



# Recycle This! Newsletter

Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management & Recycling Program \* Winter 2007



## Augusta Update

Augusta is one of those “cities that never sleeps”. Even when the Legislature is not in session, the Executive Department, including the State Planning Office, and line agencies, including the Departments of Labor and Environmental Protection, continue to respond to task force and study assignments of different committees and work groups.

Just recently we got a call to the office from a friend, certainly a Hero in our midst. Following our discussion of the current state of Maine Recycles Week arrangements, the caller left a wish for the Spirit of the Holidays or more accurately my neighbor in the corner birth -not “Bulldog” Tyler but “Money Bags” Morris. This struck us as a more accurate survey than the usual plea to describe your relationship with schools. All were enthused and this item was squarely placed in your newsletter.

Rather than invite your input and feedback on what is happening in the communities, we would like to ask your priorities on what is needed. If you were to ask the elves or the spirits of the Holidays what you could use most to help your residents and your facility, what would it be? We give our thanks for what we have at Thanksgiving and we are allowed to wish for the gifts of Holidays to come. Please let us know how we in state government services can help?

Please respond to [sam.morris@maine.gov](mailto:sam.morris@maine.gov) or call (207)287-8054. You may write to our attention at: “Recycle This!”, Waste Management and Recycling Program, Maine State Planning Office, State House Station #38, Augusta, Maine 04330. Oh, and by the way, Thank you and a Happy Holidays to all!



## Welcome “Maine Recycles!”

After almost a year of Community Based Social Marketing (cbsm) by the Recycling Marketing steering committee and their marketing consultants, Dwell Creative, a new effort is about to blanket the State with an effort to market recycling. With recycling activities taking place for more than a decade and with various levels of success being realized, it was determined that now recycling had to be sold.

The Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources engaged in various hearings and task forces and posed the question, “Why has the 50% Statewide Recycling Rate Goal not been realized. The infrastructure appears to be in place with almost 98% of the population having the opportunity available to recycle. Several municipalities had implemented strategies to increase local recycling rates. In some areas throughout the State, communities had taken steps to make recycling as easy as they possibly could. Despite all the preparation, instigation, and manipulation, the statewide rate still hovered below our dreams and expectations.

The recycling situation and achievements were not unique to Maine. All across the Country similar frustrations were being wrestled with to attain the much-wanted success. A logical strategy that was explored and in some cases proven successful was marketing recycling. This approach looks for behavioral change and we strategize that the desired change can be accomplished by adding greater promotion efforts to educational activities and the physical network now in place. through advertisement, peer pressure, and pure selling, it is hoped that recycling numbers will move upward from the established plateau.

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## *We Need Your Data!!!*

Municipalities are responsible for furnishing solid waste disposal services for their residential and commercial solid waste. One of our functions here at the State Planning Office is to track municipal program activities, so that we are better prepared to assist local programs and conduct long-range planning for solid waste disposal needs.

Therefore, the reporting done by you is critical, and as such is required under State Law, 38 MRSA section 2133.7 (shown in part here):

**7. Recycling progress reports.** Municipalities shall report annually, on forms provided by the office, on their solid waste management and recycling practices. The annual report must include how much of each type of solid waste is generated and how that solid waste is managed. The office shall assist municipal reporting by developing a municipal waste stream assessment model. The model must rely on actual waste data whenever possible, but incorporate default generation estimates when needed.

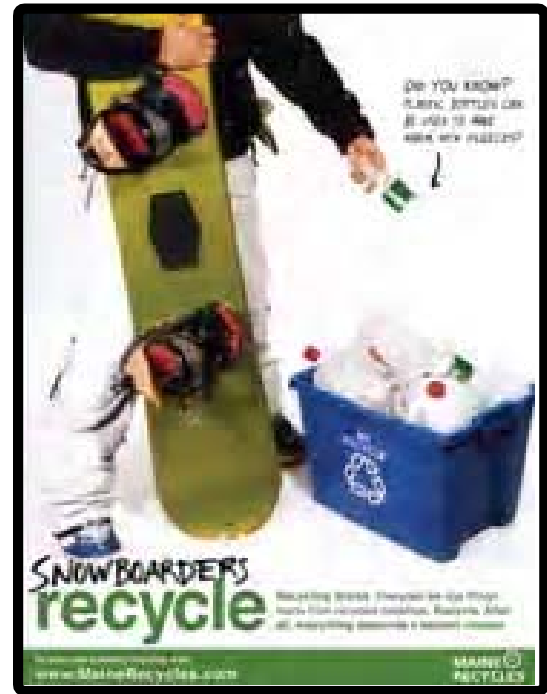
It is difficult for planning to be done without adequate and correct data to project from. We rely on the the timeliness and accuracy of the solid waste program information you submit to this office. That information is the cornerstone that supports other solid waste program data collected from other processors, disposal facilities and material handlers.

One of the more common questions asked by our Legislators is why don't the municipalities all submit their reports to you by your deadline? Their question has more to do with the state having solid waste data in a timely fashion, which would provide a more current picture to the Legislators than the current data - lag time of at least a year.

During the past Legislative session, this office was directed to complete its Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity Report on an annual basis, instead of every other year. In this age of quickly available information, we, and that includes you, continue to be asked to provide current solid waste management and recycling program information.

## Welcome "Maine Recycles!"

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The strategy to be employed consists of: a statewide ad campaign designed by Dwell Creative in conjunction with the State Planning Office and the Recycling Marketing Steering Committee; tool kits of press releases and other materials to assist recycling committees or local efforts; and a new logo. The focus of the campaign will be the young adult population, 20 to 40 something, or those that are too busy or just don't have the time to recycle. Now we need only to add enthusiasm, energy, and exposure. From the past, let us bring forward and stir in commitment, ability, and the support previously exhibited. The end result hopefully will be a product or recycling rate given rise by the united efforts of people of the State of Maine.



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## *Waste Audits for Businesses Are Coming Around Again*

From time-to-time, the State Planning Office receives a call from a business that would like help with their recycling program. There are several web sites available with directions for conducting waste audits and material is offered by the Environmental Protection Agency and such national programs as "Keep America Beautiful". There is always a place for businesses to adopt a green philosophy and with it incorporate the principles of waste reduction along with the spirit of energy conservation. While this has been talked about in the past, recently there has been a resurgence of requests from small business for technical assistance coming from various communities in Maine.

The Lewiston Sun Journal reported in a story by Mary Adams that such audits were taking place in Rumford. Reading into the article, one learns that Patti Duguay brought her interest in recycling to the River valley Healthy Communities Coalition where she now serves as director. Focusing on office paper and cardboard, she has found some interest in the audit, and we commend her for her effort.

Further to the South, Sarah Wojowaski, recycling coordinator in the Saco, Biddeford, Scarborough, and Old Orchard area, has implemented a program in Biddeford. Sarah references the Keep America Beautiful, Inc., process found in "Guide to Waste in the Workplace". This program recognizes those businesses that have conducted audits and devised a plan of action.

As mentioned, from time to time we do receive a call at the State Planning Office and one or two staff members of the Waste Management and Recycling Program will plan a visit. Not too long ago, just such a call came from the Office Pavillion in Portland. A time was scheduled and Sam Morris headed off on rainy day to meet with the staff. A tour of the office was planned - followed by a debriefing and question-and-answer session with several of the staff. At times, an assignment is so rewarding that one's spirits are raised - even on a rainy day. Sam's dumpster dive first embarrassed the Office Pavillion staff and then brought a mutual meeting of the minds between the OP and SPO staff members. Little could be suggested; however much could be and was discussed.

## *A Little Business Can Go a Long Way!*

### *An Audit May Be in Order!*

Each community is different when it comes to recycling or waste reduction. While guided by the state and federal governments, the final decision is left to each municipality. In most cases, we hear about the residential sector when it comes to recycling. Businesses doing business within a community may call for directions and ultimately be directed toward a private hauler; however lately businesses in Maine have demonstrated an increased interest in doing their best to be recognized for adopting "green practices", which may include a request for suggestions to better assist the community and state. How can we turn down a request like that - actually what most of us have been waiting more than a decade to hear. Here some suggestions:

**Listen** - This is true of both the initial contact and then when the visit comes about. Ask what is being done and then request to be shown around. Remember that in any business it is the employee workforce from top to bottom that make up each company.

**Observe** - There are several types of audits and each can happen anywhere along the route of materials from mail or personal items to products from delivery to discharge as waste.

**Summarize** - Recognizing that you are a guest on a mission, it is always a good idea to play the role of a diplomat representing the Recycling Industry, your employer, and yourself. Ask questions to verify your information and add the reality check before commenting on your findings.

**Commend** - Offer support from the very beginning for the call and desire to improve and volunteer recognition of what and to what extent efforts have been made.

**Recommend** - When recommending begin with the doable and discuss the impact of change - remembering that the business best knows its resources - both financial and human.

**Recognition** - Make sure that you have thanked everyone for their time but don't let it stop there. Follow your visit with a written letter of appreciation and support by asking to hear of future successes and needs.

## Maine Recycles Week 2007

For the ninth year, the maine Recycles Week Steering Committee thanks one and all for their part in making Maine Recycles Week a success. Each year we try to create opportunities to speak to our citizens about recycling and composting. We visit communities and events to get the word out. We have been doing this for nine years.

Who is the “we”? The citizens of the State of Maine can count on the staff of the Waste Management and Recycling Program of the State Planning Office. The members of the maine Resource Recovery Association represent the communities and their facilities that make recycling happen. Just as Maine Recycles Week is a public/private partnership, there is a valued working relationship between the towns and private industry in the waste reduction field. There are the unselfish citizens that give of their time and energy to work in local government or are elected to shape our strategies and make the hard decisions. Then there are the volunteers that may either serve on committees or may even assist at the facilities. There are also the residents of Maine that have over time shaped an image and reputation for doing the right thing and have made recycling almost second nature.



The auditorium of the Readfield Elementary School packed with students for their Recycling Assembly.

It takes but a visit to a school to realize where the message is though. Having been invited to the Readfield Elementary School one day became an eye opener. Eighteen children in the RES Recycling Club were dedicating the new recycling shed. The school had adopted their own motto “Replace the Y (Why?) in Recycle with I. I Recycle! All 102 students served as the best evidence that Maine can reach its goal of a 50% statewide recycling goal - and it just may be this year!

## 2008 Maine Recycles Calendar

Announcing the 2008 Maine Recycles calendar, which is available December 20, 2007, and containing student MRW art work. Calendars will be sent to all municipalities in Maine as well as all schools. Individual copies can be ordered free of charge on our web site, [www.mainerecycles.com](http://www.mainerecycles.com) or call Bruce White at (207) 287-8053 .



At the ecomaine Green Expo, MRW friend, The Colony Hotel, displayed only a few of their many awards received as the premiere Green Hotel.

There was a new end to Maine Recycles Week when ecomaine scheduled its first Green Expo on November 15 in the Sullivan Gymnasium of the University of Southern Maine on the Portland Campus. The ecomaine Green Expo has all indications of becoming a tradition. of particular excitement is the niche that it hopes to fill - which is the real promotion of products that are made from recycled materials and the companies in Maine that embrace the green philosophy in their day to day operations.



The Sunrise Guide made great neighbors for the MRW booth at the ecomaine Green Expo.

## The 3Rs Finds a New Home

For the last several months, Ruth's Reuseable Resources had been looking for a new home. Having been housed for the last several years in the former Bessey School in Scarborough, the 3Rs fell prey to development. As with many of the reuseable resource centers that have worked out of abandoned properties, especially schools, there often comes a time when their facilities are suddenly envisioned for a new purpose and more tangible profits from sale. The deadline was the end of July and, once more, Ruth Libby, husband Tom, and a remarkable Board surfaced in new and fashionable style.



The old Unum sign is kept company by Ruth's familiar pet rock.

Ruth's Reusable Resources has relocated to 39 Blueberry Road, Portland. The new location was built and had served as the records center for Unum Insurance. With a design far more suited for the operation than any would hope, there should be few renovations needed before becoming a model operation. Even the inherited forklifts, jacks, shelving, and loading dock, brought tears to the eyes of the new owners.

As Ruth offered an early tour of the new facilities, she recounted details of a last minute trip to Augusta. There in Commissioner of Education Gendron's office, she learned of a grant that helped make things fall into place. When complete, a store or green zone and more manageable (Ruth's couldn't be more friendly!) space has room for constructive change eventually, and for now a wonderful new place for business.

Ruth's can be reached at new numbers: (207) 699-5565 and (207) 699-5567. The fax machine splits the difference at (207) 699-5566. In case you missed the coincidence, we would point out that at their new location Ruth's new neighbor at 64 Blueberry Road is none other than ... yes, you guessed it - **ecomaine!**



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In the learning process, we determine: what is needed; how the best to educate; and finally evaluate how well we have done. Once done, we look at the evaluation and try to determine how well the lesson has been learned.

We can then repeat the same; offer a new approach or lesson; or prepare to support the successful effort. This also describes Community Based Social Marketing, as well as education, and basically identifies where we are trying to change the behavior of our citizens so that all of us are working together to: reduce the waste stream; reduce the cost of waste disposal; and reduce the impact of waste on our environment.

Please keep in mind the importance of submitting your program's information to us - why the reports, numbers, data? Look again at the education process and consider the value of the evaluation process is. The information you provide is not used for comparing one community to another, but to gather as complete a set of statewide data, in order to have a reliable base upon which to plan for future needs, as well as to address current concerns. Please make every effort to get your reports in on time - your data is more critical than you may realize! If you have already submitted your program's report, **THANKS!!!**



**Does this face look familiar?** Meredith Batley was in our summer issue of ***Recycle This Newsletter!*** and has actually found a new place at the State Planning Office. In all likelihood, the new ad campaign would never have come together as it did without Meredith's contribution. Thanks for all of your help Meredith!

Maine State Planning Office  
Waste Management & Recycling Program  
38 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0038  
1-800-662-4545 or 207-287-8934  
www.recyclemaine.com

## Mark Your Calendar !

**Maine Resource Recovery Association  
Winter Workshop**

January 28, 2008

Contact MRRA at (207) 942-6772

**Maine Resource Recovery Association  
Annual Conference**

Around the First of May

Contact MRRA at (207) 942-6772

Order your

**2008 Maine Recycles Calendar** today

Available Mid-December order online at

[www.MaineRecycles.com](http://www.MaineRecycles.com).

Our Holiday Greeting courtesy of the 2008 Maine Recycles Calendar, Maine Recycles Week 2007, and Eliza, Grade 7, King Middle School, Portland.

*Your Waste Management and Recycling Team*

