

WASTE BYTES!

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

Green for a Day! Earth Day April 22nd

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Why is it that we tend to think about conservation in the warm months? In Maine, that is about the third week in August! In the winter, our actions are driven by oil prices or energy costs. Perhaps it is because we think of long winters here that we first look to energy savings. Forget the transportation aspect of the energy field, because here comfort and safety are worn like a badge of success in the choice of our vehicles, especially in winter. The fleet of summer vehicles (boats, jet skis, etc.) goes to rest on blocks in garages or our backyards, giving way to trucks with plows and the like.

'Green' seems to be the ever present 'Go' traffic light. Without a reminder of dark and dreary days, an environmentally friendly state can become a play land for all those that have survived their confinement to enjoy the sun and the wide open spaces.

In reality, thoughts of conservation have to be year around. We have to adapt our way of life again to the environment rather than force our environment to bow or curtsy with its arms spread, a wave of the plumed hat, and the drop of the cloak.

We have to do more to instill sensitivity to, and respect of, our environment into our everyday way of life - - for all of us - - all year round. When we celebrate Earth Day, we should be looking to what we can do year around, or at least from Earth Day to Maine Recycles Week.



Third Call for MRRA Conference

Hey Folks! This year the Maine Resource Recovery Association Conference is a little later than usual - - May 4th and May 5th, and returns to Bar Harbor. The last time that the MRRA converged in Bar Harbor, the membership was surprised to see the Atlantic Oaks crammed to the gills with attendees. The distribution of attendees was better than usual and was representative of the entire state, from Eliot to Fort Fairfield. This year, the MRRA looks to a new setting on Mt Desert Island, the Bar Harbor Club, but would very much like to repeat the earlier success.

The setting may be a little larger or not; however the grand thing about the conference is not the setting so much as it is the people. In a relaxed or relaxing setting that is always an essential component of the annual conference of the MRRA (for all of its 16 years), each attendee can seek out their friends and compatriots to learn together, to exchange ideas, opinions, and news. (Continued on page 2)

Students Helping Recycling

Unity, Maine, has come to be known for the Common Ground Fair, the last fair in the summer and the end of the fair season in Maine. The reputation is more for the environmental awareness effort than for Unity Speedway. In this small town in central Maine though, there is also a college that almost mirrors the commitment to the environment and sustainability of the Maine Organic Farmers Association (MOFGA) that organize the Common Ground Fair. The school's web site features a banner displaying "America's Environmental College" and in their quiet way they are proving that they can make a difference.

As the weather gets warmer and the conversations in public schools move from Spring Break to the prom time, we know that we are approaching the end of the year. It also brings anticipation from knowing that the end of the year will have student projects come due. This year the eye is on Unity College in Maine to see what might surface.



Actually those that have been confided in and consulted know what is coming; however there is no way to know what to expect. Unity has received a grant to support the production of classroom media. Last summer a student, Aaron Witham, working in a summer institute produced a guide for recycling in Maine Schools with an effort to coordinate the activity of recycling with the State's Learning Standards.

Aaron is now on staff and working with students and faculty on the grant recycling project. With the financial backing, the audiences and the horizons will expand. The setting will be the Unity Elementary School though, and the end product can become a valuable resource to our municipal recycling programs throughout the state and beyond.



MRRA Spring Conference (Continued from page 1)

Only the setting changes most years, to try to reach new people or to frame the audience differently. The Samoset Resort in Rockport has always been a setting that is well accepted. Why? It is easy to answer - - the attendance is generally high - more people - the better the conference. Sugarloaf sought a more rural audience the year before last and was considered a major success. Why? New faces were seen; however the real treat was the satisfaction and excitement of more vendors and new faces. Oh yes, the numbers held fast and grew at the door.

The Maine Resource Recovery Association Annual Conference is on us again! We ask each member and interested party to take another look at the conference schedule and consider joining your friends and neighbors in Bar Harbor for a fresh outlook on the summer and the year ahead. With thanks to the MRRA office (Victor, John, and Jackie), the MRRA Educational Committee Members, and the MRRA Board Members, all the pieces are in place for another wonderful retreat. All we need is you!

Follow this link to the

http://www.mrra.net/admin/assets/2009_Conference_Registration_Flyer.pdf

Maine Resource Recovery Association's
16th Annual Spring Solid Waste Conference
in Bar Harbor, Maine on May 4th and 5th, 2009.

Please consider joining us at the Bar Harbor Club!

We hope to see you there!

Maine Reuse Center Collaborative

Within the Solid Waste Management Hierarchy, the first two strategies identified are ‘Reduce’ and ‘Reuse’. It was not too long ago that the educational reuse centers first agreed to meet together to share their successes and problems: The Creative Resource Center; Everyone’s Reuse Depot; Ruth’s Reusable Resources; and the Auburn SHARECenter. They had served much of the southern and central parts of the state for literally decades; however, when the individuals that made things happen in each sat down together, they spun magic.

There are other operations such as the Maine materials exchange (M2X) with Harold Arndt and his better known life of recycling with the Island Rover Foundation. The Maine Housing and Building Materials Exchange was at one time more prominent than the Habitat for Humanity’s Restores that now have facilities in Portland, Bath, Lewiston, and Bangor. State Surplus will always be special to us.



Close to our hearts though is the number of “swap shops” found at municipal transfer stations and recycling centers around the state. We recognize 61 facilities with buildings set up by municipalities for swapping as well as 75 facilities with areas used for swaps. While these services of the local recycling centers are a part of our discussions as we network at the MRRA conferences and meetings, there is always amazement and excitement aroused from introducing the more focused facilities into the agendas of the MRRA events. It is a natural partnership to have the reuse centers work with the municipalities. Passing the word as well as considering referrals for donations or requests for specific items, is an important role by transfer attendants.

During the conference, Maine’s Reuse Collaborative will have space at the conference in Bar Harbor. Drop by to talk about possible donors of materials in your areas and possible locations for reuse in your communities.

PAYT - Pay As You Throw

It almost seems funny that with the arrival of Single Sort Recycling there was a rash of calls inquiring about Pay As You Throw programs. For a decade or more, communities in Maine have debated adding PAYT to their programs. From around 60 or 70 municipalities in 2004 with PAYT programs, the number has more than doubled to this day. With such an increase, the impression just may have been that many have jumped on the band wagon.

Oh, there were and continue to be debates, although the logic seems so natural, one would have to wonder why. To some, a fee on a trash bag equates to another tax. There is also the amount of the fee. There is the problem of charging the elderly or those on fixed incomes. In the long run though, we may have to admit that behind the sound reasoning the logic works, insofar as encouraging residents to recycle. If you pay to throw away and don’t pay to recycle, then there is added incentive to recycle.

Now with single sort/single stream/zero sort programs opening new markets, it would seem that the Pine Tree State has redefined ‘Green’. Recognizing that ‘curbside’ lends itself more to the urban curb collection, PAYT has found its niche in complementing the urban ways. When looking at the increase in efficiency with single sort, et.al., though, it seems logical that the partnership may spread. The end result could then become reduced municipal solid waste program costs and an increase in recycling.



Is Single Stream or Single Sort Recycling Beating Out Interest In Recycling?

The rule of thumb with recycling was something about making it convenient or easy. Now one has to wonder if we haven't made things too easy. Hey! Wait a minute! We have plenty to talk about.

We still have a statewide goal of 50% recycling rate to work toward. Maine is still very much a rural state and even with single sort, we see communities opting out of materials or buying into the new strategy of single sort - primarily for transportation. The public is being won over by a Green Era and finally discovering or acknowledging recycling in many places. These are exciting times!

We have to still get the word out about products and materials. Don't stop telling your citizens that they have to make sure that the materials are as clean as possible. Now that we collect all seven plastics - What is next? Really! What next?

Do you know where the phrase "Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater" comes from? Back before we got all the conveniences of today's home, bathing was a luxury. Bath water would be heated and the tub would be brought out for the family. The head of the household bathed followed by family members in pecking order until the last to be bathed was the baby. By the time the newest member of the family came along, the water that was left was dark and murky, which prompted the warning of getting rid of the newest member of the family along with the bath water. The newest member of our family is single sort so let's get excited and see how the family grows!

The fate of recycling and waste reduction lies not in our MRFs, PAYT, or other options. Every operation and facility throughout Maine, every municipality, and especially every citizen is important. Let's do our part to welcome each new strategy and get excited about the potential each new strategy brings.



Maine Resource Recovery Association

16th Annual Solid Waste Conference

Scheduled for
Bar Harbor on May 4th & 5th.

For details and more information, please
visit the MRRRA web site - www.mrra.net.

Hope to see you there!!!!



Application and Contract

16th Annual Maine Recycling & Solid Waste Conference and Recyclathon
Bar Harbor Club (800-341-1650), Bar Harbor, Maine May 4-5, 2009

Company/Organization Name: _____

(As you want it to appear in all publicity)

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Sponsorships

____ Major Sponsor \$3,000 ____ Corporate Sponsor \$2,500

____ Supporting Sponsor \$1,500 ____ Other (please specify): _____

Exhibit Hall Booths

____ Prime/Corner Booth \$600 ____ Outdoor Space (with inside booth) \$550

____ Standard Booth \$550 ____ Outdoor Space (only) \$150

____ Tabletop Display only \$150 (first-time exhibitors only)

Choice of booth location(s) in order of preference: 1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____ 4th _____

____ You must check here if you would like a standard electrical outlet in your booth (no charge)

Display Ads

Size Ad Only Ad Price (with booth)

____ Full Page 7 1/2" h x 4 1/2" w \$300 \$175

____ Half Page 3 1/4" h x 4 1/2" w \$175 \$125

____ Third Page 2 1/2" h x 4 1/2" w \$150 \$100

Sponsorship: \$ _____ Make Checks Payable In US Funds To:

Exhibit Booth: \$ _____ Maine Resource Recovery Association

Advertising: \$ _____ PO Box 1838, Bangor, ME 04402-1838

TOTAL: \$ _____ Amount enclosed or to be billed to credit card \$ _____

Credit Card: MasterCard: _____ Visa: _____ Amex _____ Discover _____

Card #: _____ CCV #: _____ Card Expiration Date: _____

_____/_____/_____

Card Holder Name (as it appears on the card): _____

The undersigned hereby agrees that a down payment of fifty percent (50%) of the total cost must accompany

this Application payable to Maine Resource Recovery Association by March 6, 2009 and full payment of the

balance must be made to MRRA by April 3, 2009. Booth assignments will be on a first-paid basis. Booth

refunds will be granted if cancellation is received in writing by April 3, 2009. There will be no refunds

granted after April 3, 2009. All refunds will be processed within 30 days of receipt of notice of cancellation.

Ad copy should accompany this application. A Confirmation packet with Exhibitor Rules and Regulations

and registration information will be sent upon receipt of payment. This form may be faxed to 207-942-4017.

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____