

A Quarterly Newsletter of



**Spokane Regional
Solid Waste System**

(509) 625-6580
www.solidwaste.org

Summer 2013



Two more local schools recognized as Washington Green Schools

Two Spokane area schools recently received their Level 1 certification in the Waste and Recycling category from Washington Green Schools. River Day School, a small private school in Spokane, and Cheney Middle School, Cheney, both achieved their certifications by assessing the waste and recycling activities and then instituting a lasting, positive change. These schools join Northeast Washington Technical Skill Center, Spokane, which received Level 1 certification earlier in the Energy category. Other schools in the Spokane area that are working toward their certifications are: Farwell Elementary in Mead, The Community School in Spokane and West Valley City School in West Valley.

Washington Green Schools challenges students and school communities to create a sustainable region through educational experiences that transform school environments. There are more than 52,000 students in 234 participating schools throughout the state. Learn how your school can become involved at www.wagreenschools.org. The Spokane

Regional Solid Waste System can offer support to schools working on the Waste and Recycling certification category.



Students and teachers at Cheney Middle School proudly display their new Washington Green Schools flag.

Recycling Educator Retires After 23 Years

Ann Murphy, Education Coordinator for the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System (SRSWS), retired last week after 23 years of teaching others how to reduce, reuse and recycle. In her long career, Ann coordinated everything from large-scale assembly programs to small classroom education programs in Spokane County schools. She supervised the tour program at the Spokane Waste to Energy facility and was lead instructor for Spokane County's Master Composter/Recycler program.

Ann began working for the SRSWS in 1989 as a Recycling Education Specialist. In 2004, she became the Education Coordinator.

Living the Message

Her work in recycling and environmental education is extensive, but Ann doesn't just "talk the talk," she "walks the walk" in her personal, as well as professional life. She uses a blue curbside recycling cart at home, has an active compost pile in her backyard, and a worm bin in her kitchen.

She carried her lunch to work daily in reusable containers, was rarely seen without her refillable water bottle, had plenty of cloth bags handy for shopping, and always explored alternative uses for materials before consigning them to the recycling container or trash bin. Ann takes the bus or rides her bike, carools if possible, and teleconferences when she can. If she used the printer at work, it was always set for double-sided copies. Much to her co-workers'



consternation, she threw little away, as evidenced by her office. Even brochures and letterhead with outdated information were repurposed by the careful application of a sticky label with corrected information.

Ann served on the City of Spokane's Green Team to champion sustainable purchasing and practices in local government and was known to corner organizers at various events not only to extol the benefits of waste reduction

and recycling, but also to offer her time in helping them get the materials and information they needed to get started. Ann has served on committees supporting environmental awareness for youth, such as the EnviroKids Club and the Spokane Youth Environmental Conference. She was a founding organizer of Washington Green Schools, a statewide non-profit program. Ann was also a founding member of The Green Zone, a free, public outdoor and indoor learning center. In 2011, she was inducted into the Recycling Hall of Fame by the Washington State Recycling Association.

"Ann is one of the most knowledgeable and

committed waste reduction and recycling experts I have known in my career," says Ken Gimpel, Business Director for the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System. "That knowledge, expertise, and commitment will not only be missed by our department, but the entire community. Many of our region's programs are in place because of Ann, including most recently the launch of Big Blue. Ann will be deeply missed," says Gimpel.

Master Composter/Recycler program adds 30 new volunteers

The 2013 Master Composter/Recycler class included 30 members. In exchange for their free training and materials, the recent graduates volunteer at least 40 hours of their time. You'll see Master Composters/Recyclers, all of whom are trained volunteers, assisting at many Spokane Regional Solid Waste System events—usually answering questions about home composting.

The Master Composters/Recyclers were hard at work at the Spring Compost Fair on April 27, where 384 compost bins were given to Spokane County residents who completed the learning activities. This was the 18th year for the twice-a-year Compost Fair. Since the fair began, SRSWS has distributed about 10,000 compost bins. Additionally, another 100 bins were distributed at other spring classes. By composting in backyards with those bins, residents have reduced the waste handled by SRSWS system facilities and programs by as much as 1,100 tons per year.



Three new Master Composter/Recycler graduates (right) explain appropriate materials to some of the 440 attendees at Compost Fair.

Clean Green

Residents may also use curbside collection of Clean Green where it is offered by the garbage hauler as an additional subscription service. Residents can take Clean Green to the SRSWS sites (see page 4).

Clean Green includes yard and garden debris (plants, prunings, leaves, grass clippings, etc.), as well as food scraps and non-shiny, food-soiled paper. No plastic bags are allowed. Residents should never use bags that may be marketed as "compostable" or "biodegradable."

Be "sharps" smart

Did you know that home-generated medical sharps are NOT accepted in any curbside collection program offered by haulers in Spokane County? No matter what type of container you use, you cannot put that container with its sharps into a curbside cart, bin, or can. Also, please don't attempt to flush sharps down toilets or drains.

Sharps are accepted year-round during all open hours at the three SRSWS facilities. Please put all sharps, including needles, syringes,

and lancets, into puncture-resistant containers (coffee cans or thick-walled plastic bottles, such as liquid detergent or bleach bottles). Seal the lid of the container and clearly label the container, "SHARPS." Deliver sharps to the household hazardous waste area at any of the three SRSWS facilities. There is no charge for typical household quantities of sharps. Refer to page 4 for SRSWS facilities' locations and hours of operation.

Join us! Kids Day August 10 Riverfront Park

Greening your event

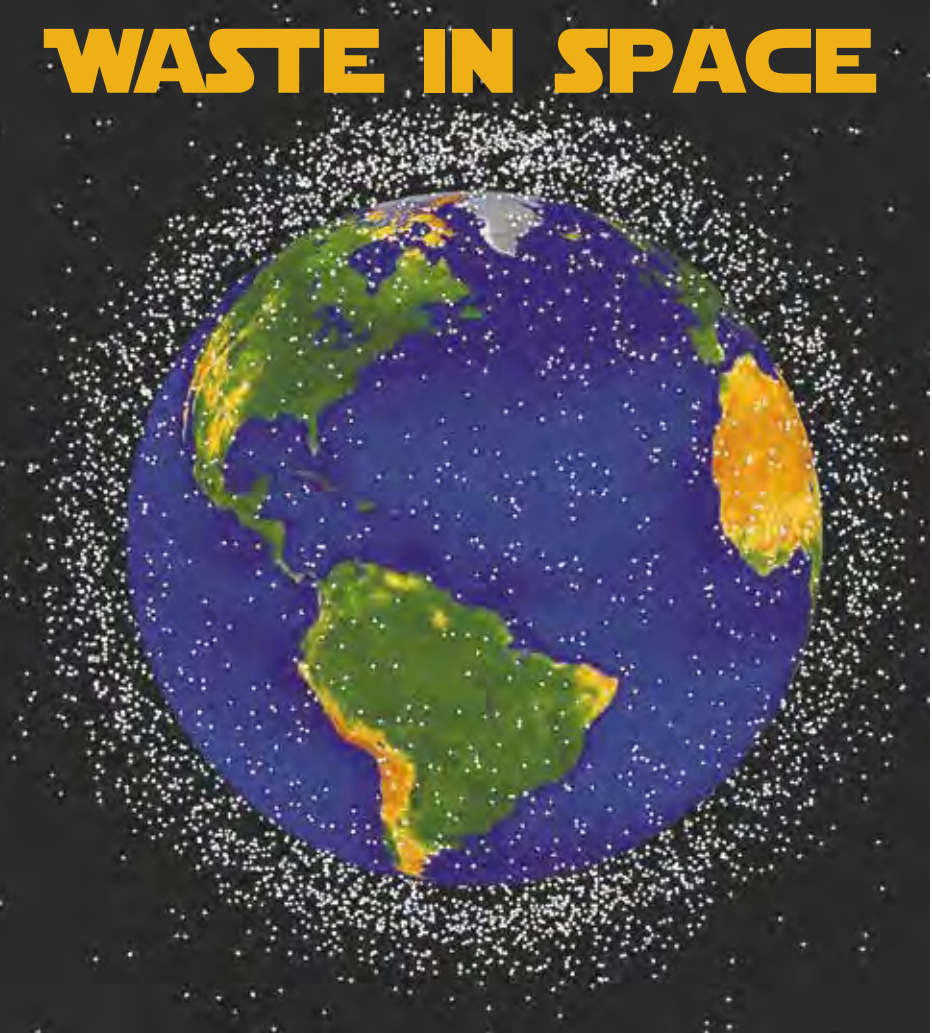
Having a backyard barbeque, family reunion, garden wedding, or just lots of friends getting together for a little summertime fun? Make it a "green" event by borrowing collection containers

to recycle aluminum cans, plastic beverage bottles and food scraps. These are the same containers that you see at big events, such as Bloomsday, Hoopfest and Pig Out in the Park.

To request recycling contain-

At the Corporate Cup, it appears that we had about a 200 percent increase in aluminum can and plastic bottle recycling compared to last year. These figures reflect a 69 percent decrease in the amount of garbage collected.





This image illustrates items in Earth's orbit that are currently being tracked, about 95% of which are orbital debris and not functional satellites.

Our exploration of space has led to insights about our planet and universe, scientific experimentation and discovery, and a satellite communications system that interconnects our global community. But sometimes, what goes up doesn't come down. As it turns out, the area of space known as "low Earth orbit" is congested with debris, much of it from explosions and collisions, some intentionally released during launch and mission operations, and millions of tiny objects, such as paint flecks, that result from heat stress on spacecraft. NASA tracks this debris, which includes more than 21,000 pieces larger than about 4" in diameter and millions of smaller pieces. Even seemingly small debris can cause significant damage to spacecraft and satellites because all collisions in space are high-speed. By studying damaged parts, NASA's Orbital Debris Program is able to help design systems to protect new spacecraft and satellites from debris impact. The program also works to minimize the amount of future debris through improved design and materials. To learn more about space debris, visit <http://orbitaldebris.jsc.nasa.gov>. *Space Junk 3D*, a short documentary, tells the story of the ring of debris orbiting Earth—and explains how that debris could affect future space exploration. The film, which continues to play at museums, planetariums, and theaters around the country, will be available on DVD in September. To learn more about this film, visit www.spacejunk3d.com.



This part was removed from the Hubble Space Telescope during in-space repairs. The yellow arrows show the damage from many orbital debris impacts.



GOING GREEN AT THE GAME

Most recycling efforts and sustainability strategies focus on the home or workplace. However, many people consume and produce waste while on the go. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 30 to 40% of our waste is generated outside the home. In heavily used public spaces and at large events, there are many opportunities to recover valuable resources that may have otherwise gone to landfills.

When Everyone at the Stadium Competes

The Game Day Challenge is a friendly, annual competition sponsored by the College and University Recycling Coalition, RecycleMania, and Keep America Beautiful. It is also supported by EPA's WasteWise program. In the fall, competing colleges and universities implement waste reduction programs during home football games. Schools track and report waste reduction and disposal data that is used to rank the schools. These were the 2012 champions:

- Waste Minimization: Earlham College
- Diversion Rate: Ohio State University
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction: Franklin College
- Recycling: Franklin College
- Organics Reduction: University of Nevada—Las Vegas

To learn more about the Game Day Challenge, visit <http://gamedaychallenge.org>.

University of Colorado's Ralphie Is Making Strides

CU-Boulder won three of the five categories during the 2009 Game Day Challenge. In 2010, CU's "Ralphie's Green Stampede" initiative diverted 71% of the 77,000 pounds of waste generated at the home football games. The program aims to move the campus toward a zero-waste football stadium by 2020. This will require recycling or composting at least 90% of all materials by that date. Nearly all food and beverage services at Folsom Field have already converted to recyclable or compostable materials and containers. And, most packaging within the stadium is refillable, recyclable, or compostable. There are no public trash containers—only recycling and compost containers—throughout the public areas of Folsom Field.

Seventh Inning Stretch to Sustainability

In 2005, the Seattle Mariners recycled 12% of the waste at their home games. By 2012, that figure had increased to 85%. Like the CU-Boulder Buffaloes, the Mariners' end game is zero waste. That will require a diversion rate of 90% or more. In order to get there, the team knew composting food waste would have to be a big part of their program. Ten "Sustainable Saturday" events were held during the 2012 season. At 16 zero waste stations, volunteers helped fans sort their recyclables and



To shred or not to shred

Last year, 12.6 million Americans were victims of identity fraud, where personal information was misused by a criminal to steal monies—either from individuals or from banks, stores, and other businesses. To protect yourself from identity fraud, promptly remove mail from your mailbox and take immediate action on all security breach notices from businesses by changing logins and passwords. In addition, keep your private information securely stored in your home—12% of identity fraud cases involve "familiar fraud" by someone whom the victim knows. Switching to less frequent or online statements can also reduce your risk.

Another way to protect yourself from identity fraud is to shred documents with confidential information. Generally, if a document contains a Social Security Number, financial account number, medical or legal information, a birth date, or a signature, you should shred it. In addition, shred pre-approved credit offers, convenience checks sent by your credit card provider, old pay stubs, canceled checks, and documents containing passwords and PINs. Prescription medication labels should also be removed and destroyed or blacked out with permanent marker.

To learn more about protecting yourself, visit www.consumer.ftc.gov.

compostables into the correct containers. Promotions to increase awareness of and participation in composting programs were part of the program. During Earth Day weekend 2012, fans were given food composting kits, which included a countertop container from EcoSafe Zero Waste for kitchen scraps. Other promotions included Kids Compost Trivia, sponsored by BASF, in which fans competed for the chance to win an Amazon Kindle Fire.

A Little Positive Feedback Goes a Long Way

On one football Saturday, University of Georgia students tested simple improvements to the school's standard recycling bin, with impressive results. The bin had red LED lights which changed to green when someone dropped an item into the bin. In addition, there was a numeric display which increased its count by one with each deposit. The bin was placed in the UGA student union in the same spot where a regular recycling bin had been on a previous game day. During a control game day, deposits were monitored from three hours before until one hour after kickoff. The regular bin collected six items during that time. On the test Saturday, even though attendance at the game was lower, the positive feedback created a buzz in the crowd with people bringing friends over to take a look. At the end of the four-hour period, 19 items had been placed in the bin for recycling.

After further testing, the students developed a "SmartBin," which incorporates a streamlined version of the technology and the ability to monitor the container remotely. Bins can be monitored so that staff knows whether the container has been tampered with and when it needs to be emptied. Not only that, when an item is recycled, the new bin gives a big green smile in LED lights.

I packed my suitcase with...

On long car trips, your family may have played the Suitcase Game. The game begins, "I packed my suitcase with....," and each person adds an item—generally the sillier, the better. The round ends when someone can't remember all of the items in order. This game passes the time and creates fond memories of long drives.

If you are traveling this summer, it's a good idea to consider packing a greener suitcase. Start with two goals: to reduce waste and limit weight, both of which will save energy, trim emissions, and simplify your trip. Checking the weather forecast at your destination, planning ahead, and packing from a list will all help you achieve these goals.

- Here are some simple ideas to get you started:
- Tuck a travel mug or refillable water bottle into your bag.
 - Pack snacks, like nuts, dried fruit, and granola bars, in washable containers. For a road trip, load a small cooler or insulated lunch bag with fruits and vegetables.
 - Fold up a reusable shopping bag (or two) and slip it into a side pocket.
 - Fill your own travel-sized toiletry bottles—that way, you'll have your favorite shampoo every time!
 - Choose clothes that you can mix and match. Pick two pairs of shoes that go with everything. Remember a light jacket or sweater.
 - Multi-task with your tablet or smartphone. Download books, magazines, music, and travel guides. Update your favorite map app. And don't forget your charger!



QUOTES REQUESTED



What, after all, has maintained the human race on this old globe despite all the calamities of nature and all the tragic failings of mankind, if not faith in new possibilities and courage to advocate them.

Jane Addams, 1860-1935
Co-founder of Hull House
Nobel Peace Prize Winner

FAST FACTS

ON THE MOVE

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 12% of Americans, about 36.5 million people, moved last year. Moving can generate a lot of waste—from packing paper and boxes to unwanted furniture. If you are planning a move, consider renting boxes or purchasing used boxes. Donate or sell unwanted household goods, clothing, old toys, furniture, and more. And don't forget to recycle your paper and boxes. For more ideas, search for "green moving tips" online.



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— Ron Chapple Studios

Photo Courtesy of Ocean Conservancy | Samantha Reinders



GOING COASTAL

During the 2012 International Coastal Cleanup, 561,633 volunteers cleared 10,149,988 pounds of trash from 17,719 miles of beaches. The finds included 40 lottery tickets, 117 mattresses, 236 toothbrushes, 2,492 sports balls, and 4,159 candles. The top four

items, numbering above a million each, were cigarette butts, food wrappers and containers, plastic bottles, and plastic bags. Learn more about protecting our waterways and oceans at www.oceanconservancy.org.

SCHOOL SPENDING SPREE

Back-to-school shopping season is around the corner. A survey in 2012 by Parenting.com and Women & Co. found that parents spent an average of \$131 on clothing and \$48 on school supplies per child. Surveys by the National Retail Federation and American Express suggest that those numbers are low because they fail to account for technology purchases, such as laptops, tablets, and cell phones. Those surveys estimated total family spending at \$688 to \$800 on average. You can lower these costs and still get your kids what they need. Use leftover supplies from last year. Reuse last year's backpack. Resist the urge to upgrade working electronics. Shop for gently used clothes at garage sales or secondhand stores. And, remember, when you do need something new, look for recycled-content products, such as paper, notebooks, folders, and T-shirts.



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Do you know where your garbage goes? You can schedule a tour at the Waste to Energy facility to learn more. A new, information-packed video, which was completed this winter, is now part of the tour.

All tours must be scheduled by calling 625-6521. Tour times are available Tuesdays at 1 p.m.; Wednesdays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.; and Thursdays at 10 a.m. Maximum group size is 30. Tour participants are required to wear closed-toe shoes and should dress for the weather.

Watch the video online at: www.solidwaste.org (click on the link in the right-hand panel).

Solid Waste System Facilities

Rates

- Garbage: Waste to Energy facility – \$98 per ton; North County and Valley transfer stations – \$103 per ton. Minimum fees for self-hauling garbage to the SRSWS sites are \$15 for the first 300 pounds of trash (to help cover the cost of managing small loads).
- Clean Green: At all system facilities, remains \$44 per ton (\$5 minimum).
- Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste: Free drop-off at all sites.

Hours

SRSWS facilities' hours are **7:30 a.m.** to 5 p.m.

Locations



Waste to Energy Facility

2900 S. Geiger Blvd.

(West of Spokane, across from the Washington State Patrol)



North County Transfer Station

22123 Elk-Chattaroy Rd.

(Intersection of Elk-Chattaroy Rd. and Hwy. 2)



Valley Transfer Station

3941 N. Sullivan Rd.

(South of Trent Avenue, across from Spokane Industrial Park)

Experts at “Repair, Reuse, and Recycle”

Everyone knows that auto collisions can be traumatic for drivers and vehicles alike. But did you know that our environment can suffer, too? During 2009, more than 10.9 million vehicle crashes were reported in the U.S., with 103,000 in Washington. Twisted metal, broken tail lights, and crunched plastic bumpers—where do they all go?

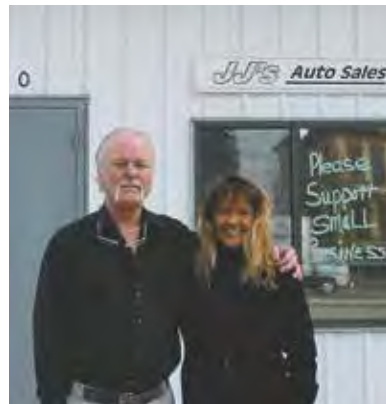
By using Spokane EnviroStars certified auto body shops, you'll be back on the road and know that waste is being disposed of and handled properly. Eight area body shops have completed the EnviroStars voluntary certification program that will save their customers money and reduce waste. This includes processes such as plastic welding, using waterborne paint, recycling office materials and steel parts, and refurbishing parts. One shop also has a clever design for “seatbelt handbags.”

In addition to recycling and waste reduction,

some of these body shops reduce air emissions, toxic air pollutants, and volatile organic compounds; manage stormwater; and conserve electricity.

Certified Spokane EnviroStars auto body shops are: American Way Auto Body, American Way Auto Collision, Ed's Premier Auto Body, Glamour Collision, J.J.'s Auto Collision, K & M Unibody Works, Maaco Auto Body & Collision, and Washington Auto Collision.

EnviroStars is a voluntary certification program for small businesses. To learn more, go to www.spokaneenvirostars.org or call Tonilee Hanson at 847-4337.



Jay and Karla Breesnee of J.J.'s Auto Collision found a local company, Allied Plating, to recycle plastic bumpers.

Scrappy Goes to School

As part of the *Scrappy Goes to School* program, students in three East Valley elementary schools participated in a May Day Challenge to see which school could generate the least amount of waste per student. After the garbage weigh-in, students at Trentwood Elementary had the least amount of garbage for the day – just 0.40 pounds per student – helping these students live up to part of the school's mission: “...to become responsible citizens.”

Other schools working on the challenge were Otis Orchards with 0.43 pounds per student and East Farms with 0.55 pounds per student. The winning school is receiving a “recycled” trophy and ClearStream recycling containers to help expand their recycling of beverage containers at school events. Congratulations to all students for working on this challenge.

Scrappy Goes to School is a SRSWS program to help schools capture organic waste from cafeterias. East Valley Schools have participated in a pilot program this past year funded by an EPA grant.



What about medications?

NEVER flush medications in toilets or pour them down drains. Medicines can contaminate streams, rivers, lakes, and our water supply. Follow these steps to properly dispose of medications:

- Make medicine unusable (add wet coffee grounds or moistened cat litter to pills; mix liquids with cat litter, dirt, or cayenne pepper).
- Remove personal identification from container labels.
- Put in garbage.

Empty pill bottles can be recycled, but they must carry the recycling code and be 4 ounces or larger.

To find medicine return locations, visit: www.takebackyourmeds.org.



Giving old textiles a new life

Each year, about 85 percent of discarded textiles, including clothing, shoes, sheets, and towels, are discarded and disposed with the trash. This is a troubling statistic, considering that about 98 percent of all textiles could be reused or recycled.

The best option for unwanted textiles is reuse. Sell items at a garage sale or through a consignment store, or donate them to a thrift shop or charitable organization. The next best option is recycling.

Gemtext, a



Northwest-based company serving the textile recycling industry through regional partnerships, collects unwanted textiles, in good and poor condition, and recycles or repurposes the materials. Acceptable items include clothing suitable for resale, as well as other textiles, such as belts, shoes, sheets, purses, curtains, towels, gloves, tablecloths, and napkins. There are 121 Gemtext recycling drop-offs in parking lots throughout the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene area.

Gemtext also gives back to the community. Locally, Central Valley School District (Barker High, Central Valley High, Liberty Lake Elementary,

and North Pines Middle), Freeman School District, West Valley City School, Valley Christian, and Cheney High School all have fundraising partnerships with Gemtext and also receive classroom education materials. A portion of all Gemtext proceeds fund camps, college scholarships, and enriching experiences for youth in the Northwest with major health challenges.

To learn more about Gemtext, visit www.gemtextrecycling.com. To find a location near you or to discuss placement of a drop-off box, contact Becci Carlson, Market Manager, at Becci@gemtextrecycling.com or 877-640-2906.

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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WASTE TO ENERGY REPORT CARD



Spokane Regional
Solid Waste System

Working Together!

January – March 2013

Garbage In

63,354.31 tons disposed
61,595.78 tons processed at WTE facility
1,840.17 tons of ferrous metal recovered from the ash for recycling
17,429.63 tons of ash disposed at Rabanco
Notice of Violation None

Electricity Generation

38,775 MWh produced
6,821 MWh used to run the facility
31,954 MWh sold to Avista

Revenues After Electricity Transmission Expenses
\$1,567,565



Wheelabrator
Spokane Inc.