



Recycle This! Newsletter

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

Augusta Update



The Waste Management and Recycling team has been moderately active with various Legislative initiatives and activities during the last couple of months.

The first session of the 123rd Legislature is scheduled to go through June 20, 2007.

A number of bills drew our attention this year, including our own bill that offered changes to statutes, based on the recommendations from our Solid Waste management Policy Review Task Force, which completed its work in early 2006. Among the changes are having the biennial waste Generation and Disposal Capacity Report become an annual report and replace the Task Force to review solid waste capacity with a standing advisory council. The bill received some minor amendments and was approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor on may 30, 2007. It is referenced as Public Law Chapter 192.

The Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on Solid Waste Management, that met during 2006, in addition to having a report on their meetings and findings, submitted legislation to carry their recommendations to the Natural Resources Committee. LD 810 will permit the Natural Resources Committee to meet up to four times during this summer and fall to continue discussions on solid waste issues.

A number of other solid waste bills were presented to the Natural Resources Committee on topics from exempting the sale of certain mercury containing items from the existing ban, the recycling of cellphones, but other committees also touched on solid waste management concerns. The Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee spent a great deal of time on LD564, entitled "An Act to Streamline the Regulation of Agricultural Composters",

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MRRA Conference Achieves Greater Heights in Carrabasset Valley



The Maine Resource Recovery Association Spring Conference drew a record number of vendors and an appreciative audience of members and guests to Sugarloaf USA. Keynote speakers were John Rooks of Dwell Creative on Monday and Kate Krebs of National Recycling Coalition on Tuesday. The speakers assessed the development of the image of Recycling on both the State and the National levels.

The conference was the first of the season, and booths were being set up on Sunday, while the last of the Spring skiers made their runs. The Department of Labor and the DEP made a strong showing in their training sessions. As was expected, much of the discussion turned to single sort and was the focus of one session. The traditional tours were scheduled with the Carrabasset Valley facilities as well as the Boralex plant in Eustis. This year Sandy River Recycling Association in Farmington and Waste Management in Norredgewock added open houses at their facilities for the attendees and the wrap up of a great event.

Congratulatuions and thanks go to the MRRA staff and the Education Committee for bringing together a great event. Please visit the MRRA web site www.mrra.net.

PERC Does More with Less or the Same

New happenings are in place at the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) in Orrington. The latest change in strategy is perhaps the State's newest grinder. What is a grinder doing in PERC? Peter Prata, plant manager, is upbeat about all that it has and does accomplish as it has been periodically been introduced into the processing strategy on the tipping floor. Trash often deferred before at the plant now becomes a light fluffy fuel at the end of the grinding process.



Show time and a mattress is selected.

Powered by a Mercedes engine, the piece of German equipment is put through its paces. Without a noticeable hitch of the motor, the steady turning reduced even the most stubborn mattress to a light fluff in a matter of seconds.



Mattress reduced to fluff in no time flat.

The new grinder will not only reduce trash going to the landfill from PERC but will also be enlisted in community cleanup days in Bangor and the surrounding area. The PERC Board and management should be congratulated on their willingness to step up to the plate.

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and the Business, Research, and Economic Development Committee heard several bills related to Miane's beverage container deposit program, to either increase the deposit value, modify the redemption center qualification requirements or to seek the unreturned deposits to assist with state programs.

We will update everyone in the next news letter on how this session ended... .

SPO Enlists Skills of Intern



Welcome Meredith!

The Waste Management and Recycling team has been joined in the "Tree House" by a summer intern. Meredith Batley will help design components of the new state recycling campaign. Specifically she will develop a tool kit that will include advertisements, PSAs, articles, logos, posters and educational activities for youth that communities can use to help promote their recycling program. Meredith graduated with honors and has a B.S. in environmental science from Acadia University in Nova Scotia. She is from Cushing, Maine.

***EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT
TO REDUCE!***

***Request that this newsletter be
delivered by e-mail-
www.recyclemaine.gov.***

Can We Bring the Schools Together! Exercise our Right to Recycle!



The Hodge School at the Matthews Museum of Maine Heritage in Union.

In New Hampshire and Vermont, there is a recycling club designed to let the schools serve themselves. When schools want to know more about recycling, they contact the club office and ask what school close to them has the most successful recycling program, and they are guided to their nearest neighbor. In Maine, although we have tried before, we really do not know who is recycling in schools - unless it is by accident.

While it has been tried before, we would like to identify the audience. Many will say that if you teach about recycling in schools you have the best and most efficient way to reach the community; however if after years of Maine Recycles Week focusing on the children and twice that long working with with education, why aren't the recycling numbers just bursting out of the meter range?

A few observations are in order. In an article by Kivi Leroux Miller in Resource Recycling, they site a survey that recognized that less than 4 percent of the population was influenced by their children. The statement of adults with families being too busy might be the most consistent excuse. The same research showed that the best recyclers were those adults without children. In Maine our older population is dominant and may support the state's reputation for being environmentally conscientious.

In the educational setting though, recycling has to be considered as a part of the educational environment - as much as display boards, bulletin boards, and other

audio/visual aides. If schools don't recycle, recycling in the curriculum is a mute lesson. If kids see their recycled materials thrown into a dumpster and carted off in a rear loader or front loading packer truck, it may be real difficult to sell recycling - even if it is part of a single sort program. If lessons and attention last for just one week and recycling is not otherwise practiced or present, the message will then be negative.

School children are our future adults, and we know that the recycling message carries with it values and responsibilities. With twenty percent of the population at stake, we must continue to develop quality recycling programs in our schools. While we have tried surveys before about this, we would like to try once again. With an intern at the State Planning Office this summer, we would like to aggressively survey our 800 schools. First we would like to ask those of you in the field to help us jump start this project to help us and help your community. Please let us know what you know about our any schools in your area and get back to us as soon as possible.

PLEASE Help!

Please let us know what you know about our any schools in your area and get back to us as soon as possible. When you read this, stop a moment and call your local school or schools and ask a few questions for us.

Do you teach about recycling in your curriculum?

Do you participate in Maine Recycles Week?

Do you recycle in your school?

What materials do you recycle?

Who collects them or where do they go?

School(s) name(s)?

Community(ies)?

Contact(s)?

Telephone #?

E-mail address(es)?

Your name and e-mail address or phone #?

You may respond to bruce.white@maine.gov or Bruce can be reached at (207) 287-8053 or fax to (207) 287-6489. The State Planning Office receives mail at State House Station #38, Augusta, Maine 04333.

Thank you!

Shine a Little Light on the Compact Fluorescents

One of the most frequently asked questions lately is in a similar light to our familiar exercise of choosing the right bag. “Which bag do you prefer at the grocery store? Plastic, Paper, or Cloth,” has been asked often to prompt discussion. This has now been challenged by people asking why fluorescent lamps are being touted for energy savings at the same time that they are being labeled as a universal or hazardous waste. Fluorescents do contain a small amount of mercury, but the energy savings can offset the need to recycle the lamp when it no longer works.

The answer is that with new technology compact fluorescent lamps can contribute tremendous energy savings. They also should be providing longer life that offers considerable cost savings to the consumer. **However, they do merit care in handling.**

How to Handle Fluorescent Lamps

KEEP LAMPS SAFE - DO NOT BREAK THEM!

1. Place lamps in the storage boxes provided by the lamp consolidator.
2. Fill out the log that tracks where the lamps came from, (household or business).
3. Place the lamp storage boxes in a storage rack where they will be safe from damage and easily inspected.
4. Write “Waste Lamps” on storage box.
5. Write the date on the storage box when the first lamp is received, or if a full box is delivered, the date it is received.
6. Do not store boxes more than five feet high.
7. Don’t let the storage boxes get wet or damaged. Lamps should be stored inside a building.
8. The storage area should have a sign saying, “Waste Lamp Storage” or “Universal Hazardous Waste Storage”.
9. Make sure that the storage area is locked when not in use.
10. When a box is full or has a broken lamp, seal all openings, using tape or other appropriate materials.
11. Keep a weekly inspection log.
12. Call the lamp consolidator for a pickup when you are running out of empty boxes, space or have lamps that have been stored for almost a year.

Call DEP with any questions at (207) 287-2651.

Taken from the Department of Environmental Protection training program.

What we have to do now is educate the public to our ability to take and properly dispose of them. The disposal ban is in place for a reason. The solution to problems caused by improper disposal can be handled by the recycling facilities which have proven that they are able to do what is needed so well.

Recyclathon Is Unique to the Maine Resource Recovery Association Conference

The MRRA conference generally has a few different paths of concurrent sessions to appeal to the wide variety of interests and responsibilities of individuals that now attend the event. Only as one sits down to lunch or dinner, do you become aware of the other sessions that you have missed either by chance or choice. During the breaks and lunch, conversations pop up about what else is going on - including "What is a Recyclathon?"

What is a Recyclathon? The Parthenon was a Greek temple in Athens. A marathon is a foot race, which is an original Olympic event having its beginnings in Greek legends. A biathlon certainly has its roots in war, as soldiers would have skied to points to shoot their rifle and plug on to the finish. A triathlon is an athletic event that is comprised of three distance challenges - running, swimming, and biking. But what is a Recyclathon?



A recyclathon is a competition on a course laid out to be traversed by loaded forklifts operated by professionals being timed and checked for accuracy. We can only surmise that it might have been conceived by a small staff that had spent a long day shuffling some nasty products in the confines of a relatively small facility that was buttoned up in protection from the weather. One would only guess that the stage was set for the small group to lay out the challenge for themselves to bet a week's wages to show off their stuff or destroy their reputations and no one knows what else in the process.

From such a legend, one introduces a few more stable influences such as state and local government agencies, especially Labor's Safety Works!, the Association, and sponsors, to produce rules and an environment that might save a hotel or conference center.



This year 7 competitors from a few communities climbed into the seat of the borrowed Toyota forklift to run the course of pylons set up in the maintenance garage at Sugarloaf and show that they had the right stuff. As the rain moved in on the outside, the competitors first made comments about having a new forklift to use and then cheered each other through the course - with a few well-meant asides at different turns. We won't say what the worst time was; however it is ashame that evryone doesn't just come together at the end of the conference to cheer on the local heroes.



As a closing gesture, the company rep climbed aboard his vehicle, maneuvered over a new quarter on the floor, and using one of the arms flipped the coin onto it.

Quick question: Have you and how many of your facility's workers ever seen the Recyclathon at an MRRA Conference? Please send an e-mail to bruce.white@maine.gov.

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Because You Asked!



It was recently announced that used compact fluorescent bulbs would soon be accepted for recycling at some of the largest stores selling them. Recognizing the conflicting stories between compact fluorescent lamps being hazardous materials due to their mercury content while still being touted by *Efficiency Maine* for their long life and efficiency, a collection program will soon be announced. As it is put in place, we do know that Home Depot and WalMart stores have signed on with the Maine Public Utilities Commission and Maine Department of Environmental Protection to serve as collection points. They will still be accepted at most transfer stations handling universal waste. The program will be vigorously promoted as soon as it is available.

Single Sort Recycling, which has been much talked about for the past year, has arrived. The *ecomaine* facility in Portland is delivering all that it promised with its new equipment on Blueberry Lane. There is still room for more recycling in the new facility that is fascinating skeptics with the performance of their optical scanning of all seven plastics and efficient handling of other materials.

The Maine Resource Recovery Association has scheduled a tour of the *ecomaine* plant on June 25th. For more information, please contact MRRA at (207) 942-6772 or visit their web site at www.mrra.net. Space for the tour is limited.