

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Spokane Regional
SOLID
WASTE
SYSTEM

(509) 625-6580

www.solidwaste.org

Summer 2009



Progress continues on plan update

The Spokane County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan Update was presented in April to the Spokane County Board of Commissioners for consideration. The Board held a public hearing April 28, 2009. The Commissioners accepted public testimony at the hearing, and continued to accept written comments through May 12, 2009.

The Board and County staff are in the process of reviewing the

Plan and public testimony, and will set a date in the future for Plan adoption. After County adoption of the Plan, the Plan will be presented to each of the cities within Spokane County for adoption. Once the County and cities have adopted the Plan, it will be delivered to the Washington State Department of Ecology for approval.

You can view the Plan at www.solidwaste.org.

Look for blue as Downtown continues to be green

Recycle bins have come to Downtown Spokane this summer! In addition to nine more of the new black trash receptacles, which are replacing the Expo '74 bins, the Downtown Spokane Partnership is placing recycling bins in four loca-

tions. The blue recycle bins, matching the style of the garbage cans, will be installed by early July. These bins will be for glass, plastic, and aluminum recyclable bottles and cans *only*, and will be labeled for such items.



Blue curbside containers are for recyclables only!

After recyclables are collected at the curb, they are taken to local recycling processors. At these facilities, recyclables are sorted and prepared for market. When residents place non-recyclables into blue curbside containers, these items are considered contaminants and must be sorted out and disposed of by the recycling facility. Kevin Holcomb of Pacific Recycling reports that his company has seen an increase of as much as 8 percent in non-recyclable materials that had to be disposed during the last year.

When it comes to contaminants in the curbside containers, the biggest problems are plastics that are not currently accepted here. However, the recycling containers also seem to collect a lot of things that just don't belong, including: broken hand tools, patio pavers, clothes, shoes, broken lumber, dirty diapers, concrete, dog poop, kitty litter, and hypodermic needles and other sharps—you get the idea! Some of those items are definitely garbage, while others could have been diverted by other means, such as reuse. Remember—just because something like medical sharps are in a container that could have been recyclable if it were empty, doesn't mean the contents and container are recyclable together!

Most residents do a good job of preparing their recyclables. However, some of us could do a little better at keeping our recyclables contaminant-free. For a complete listing of items to put in your curbside bin, please refer to the copy of the bin sticker on this page. All of Spokane's recyclables are still destined for recycling markets. In these challenging times, it is important that we provide the best possible recyclables to the marketplace.



What were they thinking?

Acceptable Materials

- Batteries**
Household: Put in plastic bag
Put bag on top of bin
Vehicle batteries: Place next to bin
- Cans: Aluminum & Tin**
Labels OK
Rinse well
No foil, foil trays or scrap metal
- Cardboard & Brown Paper Bags**
Corrugated cardboard only
Flatten & bundle (Max. 2' x 2')
No cereal or pizza boxes
- Cell Phones**
Put in plastic bag with household batteries
OK to include chargers
- Glass Bottles & Jars**
Brown, green or clear only
Rinse, labels OK
No lids
- Magazines & Catalogs**
Bundle or bag
Staples OK
No junk mail
- Newspapers & Phone Books**
Bundle or bag
No plastic bags
- Plastics**
Only plastic bottles with necks smaller than their bases are accepted. Acceptable codes:
Code 1 (PETE) Bottles & Jars
Code 2 (HDPE) Uncolored Bottles & Jugs
Please rinse, labels OK
No lids
No tubs or dishes
No colored code 2 or other codes
No plastic bags
No other plastic of any kind!

Recycling Hotline, 625-6800 www.solidwaste.org

Bloomsday pilots cup recycling program

For the first time, Bloomsday organizers composted used drinking cups from the water stations along the 12K race route. A total of 2,080 pounds of paper cups, collected in compostable plastic bags, were delivered to Royal Organics in Royal City, Washington, where they were mixed with the System's clean green yard debris for composting. So far, it appears that the cups and bags are composting nicely.

Bloomsday also recycled 1,500 pounds of cardboard from the boxes that contained the t-shirts, cups, etc. Also new to the event were several temporary blue recycling totes in the Spokane downtown business area. These totes collect 140 pounds of recyclable Code 1 plastic bottles and aluminum cans each.

Riverfront Park contributed to the recycling tonnage by recycling cardboard and providing ClearStream recycling bins within the Park. Riverfront Park now has five recycling containers in high-traffic areas.

Compared with last year's race, Bloomsday 2009 reduced its disposal tonnage by 3.4 tons, recycling nearly 2 tons of material.

Event recycling is the law

Washington law requires that recycling be provided at all official gatherings and sports facilities. The Spokane Regional Solid Waste System loans out ClearStream containers and, as of this summer, has a staff member to help facilitate event recycling. Check out the information, guidelines, and procedures at www.solidwaste.org (go to Recycling and then to Public Event Recycling). Look for these ClearStream containers at public and sports events that you attend.

Plastic primer

Sometimes it seems as though you need to be a detective to figure out just which plastic containers can be recycled and where. So here is a quick primer:

Curbside Programs

The curbside programs accept bottles and jars *only* (the neck is smaller than the base of the container). Containers should be empty, rinsed, and without lids. It is OK to leave on labels. In Spokane, the following codes are accepted:

- Code 1 – Bottles and jars
Excluded: microwave food dishes, clam-shell type food containers, and drink cups



- Uncolored Code 2 –
Translucent bottles, jugs, and jars (In an "Uncolored Code 2," you will be able to identify the color of the contents when the container is full.)



Excluded: Colored Code 2 bottles and jars (white is considered a color), Code 2 cups and tubs (such as yogurt containers and butter tubs), and Code 2 plastic bags

Drop-Off Programs

At the Spokane Solid Waste System Recycling Facilities, you can drop off Code 1 and Uncolored Code 2 bottles and jugs, as described above. In addition, you can recycle Colored Code 2 bottles and jugs, such as detergent bottles, organic milk bottles, and health care product bottles and jars.

Plastic bags (Code 2 and/or Code 4) may be accepted for recycling at your favorite grocery store or some schools. If you don't see a bin, go to Customer Service and ask whether plastic bag recycling is available.

At the present time, all other plastics are excluded from recycling here in Spokane. This includes: all other codes (3-7) of plastic bottles and jars; all other plastic containers, including microwave food trays, deli and take-out containers, drink cups, and tubs; polystyrene or Styrofoam egg cartons and clam-shell containers; and other plastic items, such as disposable dishware, toys, balls, and yard furniture. Local recyclable materials brokers do not have markets for these plastics, which is why these items are NOT accepted in local programs.

To reduce the amount of non-recyclable plastic that you must put in the trash, buy products only in recyclable containers whenever possible, use reusable shopping bags, and use durable dishware.

Recycling Facilities

Curbside Collection

City of Spokane
Solid Waste Management Department:
625-7878

Cities of Deer Park, Liberty Lake,
Millwood, Spokane Valley, and some unincorporated areas east of the City of Spokane

Waste Management: 924-9400

Fairchild Air Force Base
Sunshine Recycling & Disposal: 924-5678

Drop-Off

The Spokane Regional Solid Waste System operates three drop-off sites (see box).

Community Drop-offs

Airway Heights
Cheney
Fairchild AFB
Medical Lake

The Spokane Regional Solid Waste System maintains a local Recycling Hotline, 625-6800, which is staffed

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Our Hotline operators will help guide you in finding options for the recycling and disposal of items that you need to get rid of. If you call outside of those work

hours, please leave a message, and your call will be returned on the next business day.

You can also find recycling and disposal information on the Recycling and Garbage Guide pages in the QwestDex Directory and on our website, www.solidwaste.org.

System facilities

The Spokane Regional Solid Waste System provides clean, convenient, one-stop drops for **recyclables, household hazardous waste, yard waste, and trash**. All residents in Spokane County have a choice of the following three locations:



North County Recycling Center / Transfer Station
N. 22123 Elk-Chattaroy Road
Intersection Elk-Chattaroy Road and Highway 2



Valley Recycling Center / Transfer Station
3941 N. Sullivan Road
South of Trent across from Spokane Industrial Park



Waste To Energy Facility Recycling Center / Disposal Site
2900 S. Geiger Blvd.
West of Spokane across from the Washington State Patrol



System sites offer "Clean Green" disposal during all hours of operation. Our System sites are now on summer hours (through September 30). Hours are 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, with extended hours to 7 p.m. at all three System facilities on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. In addition, the Valley Transfer Station is open late on Thursdays.

On the days the sites are open late, a reduced rate for clean green starts at 3 p.m. The first 100 pounds are free and any amount over 100 pounds is charged at \$35/ton. At all other times, clean green is subject to a \$5 transaction fee plus \$35/ton for amounts over 280 pounds. Senior citizens (+62) may drop off 100 pounds free Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Haulers in Spokane County offer subscription service for curbside collection of clean green. The details for service may differ slightly, so please call your provider:

- City of Spokane, 625-7878
- Waste Management, Inc., 924-9400
- Sunshine Recycling and Disposal, 924-5678



Ann Murphy and Reanette Boese accepting the LASER award for SYEC.

12th Annual Spokane Youth Environmental Conference a Success

Nearly 100 students from Spokane County participated in the 12th annual Spokane Youth Environmental Conference held April 28 at Spokane Community College. Students from Central Valley High School, Freeman Middle School, M.E.A.D. Alternative High School, and West Valley City School participated.

Students who received a superior rating were: Drew Brown, David Ross, Kelsey Solberg, Madison Hilpert, Dallin Squires, and Rahmi Nemri from Central Valley High School; Rob Smoot, Ben Carasco, and Claire Hulse from Freeman Middle School; and Annalee Foster,

Mackenzie Pierce, Ty Laboy, Connor Macklin, and Joe Crowe from West Valley City School.

Funds for school and individual awards are provided through the generous support of Altek Inc., Big Horn Foundation/Inland NW Wildlife Council, Budinger & Associates, Central Pre-Mix/Inland Asphalt, CH2M Hill, Geo Engineers, Hollister-Stier, Northwest Farm Credit Services, Rings & Things, Spokane Aquifer Joint Board, Spokane County Conservation District, TransCanada, Washington State Employees Credit Union, and Wells Fargo.

SYEC receives award

In May, the Spokane Youth Environmental Conference project team received a Science Education Advocate Award from Washington State LASER (Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform) for SYEC's efforts to improve science education in Washington State. The recognition includes a \$5,000 award that will be used to increase participation in the conference for 2010.



Heat up your composting efforts

Summer is a great time to enjoy the outdoors and jumpstart your home composting efforts. As you are mowing your lawn, weeding your garden, and trimming bushes and trees, turn your yard waste into garden gold in a backyard compost bin. If you need help solving compost problems or getting started, call the Recycling Hotline, 625-6800, to request information.



By composting at home, you can reduce garbage and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Last year, the System distributed over 1,000 compost bins. If at least 1,000 bins are in use, that means 74 tons of yard trimmings have been recycled and 1.65 tons of greenhouse gas have been eliminated.

The Master Composters also make presentations to garden clubs, civic groups, and others. If your group would like to learn more about composting, call the Hotline and ask to speak to a Master Composter.

Mark your calendars now—the next Compost Fair will be held Saturday, October 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Arboretum.



We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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Spokane Regional Solid Waste System

WASTE TO ENERGY REPORT CARD

Working Together!

January–March 2009

Garbage In
62,754 tons disposed
61,012 tons processed at the WTE Facility
2,092 tons of ferrous metal recovered from the ash for recycling
17,033 tons of ash disposed at Rabanco

Electricity Generation
36,569 MWh produced
6,522 MWh used to run the facility
29,501 MWh sold to Puget Sound Energy

Notice of Violation None
Revenues after Electricity Transmission Expenses \$3,117,122



Wheellabrador Spokane Inc.