

WASTE BYTES!

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

The MRRA Celebrates Spring Conference '18'

The Maine Resource Recovery Association prepared for a coming of age celebration with its 18th Annual Spring Solid Waste Conference. Returning to the Samoset Resort in Rockport, Maine, the association's meeting attracted almost 250 people over the two day event. The conference format was the same as in the past, with three tracks: safety and education for attendants, volunteers, and workers at the facilities; materials and marketing trends for managers; and closely related economics and policies for the decision makers.

Speakers this year spoke to trends of materials and markets. Susan Collins (not our Senator) reported on a plastics study which was done for the Container Recycling Institute. The study, which was viewed as being critical of the quality of single stream processing, never really attracted the controversy that was anticipated. Plastics were another session holding promise and did work well as an information session by Liz Bedard and Becky Secret. That session ended as did the report of the Bangor WABI television news report with a focus on Sally (the poster 'figure') of "Got Your Bags Maine?"

In addition to the practical reports, the conference also looked at the leadership role taken by the State of Maine in recent efforts to enlist the support of producers in accepting responsibility for disposal of their products. The stewardship movement has been successful with handling electronic – computers and televisions. Sierra Fletcher of the Product Stewardship Institute took her product stewardship and Extended Producer Responsibility message from Tuesday's breakfast into the final wrap-up session.

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Let's Talk about Nothing for a Bit or Byte - Zero Waste?

Zero waste is not really new! In a sense, it is the goal associated with solid waste reduction. Zero Waste is a philosophy that we do hear more about lately though. In some cases, it is thought to be a step up on the Waste Management Hierarchy, which is the common practical approach to waste reduction. The Waste Management Hierarchy has existed as a logical waste reduction strategy and in many cases – policy. When it is raised or mentioned at the MRRA conferences though, a few eyebrows are raised.

The Waste Management Hierarchy is familiar to most: Reduce; Reuse; Recycle; Compost; Waste-to-Energy; and Landfill. Compare this to the Zero Waste: Rethink; Reduce; Reuse; Recycle; and Compost. The "Rethink" not only expands upon smart shopping but also looks at design toward not only the use but to the end. For some, this is the "cradle to cradle" life cycle.

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Maine's Educational Reuse Centers – Who Helps the Helpers?

One of the distinctions that Maine enjoyed was once thought to be found in the educational reuse centers. As more was learned about these reusable resource centers, it was learned that there are chains of centers that have ties in philosophy, waste reduction mission, and very much by similarly beautiful people. Make no mistake about it, the commonage has to be identified from inside the circle of these educators - or a very close proximity there of – maybe family and the closest of friends. Most of Maine's educational centers still have their original director, a priceless institutional memory, with more experience than most teachers, and a wonderful way of struggling to exist.

Many of the large supplies donated to these centers are from the over-runs of local industries that may count as much on the reuse centers as the centers count on them. Ruth Libby of the '3Rs' often points out that they need them when they them and she won't turn anyone away. Mary Ryan of Everyone's Reuse Depot suggests that her materials come from individuals who are committed to 'reuse' as a way of source reduction. When these three centers need supplies and a particular stock, quite often they will plan a swap. After a while, one realizes that it is more than material treasures that are swapped but also strength, vision, and stability. A visit to Waste Wise in another state lets anyone understand that educational reuse centers stand apart in other states as well. In many places, the educational reuse network is not recognized at all – for a number of reasons.

The EPA, through the Northeast Recycling Council, has funded a virtual exchange project for participating states (Maine has opted not to join due to the project's requirements) but 6 other exchanges are taking part in the project. The educational reuse centers are now on track here in coordinating their operations among themselves. In these times, the centers seem to be a good yardstick for measuring our economy. It should be recognized however that even in good times, the reuse centers will often struggle because it does cost to get rid of the unwanted by connecting with the right parties. Consider how you could help our State's educational reuse centers.



Got Your Bags, Maine?

Now you see Sally more and more. (Did we tell you that Sally is the name for the little lady in the logo?) We would like to make Sally 'of the reuse bags' as common and at home as some of the other famous Sallys. Just as when some of us hear the name "Sally Fields" and think of the "Flying Nun", others may think of "Gidget", still others may think of "Norma Rae", and others may know of her from any number of appearances that span her life as an actress, we would like to see our Sally, the bag lady, as popular and well-known.



Spring Conference '18' (Continued from Page 1)

Often overlooked with our "Waste Bytes" message about the conference and written to the tune of "Wish You Were There" is mention of the vendors. Last year there didn't appear to be a full house of vendors and of course we were facing many economic barriers. This year the exhibit hall displayed a wide array of vendors that particularly accented the many faceted nature of the Solid Waste Industry.

Let's Talk about Nothing

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Zero Waste, as put forward by the Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA) in 1994, looked to incorporate the commitments of: business and industry; community or public; and decision makers or the government. Business and Industry would accept responsibility for production and design; Community or the public would accept responsibility for the consumption, discard use, and disposal; and the government would coordinate the levels of responsibility. The philosophical beauty takes into account the elimination toxics from being released into the air or the earth. Zero Waste challenges producers and consumers to rethink their 'discards' from 'waste' to 'resources'.

It appears that when Zero Waste has been adopted it has attached goals of additional waste reduction of 30 to 40% by 2040. Maybe this is meant to be 90% by the specified date – which raises the question as to whether the zero waste is being presented as an attainable strategy or a lofty and inspiring goal. In either case, we are not there quite yet. From what we know, and we have learned a great deal over the last couple of decades, we can still tweak the levels of the Waste Management Hierarchy and clean up the 50% recycling rate making it a sustainable base before moving on total involvement.

Municipal Accomplishments

With so much negative news going around and problems shared by everyone, it is pleasant to see something positive. The second round of municipal grants to promote recycling and composting has been completed. Suzanne Duplissis, who oversees the Maine Recycles Campaign, announced some of the results of the 'Tool Kit' Grants to the communities.

Take a look at what some others have done and perhaps gear up your committee for your public relations campaign to be ready should other opportunities arise. You might also get some great ideas from the following projects.

1. Biddeford – 150 Magnetic bumper stickers 11" x 3"
2. China – 2 Newspaper inserts and one Town Line Paper
3. Dayton – Sign with posts & recycling brochure
4. Etna – 60 Recycle Bins
5. Hollis – mailer to residents regarding recycling
6. Limerick – Newsletter and postage
7. Mechanic Falls – 2 Wheelbarrows, signs for recycling.
8. Northern Maine Development Commission – 3 Trade Fair Booth fees
9. Ogunquit – Newsletter
10. Poland – 3,000 Color Recycling/Transfer Station Brochures
11. Porter – Ads placed in The Shopping Guide
12. Pownal – Composting Chefs presentation – 31 people attended, mailers for event
13. Reed Plantation – Compost mailers with postage
14. Saco – 8,000 recycling post cards
15. Sandy River Recycling Association – Web domain name registration and web hosting fee for one year – web site development
16. Sanford – 1,000 recycle bin labels
17. Stockton Springs – Newsletters for April and May
18. Unity – 1,000 Household Hazardous Waste Day Brochures
19. Waterboro – 5,000 tri-fold brochures with postage
20. Wilton – 4' x 6' sign; 4,000 flyers

The Intern's Take

In my early days as an intern in the Waste Management division of the State Planning Office, I have come to realize that good stewardship of the Earth is much more than driving a Prius and turning off the lights. Before coming to my position, I avoided the topic of landfills like the plague. The idea of a landfill was a sad one, one that I attempted to keep out of my mind, a sad truth of our modern world.

Since coming to the State Planning Office, however, I've been exposed to the positive aspects of landfills—and the steps the State of Maine takes to avoid creating more of them. In fact, Maine policy on waste management places landfills into a “last resort” category!

At a DEP training seminar for burgeoning Transfer Station operators, I discovered just how complex the task of managing our waste is, and the difficulties ahead for humble Maine citizens working in the field. First, the operators had to accident proof their facilities to cater to OSHA standards, meet DEP regulations in the design and upkeep of their facilities, and follow unique rules and procedures when handling the myriad form of waste products they would encounter in their work. Then, to complement OSHA standards were warnings and regulations from representatives of the Department of Labor.

It's comforting to know that Maine takes the issues of waste seriously, and also goes to great lengths to make sure those in the waste industry in our state are properly trained. – Ben Gadberry



UMF Student Benjamin Gadberry from Manchester is the summer intern for the SPO in the Waste Management and Recycling Program.

Got Your Bags, Maine? Washed (Continued from Page 2)

We know that more people are using bags and displaying reusable bags. It may not be as obvious as with one of our planners at the SPO, but it does demonstrate the good feeling. Keeping your reusable bags under your car's windshield wipers may remind you to take them into the store but may also restrict your vision – not recommended. It actually turned out that the day's milk had spilled in and on the bags making them destined to be washed and dried in the sun.

For more information about Sally, our efforts to promote reusable bags, as well as to encourage recycling plastic bags please visit our web site – www.gotyourbagsmaine.org

“MaineRecycles” Is on “Facebook”- Care to Join Us?

Following a belief that it takes individuals to bring success to recycling, the modern local Society section has arrived with Maine Recycles for the family album. For those of you who are so inclined to show your support of recycling, you are invited to sign up and encourage your friends to sign up as well at www.facebook.com/pages/Maine-Recycles/116869131683295

As long as you are at it, “Got Your Bags? Maine” has a Facebook site that encourages and reinforces the use of reusable shopping bags and the recycling of plastic shopping bags. The State's retailers have gotten together to reduce the number of plastic bags by 33% by the year 2013. If you like MaineRecycles, Sally invites you to go to and sign up for her page www.facebook.com/gotyourbagsmaine.

*Look familiar to you?**Spring Conference 18 (Continued from Page 1)*

Often overlooked with our “Waste Bytes” message about the conference and written to the tune of “Wish You Were There” is mention of the vendors. At last year’s conference, there didn’t appear to be a full house of vendors. This was also reflected when securing sponsors for the Maine Recycles Week campaign. This year the exhibit hall displayed a wide array of vendors that particularly accentuated the many faceted nature of the Solid Waste Industry.



If our logo doesn’t, we have more work to do. When the logo and recycling in Maine are taken for granted or become second nature then and only then can Suzanne rest on her laurels.

Take a look at the list of vendors who displayed their services/products at the MRRA conference. You can contact MRRA for contact information should you wish to seek products and services for your community.

ALEXANDER INDUSTRIAL TECH, INC	GEOSYNTEC CONSULTANTS
ALL-TECH WEIGHING SYSTEMS, INC	HOWARD P. FAIRFIELD, LLC
ARMAC, INC	JORDAN EQUIPMENT CO
ATLANTIC RECYCLING EQUIPMENT LLC	MAGUIRE EQUIPMENT INC
AVERY WEIGHT-TRONIX	MAINE DEP
BDS WASTE DISPOSAL INC	MAINE DEPT OF LABOR – SAFETY WORKS!
CALL2RECYCLE	MAINE STATE PLANNING OFFICE
CASCADES GROUP	MESSAR TRUCK EQUIPMENT
CASELLA WASTE SYSTEMS, INC	NORSEMAN ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCTS
CES, INC	ONESTEEL RECYCLING
CLEAN TECH, INC	REHRIG PACIFIC COMPANY
CPRC GROUP	SCHNITZER NORTHEAST
CREATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC	SCOTIA RECYCLING, LTD
ECOMAINE	SIMPLICITY ENGINEERING (NE) INC
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS, INC	ST GERMAIN COLLINS
EQ-THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CO	TOTER INC
ERRCO / LL & SC &D RECYCLING	UNIVERSAL RECYCLING TECHNOLOGIES,
EWASTE RECYCLING SOLUTIONS, LLC	W.D. MATTHEWS MACHINERY

Having these companies as conference sponsors and exhibitors was appreciated. Any business may inquire about becoming a sponsor of Maine Recycles Week 2010 by contacting any member of the Maine Recycles Week Steering Committee: Jeff McGown, Waste Management, Inc.; Tom Kane, CPRC Group; Beth Young, FCR Goodman/Casella; Diane Doe, Auburn SHARE Center; Janet Cummings, Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCoG); or John Albertini, Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRA).

Maine Recycles Week 2010

www.recyclemaine.com

Sponsorship Levels & Benefits

Premier - \$1000 or more

Your company will be included in all Maine Recycles Week press releases.
Your company will be presented with a plaque recognizing your support of MRW 2010.
Your company's name and logo will appear on all our MRW messages as well as:
MRW posters that will be distributed in the fall of 2010 to Maine schools, municipalities, businesses, colleges, and post offices throughout the state; 2011 MRW calendars that will be distributed throughout Maine; and the Sponsors Page of the Maine Recycles Week web site.

Additionally all benefits received at the Champion level will also be afforded to you.

Champion - \$500

Your company's name and logo will appear in the sponsors' section of the *Maine Recycles Week Planning Guide* on our web site.

Your company will receive a hyperlink from the Sponsors' Page of the Maine Recycles Week website.

Your company will receive a plaque in appreciation for your championing MRW.

Your company's name will appear on:

the MRW posters that will be distributed in the fall of 2010 to Maine schools, municipalities, businesses, colleges, and post offices throughout the state; and

MRW 2011 calendars that will be distributed in December of 2010 in Maine.

All of the benefits listed under the Supporting level.

Supporting - \$250

Your company will receive an award of appreciation recognizing your support of Maine Recycles Week

Your company's name will appear on:

the Sponsors section of the *Maine Recycles poster and calendar*;

the Sponsors Page of the Maine Recycles Week web site.

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Bruce A. White at 207-287-8053 or bruce.white@maine.gov before August 1, 2010.