public and media regarding current waste reduction and recycling activities and projects, will develop and implement specialized informational programs promoting waste reduction and recycling through public presentation and other media techniques, and will organize and train volunteers and manage volunteer programs.



Master Recycler Call to Serve



Wednesday, July 10, 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Salem-Keizer Recycling and Transfer Station

Master Recycler need to lead a group of 11 Japanese Tokyo International University students on a tour of the Salem-Keizer Recycling and transfer station. First contact Jared Virtue at jvirtue@willamette.edu or 916-798-0701 to arrange the logistics, then contact Beth at smyersshenai@co.marion.or.us or 503-588-5169 x5920 so Republic Services can be notified and to get some pointers to help you lead a successful tour!

Thursday, July 11—Sunday, July 14

Marion County Fair—Oregon State Fairgrounds

Come be a part of the coolest county fair in Marion County! We're having a waste-reduction family focus and need volunteers who are crafty, artistic, and those who wish they wuz to staff a new offering (to us) in the Kid's Discovery Village portion of the Fair. We plan on offering reusable bag making, recycled bookmarks from sign vinyl, and heaven knows what-all. Interested? Contact Alan Pennington at 503-365-3188 or apennington@co.marion.or.us

Slots open:

Thursday and Friday: 1 to 5 pm

Saturday and Sunday: 10 a.m. to 2pm; 2 pm to 6 pm

Thursday, July 11 - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

City of Salem Green Fair Event

Peace Plaza (Salem Civic Center)

Master Recyclers are needed to staff an informational table at this new-to-us event. At this open air affair we'll be spinning the wheel of waste and answering the many recycling questions that arise from those thirsting to drink from your fountain of knowledge. Interested? Contact Alan Pennington at 503 365 3188 or apennington@co.marion.or.us

June 24 - August 9th (choose a day in this range)

The City of Donald has a popular free lunch program that they offer to children from 12:00 - 12:30 at their town park. They would like a Master Recycler to come do a simple activity, such as the sorting game, to teach the children why it's important that they recycle & not litter. The date is flexible, but they would prefer someone to come closer to June 24th if possible. If you can help with this activity, please contact Bailey (bpayne@co.marion.or.us -or- 503-588-5169 x5991).

Wednesday, July 17

ODOT DMV Safety, Health, & Alternative Trans. Fair 1905 Lana Ave. NE, Salem

Spread the good word about recycling, the Master Recycler Program, HHW, and how smart your dog is compared to the average MC mongrel. One volunteer needed from 9 until noon. Contact Alan Pennington at 503-365-3188 or apennington@co.marion.or.us.

Saturday, August 3

Riverfront Family Fest

Riverfront Park, Salem

Are you feeling family-friendly? Two family-friendly volunteers needed to staff the Waste Reduction booth at this fun event

from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Various waste reduction activities will be offered. Contact Alan Pennington at 503 365 3188 or apennington@co.marion.or.us.

Monday, August 12th

A Master Recycler is needed to lead a tour of the Salem-Keizer Recycling & Transfer Station and the Earth Walk. There will be approximately 20 students ages 7-9 and their parents. They would like to do the tour for approximately an hour between 10:00 - 12:00. If you would like to lead this tour, please contact Bailey (bpayne@co.marion.or.us -or- 503-588-5169 x5991) so that he can let the school know, notify the transfer station and give you tips on how to lead the tour.

Monday, August 12th

A Master Recycler is needed to teach approximately 20 children ages 7-9 the basics of how to recycle using our recycling sorting game at a school in south Salem between 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. If you would like to help out with this, please contact Bailey (bpayne@co.marion.or.us -or- 503-588-5169 x5991).

Flexible Date

Community Action Head Start (4611 Lancaster Dr. NE, Salem) would like someone to come teach 20 young children about recycling. Ideally, they would like someone to come sometime Monday - Thursday sometime before noon. One possible activity is to briefly talk about what composting is and read them a story about worm composting that is geared for their age (Bailey has a book). Another idea is to do a simplified waste sort activity (we have the kit here at our office). If you would like to help out with this, please contact Jennine Osorio (lunaleo27@yahoo.com -or- 503-991-3381) and then let Bailey (bpayne@co.marion.or.us) know so that he can arrange to give you the materials.

Saturdays through October

Salem Saturday Market

Downtown Salem

Zero Waste Station volunteers needed! Volunteers educate shoppers about how to sort their items and keep containers free from contamination. Hours are 9 am to 3 pm. Volunteers will receive a market gift card usable at any Salem Farmers Market. Email info@salemsaturdaymarket.org to sign up.

Another Payback Idea!

Ever thought of hosting a clothing swap? Here is a great video tutorial on getting one started. Feel free to check in with Alan, Bailey, Griselda or Beth if you have questions on using a project like this for payback hours.



Events & Occasions



Thursday, July 11, 6-8pm

Maker Thursday for Free Art Friday

DIY Studio, Salem Center Mall

Come play with reclaimed materials to create works of art to distribute on the streets of Salem. We'll provide open studio time, inspiration, and supplies for one project.

Free for members, \$2 non members

RSVP by Facebook or email info@diystudio.net so we can provide enough supplies.

Saturday, July 13, 1-3pm

Storytelling Through Assemblage Collage

DIY Studio, Salem Center Mall

You don't have to be an artist or expert at drawing to collage, but you will need to have a sense of adventure. We'll supply the instruction, materials, and inspiration. You'll leave with a completed collage as well as a booklet with inspirational tidbits, tips, and tricks. \$25 member, \$30 non-member Ages 12+

Saturday, July 13; 1 pm - 4 pm

The Willamette Valley Mosaic Workshops - Artist Lynn Takata

Straub Environmental Learning Center

Learn about native riparian plants and create artwork for the Willamette Valley Mosaic. Join us in an upcoming mosaic workshop at Straub Environmental Learning Center and contribute to a Salem legacy! You may recognize Lynn's work from the Salem Peace Mosaic she created with the community on the corner of Court St. and Cottage St. downtown. The workshops are FREE and open to the public. Registration required (ages 10 to adult). Call 503-391-4145 or email michelle@fselc.org to register.

Saturday, July 13 9-11 am (Birding)

Saturday, July 20 8-10 am (Birding)

Saturday, August 3 6-8 pm (Hiking)

Willamette Mission State Park

Friends of Straub Environmental Learning Center presents these learning-the-basics birding and hiking opportunities co-sponsored by Oregon State Parks and led by a park ranger. Participants to meet at the park. To register and get carpooling instructions, call John Savage at 503-399-8615. All hikes are free and open to the public.



Wednesdays, August 7, 14, 21, 28, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Sense of Place & the Ecological Identity

Straub Environmental Learning Center

This class series is a guided exploration of our connection to nature through investigating what is called an ecological identity. By understanding our ecological identities and the emotional bonds to nature, one may be inspired people to live more sustainably. Each class is intended to stand on its own but is designed to be experienced as a series so that the participant can define a thread of continuity from their own personal environmental ethic to an understanding of global environmental stewardship. Limited space. Please call 503-391-4145 or email fselc@fselc.org to register. \$5/class or \$20/session

Sept. 9 to Nov. 29, 2013 - Registration open now

Jan. 20 to April 13, 2014 - Registration open now

Oregon Master Naturalist Online

Designed for those interested in Oregon's natural history and how our state's natural resources are sustainably managed. You will learn natural history of plants, animals, habitats and geology; history and processes of landscape change and relevant topics in present-day sustainable natural resource management. Option 1 (Required to become an Oregon Master Naturalist, with Eco-region Specialization taught separately) online and onsite. Option 2: Online. Option 1: \$225; Option 2: \$325

The Back Page

Don't you love the simple elegance of a creative reuse idea that can be implemented with no directions required? This one was put to use in one of your favorite waste reduction coordinator's kitchens almost immediately after viewing!

File this one under "Why didn't I think of that?"



Marion County Public Work—Environmental Services

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Salem, OR 97305

Waste Reduction Coordinators:

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