



ReSource

Inform. Inspire. Involve.

news from jackson county master recyclers

fall 2010

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JACKSON COUNTY PLASTIC ROUND-UP

Congratulations, Master Recyclers and Plastic Round-up Volunteers!

The 3rd Annual Plastic Round-Up was a huge success, thanks to all our hard-working, enthusiastic volunteers. New and seasoned volunteers alike pitched in wherever needed and helped to educate the public. You made the event possible.



Team work in action.

Each year we build upon the success of the previous year. Word is spreading; this year we accepted plastic from 1,034 vehicles at our two locations at the Jackson County Expo and in Ashland.

From residential to business to farm and nursery loads, it added up to 27,000 cubic feet of plastic diverted from the landfill in just two days! (Last year we received 16,659 cubic feet.) Picture 6.5 tractor trailer loads by-passing the landfill and being recycled responsibly.

Folks who had gone above and beyond in saving and sorting their plastics were given "Rock Star" awards and entered into drawings for Kaleidoscope or Martolli's Pizza certificates. It was obvious many people had been saving for months or all year in anticipation of the Round-Up. As Rhianna said, "My hope is that by saving their plastic all year they realize how much more plastic avoidance needs to take place!"

Our wonderful volunteers made the Round-Up successful as well as fun. Tell your friends and family to save for next year. Many thanks to all of you!

SEND US YOUR

PHOTOS! Do you have great photos of recycling and resourcefulness in action? Share them with the Master Recycler community! Please E-mail JPG files to Lara: laraknack@charter.net

Hello Friends! I have to say once again that I am so proud of you! The impacts that you have made in Jackson County show and people are taking notice. People come up to me and remark on your efforts, they tell me about how much your help means to them, and they are impressed by the example you set for others. Thanks for your great work this season. I know that many of you have stretched to meet the needs of the program, and many of you have spent countless hours doing things because you believe in the outcome. I am humbled by your generosity and astounded by the dedication that you demonstrate through your actions.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the 2010 Plastic Round-up the most successful one yet! By all accounts, Master Recyclers worked really hard, had great attitudes, and made the event fun. There were several folks who stayed for extra shifts, or showed-up to help without even being on the schedule... which shows an awesome commitment to our community and the projects we undertake. I sure appreciate your investment!

Please send me an email with an update on how many hours you have invested so far. I am just trying to get a sense of where the needs are... so let me know!

I feel really thankful to be a part of this community that we are building together! Thanks ya'll!

— Rhianna
Master Recycler Coordinator

Happy Fall Time, Scavenger Gardeners!



Creative uses of common household items in the garden.

Fall is here, and with it comes the transition into cool weather gardening. There are many crops that southern Oregonians can grow throughout the fall and winter that do not require additional cover or protection. However, there are a few of us who want to eat lettuce and other fresh produce all year long.

Here are a few handy ideas of ways to reuse common household items to extend the season through small glass or plastic cloches, cold frames from cool old windows, or reusing shower curtains instead of buying more frost cloth.

Reduce, reuse....be resourceful!

SMARTWorks News & Notes

Paige Prewett, SMARTWorks Coordinator

Jackson County Exceeds 40% Waste Recovery Goal!

In 2009, for the first time ever, Jackson County surpassed its goal to achieve a waste recovery rate of at least 40%. This is exciting news, and evidence of the success of waste diversion and education efforts made by Jackson County Recycling Partnership, SMARTWorks, area waste haulers—and, of course—*Master Recyclers!*

Each year, Oregon DEQ compiles data from waste haulers, private recyclers and disposal sites in 35 wastesheds across the State that submit numbers for waste generation and recovery. In 2009, Jackson County's total recovery rate was 41.6%. We disposed of 143,484 tons of garbage, and recovered 79,278 tons of materials, which equates to 35.6%. The additional 6% was applied as Recovery Credits, which are earned by taking steps to educate our wasteshed on topics of waste prevention, reuse and composting education.

A variety of factors can affect annual results, including the reporting of numerous public and private entities that contribute data to the State. Ironically, the downturn in the economy likely improved recovery rate percentages: a slower economy means less total waste is being generated. When garbage generation is down, it is easier to achieve a higher recovery rate. Tonnage of garbage went down over 16,000 tons in 2009, while recycling went up nearly 3,000 tons.

Master Recyclers contributed to this success story not only by helping to improve the total volume of waste diverted, but also by helping the County to earn 6% Recovery Credits. Service activities, hours and results are reported to the State. Whether working at events, in schools or on the job, Master Recyclers' efforts are proof of JCRP's awareness-building efforts, and this helps Jackson County to reach its recovery goal.



The full 2009 Material Recovery Report can be found online at:
<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/recovery/materialrecovery.htm>

SMARTWorks News & Notes, cont...

Event Recycling Evolves into Rental Program

SMARTWorks & JCRP are pleased to make recycling equipment available to events across the County. Due to the exponential growth of the event recycling program, we have shifted from a loan program to a rental program with very low fees in order to keep the program going, pay for damaged and missing equipment, buy replacement bags and cover miscellaneous maintenance.

Here's how it works:

- 1) The event contacts OSU, RASS, RDR or SMARTWorks to get started
- 2) An Event Recycling Planning Form is completed
- 3) An Event Rental Contract Form is signed and submitted with payment

Master Recyclers, through word-of-mouth, can support this transition and help event organizers understand the value of the program with the following talking points:

- Event-goers seek recycling at events; it is becoming an expectation (just as bathrooms and garbage cans are expected).
- Master Recyclers help with event recycling at no charge.
- ClearStreams retail at \$250.00 for 5 bins. Replacement bags and shipping are an ongoing fee.
- Waste diversion helps make events more sustainable; it's a model of stewardship for attendees and vendors.
- Garbage service is for a fee, while recycling is not; events can save money by saving resources.

More information is online at www.icsmartworks.org.



Battery Recycling Update!

Have you been saving up batteries? Did you know that Interstate Batteries in Central Point accepts alkaline batteries. It isn't free, but it is affordable at only \$1.00 per/lb. Interstate Batteries, 894 S Front St, Central Point, 541.664.3417



Unwanted Catalogs? We all know how to stop unwanted catalogs, right? Call or write the company directly and ask them to remove your name from the mailing list or go to www.Catalogchoice.org and register your requests.

AGRI-PLAS: **W**hat's the next step for our plastic?

The round-up is over, but the work of turning our rejected plastic into new products is just beginning. All our efforts to save plastic from an untimely burial would be lost without businesses willing to take on the challenge of sorting, cleaning, processing and finding buyers. The quantity of plastic Agri-Plas manages in its operations is phenomenal. Our contribution, while not unsubstantial, is only a small portion of the impressive plastic towers neatly arranged at their facility.



Agri-Plas has worked hard to keep its recycling operation open during the recession and rocky plastic market. The current market for plastics really varies by type. The pre-sorting we do helps keep the quality high and controls some of the cost associated with sorting. Their highly-trained staff gives our plastic a final sort to make sure everything is correct. The sorted plastics are then shredded or chipped into product for manufacturers.



Agri-Plas does try to find domestic buyers when possible, rather than ship overseas. Domestic manufacturing demand for plastics has not been increasing. Allen Jongsma, Agri-plas co-founder, isn't expecting much uptick in domestic production with the economy still struggling. There is also the issue of production and labor costs domestically. He feels that U.S. consumer demand for cheaper foreign-made goods is driving manufacturing overseas. Allen recommends buying items manufactured in the USA to stimulate domestic demand. Look for recycled-content plastics as well.



The plastic-to-fuel business will help stabilize their business by providing a viable option for the less marketable plastics. Dirty plastic or plastics with no market value will be diverted from the landfill. Plans to expand Plas2Fuel, now called Agilyx, beyond the Tigard test location are moving along but must continue to pass through a series of governmental agencies and requirements. There are four "cookers" in Tigard, testing and fine-tuning the process in order to meet governmental standards. A year from now, Allen would like to see a cooker in Medford. You may follow Agilyx developments online at www.agilyx.com/home.shtml.



Allen is very appreciative of the work Master Recyclers do in the community to educate and provide plastic round-up collection events. Allen's favorite part of being in the recycling business is the positive environmental impact. He takes pleasure in knowing plastics are being kept out of the landfill. He says, "It is the right thing to do!" He also advocates for immigration reform and fair treatment of migrant workers in agriculture and related industries.

Master Recycler Dictionary of Terms

biodegrade: [bahy-oh-di-greyd] To decompose under natural conditions—the breakdown of a compound to simpler chemicals by microorganisms.

compost: [kom-pohst] A crumbly, earthy, sweet-smelling mixture of decomposing organic matter (e.g., leaves, food scraps) that is often used to improve the texture, water-retaining capacity, and aeration of soil.

grasscycling: [gras-sahy-klng] Source reduction activity in which grass clippings are left on the lawn after mowing. The practice consists of mowing grass so it is never more than two to three inches tall. The grass clippings are left where they fall and allowed to decompose, returning nutrients to the lawn.

household hazardous waste (HHW): [haz] Small quantities of unused or leftover hazardous products used in the home that become waste. Paints, pesticides, and some cleaners are examples of household hazardous waste. Caution must be taken when handling, storing or disposing of these products.

landfill: [land-fil] An engineered disposal site where solid wastes are deposited, compacted to the smallest practical volume, and covered by soil or other material applied at the end of each operating day. Hazardous wastes are taken to special disposal sites selected and designed to minimize the chance of releasing hazardous substances into the environment.

Master Recyclers: [mas-ter ree-sahy-klur] Trained & knowledgeable ambassadors of waste reduction, who contribute thousands of hours of service annually towards waste reduction.

municipal solid waste: [myoo-nis-uh-puhl sol-id weyst] Wastes such as durable goods, disposable goods, containers and packaging, food scraps, yard trimmings, and miscellaneous inorganic wastes from households, certain commercial establishments (e.g., businesses or restaurants), institutions (e.g., schools or hospitals), and some industrial sources. It does not include nonhazardous industrial wastes, sewage, agricultural waste, hazardous waste, or construction and demolition waste, also known as garbage, trash, refuse or debris.

recyclable: [ree-sahy-kley-buhl] Material that still has useful physical or chemical properties after serving its original purpose and can be reused or remanufactured to make new products. Plastic, paper, glass, steel and aluminum cans, and used oil are examples of recyclable materials.

recycling: [ree-sahy-klng] Collecting, sorting, processing, and converting materials that would have been thrown away into raw materials used to make the same or new products.

refurbish: [ree-fur-bish] To repair, clean, and make useful again. Some electronic manufacturing companies and other businesses take back used equipment, refurbish it, and sell it again.

source reduction: [sohrs-ri-duhk-shuhn] Any change in the design, manufacture, purchase, or use of materials or products (including packaging) to reduce their amount or toxicity before they become municipal solid waste. Source reduction also refers to the reuse of products or materials.

trash: [trash] Items that are discarded because they no longer work and are uneconomical or impossible to reuse, repair or recycle.

Talent Harvest Festival

The City of Talent celebrated its Centennial with our annual Harvest Festival on September 11 that was full of fun but light on waste. Master Recyclers did their typical super job once again by working with vendors, clearing our "Collection Stations" and just doing whatever else was needed to support waste diversion. Fire District 3 generously loaned us a water bar for people to refill their drink containers.

The result was that only 5 yards of waste was generated from our day-long festival that included a run and parade with an estimated crowd of over 4000. Jesse Hodgdon and I are already making plans for next year, so who knows what's in store!

– Sharon Anderson, MR2010



Jill clowns by a ClearStream

Recycle Reflections

master recycler thoughts, insights and realizations...

Research has perhaps been around as long as we have. Whether formal 'let's talk about it' or informal (in passing conversation), research helps us evaluate and determine future movement. The Jackson County Master Recyclers want to hear what you have to say about the program, curriculum, instructors, volunteering and opportunities, and everything else that pertains to the program and your Master Recycling designation and education.

To gather this input, we're planning to put together a series of focus groups led by Ginger Johnson, JCMR class of 2010. As a professional brain-stormer and researcher, she will lead and guide the groups for maximum effect and best time use.

Topics and dates will be set up in the near future. Please consider attending at least one applicable focus group. Everyone needs to be heard for this effort to be fully effective and useful.

The purpose is to evaluate the program for several reasons (retention being one example). It's also designed to provide an outlet for input; complaints are welcome as long as they are accompanied by a constructive solution. The information provided in these groups will be distilled and then offered as a body of work for the future health and development of the Master Recycling program. No individual or personal identification will be attached to any of the information.

Please contact Ginger Johnson for more information, ginger@gingerjohnson.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

Reuse Research

We are seeking a few folks to begin compiling a new "Reuse Directory." Similar to the Recycling Directory, it will be a comprehensive list of reuse opportunities in Jackson County for furniture, clothing, toys, building materials and more, such as Barely Used Beds, Fun Again Games, Consign Mart and Jack & Jill's. If you are interested in conducting research for this project, please contact Paige at info@jcsmartworks.org or 541.855.5200.

Contact Rhianna Simes, 541.776.7371, Rhianna.Simes@oregonstate.edu for additional opportunities. **PLEASE NOTE: This list is constantly growing and changing. Please let Rhianna know if you think something should be added.**

Local Recycling



Stryo-foam (polystyrene) Peanut Recycling

If you find yourself the unfortunate owner of polystyrene peanuts, there are recycling options. Medford Pak Mail Center owner Michael Shaw collects and reuses or sells the peanuts. A recent article in the [Mail Tribune](#) states that he collected and recycled 10,000 cubic feet of packing peanuts last year. All his business is done with local businesses and individuals.

A word on contamination – please bring **clean, dry** packing peanuts. A representative on the phone didn't seem concerned about corn/bio-based products getting into the mix. Their storage facility is dry, and the peanuts are not being processed into new materials.

Please no air packs or bubble wrap. Individuals and businesses are welcome to drop off packing peanuts free of charge. Those with large collections and businesses should call to make arrangements. In some cases, Pak Mail will make special accommodations for businesses, including scheduled pickups. Medford Pak Mail Center, 2640 E. Barnett Road, Medford, 541.618.8370. Hours: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday

Paint Recycling – PaintCare Update

The local take-back locations are being overwhelmed with customer questions regarding the PaintCare program. Please tell people to go on-line **FIRST** to see if their question can be answered at www.paintcare.org. It is still recommended that you call before taking paints in. They will only be able to take paint if they have room. They are not allowed to take in more than can be adequately stored. Also, please remember that these businesses have volunteered to be take-back locations. We don't want them to regret the decision and drop the program!

SAVE THE DATE AND YOUR MEDS! The Medical Alliance will be holding a medication collection event Saturday, November 13, 2010 at the Rogue Valley Mall, Macy's Home Court, 9:00-4:00. This important event keeps medications out of our waste and waterways and also provides the community with important information on the proper techniques for storing and discarding unwanted medications in the home.

Recycling Tips – Linda Holder, MR2009

Fabric

We all know that used clothing can be donated and recycled at a number of thrift stores and other agencies around town, but what about those torn shirts, ripped jeans, and worn-out towels? They, too, may live to see another purpose.

I spoke with Goodwill, Salvation Army, and St. Vincent DePaul's thrift stores and they will all take un-wearable (to us!) clothing – those items with broken zippers, holes, tears, stains, missing buttons, etc. Such clothing may be offered for sale or for giveaway, if it can still be worn; may be cut up for rags which are sold to fire departments and others; or may even end up at a shredding facility on its way to becoming a new product. Towels and t-shirts always make great rags and are often bundled and sold by the pound.

The same goes for linens such as blankets, towels, and sheets – they will be re-sold, given away, or cut up for rags if there is any usable fabric still remaining. St. Vincent DePaul even offers used rugs and blankets as dog beds! You might want to label your donation as “rags” to simplify the sorting process at the thrift shop.

If you're a seamstress, the local thrift stores will take excess fabrics, preferably of at least ½ - 1 yard uncut fabric. Salvation Army will even accept a few scraps. Also valuable are sewing notions such as buttons, zippers, trim, elastic, thread, needles, etc. which can easily be packaged in a baggie for donation.

Books

I'm embarrassed to tell you that my spouse and I both have high-school and college textbooks hiding in our archives. Of course, they're old and out-of-date but they're not yet old enough to be considered collectibles. However, I did find some recycling opportunities to keep them out of the landfill.

Allied Environmental, 8266 13th Street, White City, 541.826.2773, will take soft and hardcover books in any condition if you have enough to fill a 64 cubic feet bin (4'X4'X4'). Books are then shipped to International Paper for recycling. Think block party or neighborhood collection! Hours are 7-4:30 M-F.

SPARC, 1990 NW Washington, Grants Pass, 541.472.9300 will take soft or hardcover books 8-5, M-F. Their employees will separate the covers from the pages and both the cardboard and paper are recycled into new products.

Media Exchange, 400 W Hersey St., Suite 3, Ashland, 541.482.8799 will take any usable books, (soft or hardcover), VHS tapes, CDs, and DVDs with any dates, any subject with one exception – please no encyclopedias. They will pick up large donations or they have a 24-hour drop box. Store hours are Thurs-Mon 11-4. No charge to drop off books or even to take a “new” one home with you!

Rogue Book Exchange, 2660 Bullock Rd., Medford, 541.779.1326, (www.roguebookexchange.org) Tues-Sat 10-6. They also will take any usable book except encyclopedias or magazines, and here, too, you can take a “new” one home at no charge.

Classifieds

WANTED!!! Supplies for School Waste Audit Kits

The Oregon Green Schools program needs help building waste audit kits for use in schools. Do you have **lightly** used tarps, scales or clipboards to donate? Please contact Lara at laracknack@charter.net.

GET DOWN AND DIRTY FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Clean Forest Project is a local non-profit that brings communities together to clean up illegal dumpsites in forests. Volunteers are needed to help clean up and recycle at these events. Gloves, beverages and food are provided to volunteers. To look for a scheduled event in your area, visit www.cleanforestproject.org.



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Inventing a reusable mug

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Bridging the gap between awareness and action by motivating people to reduce waste in their homes and workplaces