

WASTE BYTES!

Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management and Recycling Program

We'll Meet You @ the Fair

Labor Day Weekend marks the end of summer; we used to say that when that time arrived, we rolled up the sidewalks and the tourists went home. This is no longer the case as any fairgoer will tell you. The Fryeburg Fair goes into October and many people have been waiting for the Common Ground Fair. (Come to think of it: maybe we just continue on without sidewalks.) Fairs are worth a visit or two and these two fairs allow us a chance to end the season in style.

Again this year, the Waste Management and Recycling Program of the Maine State Planning Office will join ranks with the Maine Resource Recovery Association in a booth at the Common Ground Fair, in the Environmental Concerns tent to discuss Recycling and Composting, as well as the rest of the Waste Management Hierarchy with those touring the grounds. The MRRA, as a part of their recycling and marketing support to Maine's communities, sells compost bins to assist with municipal waste reduction strategies. The SPO provides guidance on policy, and furnishes technical assistance and educational outreach to Maine's communities, businesses and residents.

While all of the Agricultural fairs may be fun, engaging the "Common Ground" is certainly a regional gathering of those focused on sustainable living styles.

The Common Ground Fair is scheduled for September 19, 20, and 21, 2008. For the last decade or more, the gathering has been held on the MOFGA (Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association) fair grounds in Unity, Maine. Tickets and information are now being circulated throughout Maine, especially at your whole food stores and the Green businesses that greet the 'following'. Hope to see you there!



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Bottle Redemption - the Front Line

Last month "Waste Bytes" saluted the Maine Department of Agriculture for their work with the 'Bottle Bill', and reminded us that Maine was one of the first of eleven states in the country to have a Returnable Beverage Container Law. When one looks at the history of success with the Bottle Bill, one cannot help but wonder why it isn't a standard rather than an exception. We hinted that there were changes afoot, which in turn would suggest that there is some tweaking to be done. The fine tuning most likely will come in a process to reduce the obvious problem that exists with the program - - containers being redeemed from other states.

And that is a major problem - - beverage containers that were purchased in 'non-bottle bill states' but that presented at Maine Redemption Centers for a return of the deposit (which was never collected since the beverage was purchased outside of Maine).

(Continued on Page 2)

Color ME Green!

With September comes the mailing of posters and invitations to schools to prepare for November 8 to 15 – Maine Recycles Week (MRW). Each year, communities are asked to plan local events and festivities to help raise the public awareness toward recycling and to celebrate the local success of doing as well as they do with available resources. The statewide recycling goal continues to be 50% - we're not there yet but we can make it happen!!

MRW 2008 is the tenth year of the annual campaign, and it was hoped that it might be special. **Well it is!**

The statewide Maine Recycles ad campaign has broken in onto the air waves. Separate ads now announce a competition for schools and students to create video media ads about recycling. At the local level, there is still time to view and plan to use the recycling promotional tool kit available at www.mainerecycles.com. It is expected that the wave of Green events, such as ecomaine's Green Expo, will continue to contribute to developing a behavioral change in individuals, leading them to adopt practices to benefit the environment.

The school competition will have a few changes with Maine Recycles Week. The quiet goal of having 50% of the state's elementary schools participate in the program has been shared with the MRW Steering Committee. The poster competition will still be held with the hopes of the best Maine Recycling Calendar yet! It is recognized too though, that many of the Green businesses are doing their part to further the awareness efforts – a great example may be seen with the reusable bag campaign and other Green practices found with one of Maine Recycle Week's newest sponsors, Hannaford Bros. Supermarkets.

We ask **everyone** this year to get involved! There is no greater State in the Country and there is no reason why we shouldn't 'step up to the plate' and recycle. The license may say "Vacationland" but Maine and its citizens have long been recognized for their working to protect the environment.



Front Line (Continued from Page 1)

At transfer stations and facilities, it is not uncommon to have 'collection boxes' for empty returnable beverage containers, and typically it is a local charity that oversees the collection boxes. Or staff may 'pull out' from trash or recyclables any empty beverage containers that have a 'redemption fee' label on them.

However, few folks who drop off these containers are asked if the beverage container was purchased in Maine or not, before those empties are placed into the collection box.

The Rules that apply to the state's bottle bill specify that only containers purchased in Maine, for which a deposit fee was collected, may be redeemed for that deposit. The Maine Department of Agriculture oversees the bottle bill and is working now to develop guidelines and clarification for transfer stations and recycling centers, to minimize the negative impact of non-Maine beverage containers being presented for redemption.

The bottle redemption law may be the single most successful effort to demonstrate to everyone that a discarded item can have value and in turn support Recycling in Maine. We need this process to continue to work effectively and efficiently to continue to help to create an environment to foster even more successful recycling efforts.

We'll keep you posted on this and will have that clarification within the near future.

SPO's Waste Management & Recycling Back to

We are pleased to announce the newest member of the SPO Waste Management and Recycling Program – Lana Clough. Many of you already know Lana from the Code Enforcement Officer Training Program, which she has successfully managed for many years at the SPO.

Lana joins Recycling filling the Senior Planner/data management position that was left vacant with Hank Tyler's retirement. Without telling stories, we can say that Lana is not completely new to Recycling, since we have often heard George tell how he worked with Lana at the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, back with the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling.

Lana will move up to take her place in the "Tree House" at the SPO in September, while promising a smooth transition in the CEO Training Program, which by the way, is another of the three programs in the Community Assistance Team. The other program is the Maine Floodplain Management Program. We welcome Lana to join us in the adventures and efforts to help Maine communities in the quest of further waste reduction.



MRRA Annual Meeting



On Monday, September 29th, the Maine Resource Recovery Association is holding its annual meeting in East Millinocket, Maine. Normally with a quarterly newsletter, the SPO would be wondering about when to mention the MRRA meeting. Do you promote it with an early September or do you recap the activity in a news byte in October? Do we need to mention that this is another advantage of a more frequently distributed e-mail newsletter? In October, we will comment on the event.

We commend the MRRA for their innovative scheduling. Did we say "innovative"? Yup!! This annual meeting is being held in East Millinocket on September 29, 2008. With the price of gas and a desire to take advantage of the location, the MRRA has arranged for a bus to start in Southern Maine and travel north picking up attendees in Lewiston, Augusta, and Bangor. At the other end, the bus will be used to shuttle members to a tour of the Katahdin Paper Mill where much of the newsprint that is collected by communities is recycled. Hats off to John Albertini, Ferg Lea and the education committee for this novel but efficient way of networking! For more information and registration details, please check out the MRRA web site at www.mrra.net.

Rally Round the Flag, Gang!

This year's MRRRA Annual Meeting has scheduled a session around using the "Maine Recycles" promotion toolkit. If memory serves us correctly, this session will occur about one year after the start of the Maine Recycles Campaign. It may seem like by now that we would be beyond introducing items like the kit again; however, not many programs have taken the kit and utilized it to promote local recycling programs. Posters and post cards supporting the Maine Recycles statewide campaign were available at the MRRRA's meeting in January of this year and continue to be available... just call or email us!!.

We have to work full time to not only raise the public awareness but also change individual's behavior and habits. That is where the Maine Recycles campaign comes into play....

The campaign is using a variety of televised commercials to 'reinforce' the message that recycling is important and needs to be embraced by Maine residents and businesses. Through frequent airing of short advertisements, the audience is repeatedly exposed to the recycling message that will hopefully aid local, targeted efforts to promote recycling.

Within the next year, we will be conducting another statewide survey to help determine the success and impacts of the statewide promotional campaign and perhaps decide what the next step or phase needs to be.

This is the **tenth year** of Maine Recycles Week!! Thanks to your support and involvement from teachers and students across the state, we have been able to utilize this celebration to not only promote recycling but to educate about the value of 'buying recycled'. Success is not in printing and distributing posters but in having communities become involved in celebrating the numerous paybacks from recycling.

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We have asked in the past about which communities have recycling committees. Now, rather than identifying those committees, we want to hear about their works. When Community Based Social Marketing was introduced, we talked about reinforcement as prompts or peer pressure with public commitment and what could be done locally. Do posters draw attention and that led to? Are we ready to share successes and energize our friends and neighbors? Let's share with all our experiences? Let us put a push on for the remainder of 2008.



Help Us to Build Your Following

Some of you may have thought that our attempt at a paperless newsletter wouldn't last this long. Up until this time we had a secret weapon - a great intern, Nick Miller. Now, however, it's back to us so maybe we had better to start the countdown all over again! With Nick headed back to school in Connecticut, he has fortunately left the newsletter in great shape for the team. What remains now is to build the circulation. That is where each of you can help. Please think about whom you know who should be or might want to be getting "Waste Bytes". Help us connect with contacts - contacts for: recycling committees; solid waste committees; schools; municipal governments; public works departments; institutions; organizations; and maybe, just maybe, individuals who are interested recycling and want to make our solid waste reduction efforts successful.

Think about your friends and acquaintances and send them a message asking them if they would like to know more about recycling or recycling in Maine. If they do, then ask them to forward their e-mail address to bruce.white@maine.gov in order to join the readership of "Waste Bytes".

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