

WASTE BYTES!

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

The Maine Resource Recovery Association Plans Spring Conference #18

Point Lookout in Northport will be the site of the 2011 Annual Spring Conference of the MRRA. The two day event will be April 25 and 26 this year (Yes, the two days after Easter, unless you are arriving on Sunday to set up your booth!)

The principle speakers include: Walker Lunn, CEO of EnviRelation, a Washington, D.C., company that works with composting in the Hospitality Industry in his area, who will talk about making hotels and restaurants greener; and Brian Flaherty, Nestle Waters North America Director of Public Affairs, who will talk about Poland Spring's sustainability efforts.

Accommodations are found in cabins and yet the banquet, bowling tournament, and gym will be back at the central building.

The conference itself follows the tried and true model. Safety Works will have a track of a half dozen safety sessions. Day one has the "recyclathon". On day two, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection will present a day-long Core 2 training for certification for transfer station attendants. Individual sessions will include: Options for glass; Single stream recycling; Outreach using computers; Pay as You Throw; Controlling and Reducing Costs; Event Recycling; Universal Waste; and more. For details, please visit the MRRA web site, www.mrra.net and while there why not register?



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***Don't Forget Your Evaluation Forms!
And Just to Be Fair –
Come to the Conference to have
Something to Evaluate!!***

This is your opportunity to express your concerns, satisfaction, opinions or offer suggestions for another conference. Don't forget to fill out your evaluation forms and leave them with your comments at the MRRA booth or an MRRA Education Committee member.



The Compost Sleeps Tonight



Soon though, there will be no question that even the backyard piles of compost, as well as the compost bins, will soon come alive. A few stalwarts have resorted to either vermiculture or insulated compost bins for the few cold months we experience in the northern states. These actions are fine, but to some may not seem to 'be the same' as the traditional compost pile.

This is a reminder that the compost bin sale is under way at the MRRA web site. Please check out <http://www.mrra.net/index.php?area=services>.

Let me also pass on a request to work more toward an interactive newsletter. I would like anyone who composts and can get others who do to drop me an e-mail of their success or challenge. It would be especially great to get a variety of makes and models of compost bins, as well as methods of composting and where people are located. Can you help us log experiences in every county? Let's give it a try and



The Legislative Process Continues

The 125th Legislature is about halfway through its first session. The focus is still on the budget and fiscal attention; however the committees that catch our interest are busy. When one searches for bills with "recycling" in their text, the list exhibits 15. When the search for "solid waste" is offered, the result is a higher number of 21. Through these, topics being offered for discussion and debate include looking at issues from reorganization to recycling as well as several landfill issues. The Bottle Bill 'review' is back again, as recycling is being reexamined from all angles.

Meanwhile, at the State Planning Office, Tim Glidden, the first acting Director, has left his position to become the President of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust in Topsham, Maine. Tim Glidden had been director of the Land for Maine's Future for 10 years before being appointed last year to head the SPO. The new acting director is Tony Van Den Bossche, who had previously served as a financial director since 1989.



Data and Details - Update

There always was, and is, a pride in how well Maine has recycled. The statutory goal for recycling has been 50% statewide. It was recognized that the State of Maine was consistently in the top ten in the nation in terms of recycling success; however the 50% recycling rate was ever-elusive. There was a certain acceptance of that by some with others believing 50% was not high enough and could be readily attained.

The calculations supporting recycling efforts utilize the firm tonnage numbers reported to this office by municipalities, solid waste management facilities, processors and end-users. These tonnage numbers provide detailed descriptions of what and how the various components of the waste stream are managed.

Until recently, municipalities kept the many streams of recyclable products separate, typically by material type or class. The data they submitted to this office included specifics on, for example, corrugated cardboard, newsprint, magazines, office paper, and mixed paper. Reports developed by this office could provide detailed information on the types of fiber that were separated from solid waste and recovered to be recycled.

However, now with the 'co-mingling' of fibers through the adoption of 'single stream recycling programs', the details of the data on the type of recyclables managed by municipalities, has changed. The overall, total tonnage of recyclables is still calculated, the data does not permit the presentation of detailed data that many have become accustomed to. We've adjusted our reporting format to accommodate the change in recycling collection systems and let us know if additional modifications are needed.



Old Medications Now Have A Safe Place for Disposal

In a recent article in the Kennebec Journal by Amy Calder, communities in the Capital Area have taken steps for making the collection of old, unwanted medications easier and convenient for residents. At 12 locations in Kennebec and Somerset Counties, 'MEDRETURN BOXES' have been installed. The boxes are described as looking a lot like a corner postal box or library book return unit. They are green and blue in color and 4 ½ feet tall by 2 feet wide. Many are located at the local police stations to allow for 24/7 access.

Boxes are reported to be located at:

- Augusta Police Station, 33 Union Street (24/7)
- Fairfield Police, 75 Water Street (8:30 -> 4, M -> F)
- Gardiner Police Station, 6 Church Street
(8 -> 4, M -> F)
- Kennebec County Sheriff's Office, 125 State Street,
Augusta. (8 -> 5, M -> F)
- Madison Police, 28 Weston Avenue (7:30 -> 4,
M -> F)
- Oakland Police, 7 Fairfield Street (8 -> 5, M -> F)
- Pittsfield Police, 112 Somerset Avenue (8 -> 5,
M -> F)
- Waterville Police Station, 1 Common Street
(8 -> 5, M -> F)
- Winslow Police Station, 114 Benton Avenue
(8 -> 4, M -> F)
- Winthrop Police Station, 15 Town Hall Lane (24/7)

Accepted medications are: prescriptions; over-the-counter medications; vitamins; samples; pet medications; ointments; lotions; and liquid medications.

Not accepted medications: needles; thermometers' blood or infectious wastes; medications from businesses and clinics; aerosol cans; and inhalers.

National Take Back Day is April 30, 2011.

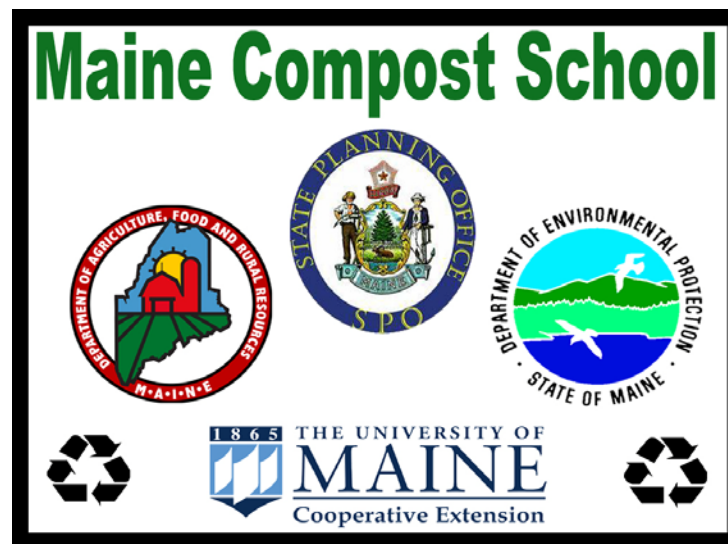
For a complete list of locations, go to www.DEA.gov

What do you look for in the month of June? Weddings and Compost School

It just seems like time flies too fast. Excuse me; we don't want to mention flies. When the Spring Conference of the Maine Resource Recovery Association rolls around, it is a sure indication that spring is right around the corner. We were reminded of that when the MRRRA conference was held at Sugarloaf. The snow hadn't quite left and Reggae Weekend may have spilled over a little. Skiers pushed us down a level at the Inn even. Before spending too much time on the spring and missing the point, we first wanted to draw your attention to the Maine Compost School.

As we approach the end of school or the traditional end of the public school year, those of us in recycling are reminded of the first session of the Maine Compost School (The second session meets in October.) Classes are limited in size, so we invite you to start planning early to attend. Information may be found about the week-long program by visiting the link to the web site below:

www.composting.org



By passing the exam at the end of the week, you become 'technically certified' as a composter, which is of benefit to your municipality or regional program.

2011 School Composting Workshop

The Maine Compost School will welcome public school teachers, school staff, and students interested in composting again in 2011. This special two day program is schedule to run June 28 & 29, 2011, at the Highmoor Farm campus in Monmouth, Maine. In a special session just designed for school personnel, many of the staff of the Maine Compost School will be joined by guest lecturers to make your exploration of bringing trouble-free or almost trouble free composting to your own schools or classrooms. Please follow the link above to visit the Maine Compost School web site for more information.

