

The New Jersey WasteWise Bulletin

Newsletter of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Spring, 2004
WasteWise...improving your bottom line and the environment
through waste reduction, recycling and recycled product procurement.

WasteWise and the Environment

While most people understand that waste reduction and recycling conserves natural resources, provides industry with a valuable source of raw materials and conserves disposal capacity, most are not familiar with the full extent of astounding environmental benefits associated with these practices. The following demonstrates this point:

- Recycling saves energy. In 2001, New Jersey's recycling efforts saved a total of 128 trillion BTUs of energy, equal to nearly 17.2% of all energy used by industry in the state, which has a value of \$570 million dollars. This energy savings is also an amount equal to 22 million barrels of oil saved or 1,940,834 cars off the road. This energy savings is enough power for nearly 1.2 million homes for one year.
- Recycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions. New Jersey's recycling efforts in 2001 reduced greenhouse gas emissions by about 3,400,000 metric tons of carbon equivalent per year, equal to approximately 50.1% of all industrial carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel combustion in the state and 9.7% of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Recycling reduces emissions of air and water pollutants. In 2001, the recycling of paper, plastic, glass, aluminum cans and steel cans in New Jersey resulted in reductions of as much as 8,000 metric tons of water pollutants and 120,972 metric tons of air pollutants (not including the greenhouse gas reductions mentioned above). Recycling reduced overall emissions of sulfur oxides, (an important ingredient in acid rain formation), by about 7,200 metric tons and nitrous oxides by about 7,500 metric tons.

Did You Know...

- Princeton University recently began using 100% post-consumer recycled content paper in all campus copy machines, printers and fax machines. The Aspen 100 recycled paper is produced by Boise.
- CellsForCash.com is one of several companies that will pay consumers for their old cell phones. The phones are resold mostly in South America. According to industry statistics, the average life span of a cell phone is 18 months.
- According to the NJDEP, 33% of the state's municipal solid waste and 53% of its total solid waste was recycled in 2002. While still a recognized leader in recycling, New Jersey's recycling rates have declined in recent years.
- A simple way to reduce the amount of paper used in your office is to use the duplex (two-sided copying) feature found on nearly all copy machines. Columbia University saves approximately \$105,000 per year by duplexing.
- According to American Metal Market, in 2003, China became the first country ever to import more than \$1 billion of American scrap metal!

Upcoming Events

- National Recycling Coalition's 23rd Annual Congress & Expo: Recycling – A Golden Gateway to Sustainability – 8/29/ – 9/1/04, www.nrc-recycle.org/congress/index.htm
- 2004 Mid-Atlantic Sustainability Conference and Trade Show – Clean Energy and Green Building Solutions – 9/29 – 10/1/04, www.nesea.org
- 2004 WasteWise Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony – 10/14 – 10/15/04, www.epa.gov/wastewise

Recycling Reduces Construction and Renovation Costs

Companies and organizations that are considering the construction of new buildings, renovation of existing offices and the demolition of old structures need to factor recycling into their plans as this practice not only benefits the environment, but will result in significantly reduced construction and demolition waste disposal costs. The results of an April, 2004 survey conducted by the NJDEP show that recycling asphalt debris, concrete rubble, used bricks and blocks, felled trees and stumps and wood scrap costs significantly less than disposing of these materials as solid waste, (see below).

Average Cost to Recycle:

Asphalt debris* - \$5.70 per ton
Concrete rubble* - \$4.85 per ton
Used bricks and blocks* - \$5.49 per ton
Trees and stumps - \$37.69 per ton
Wood scrap - \$46.43 per ton

Average Cost of Disposal:

Over \$75.00 per ton and can be as high as \$98.00 per ton.

* Several recycling centers did not charge any fee for the receipt of these materials.

Other materials found in the construction and demolition waste stream are also recyclable. For example, vinyl siding and flooring, as well as PVC pipes and other polyvinyl scrap can be recycled at no cost to the generator. Other components of the construction and demolition waste stream are not only highly recyclable, but are also valuable, especially in today's market. For example, generators will be paid for the scrap metal and corrugated cardboard resulting from their project. While it is acknowledged that disposal costs represent a small percentage of a construction project's total cost, it still makes economic (as well as environmental) sense to recycle these materials rather than dispose of them as waste.

Back to the Future

Recycling the Past, Inc., located in Barnegat, New Jersey, is a full-scale architectural salvage company that removes reusable items and artifacts from buildings prior to their demolition. The company buys and sells a wide variety of salvaged items and maintains that "nothing reusable is reusable." Recycling the Past, Inc.'s inventory is ever-changing and includes salvaged mantles, stained glass windows, doors, lighting fixtures, vintage building materials, garden furniture and a whole lot more. The operation not only benefits contractors, renovators, designers and those interested in antiques and unique treasures, but also the environment as many reusable and valuable items are kept out of landfills by the company's work. For more details, visit www.recyclingthepast.com.

Non-Paper Recycled Products for the Office

While the purchase of recycled content paper is an important first step in any company or organization's Buy Recycled program, there are numerous other recycled content products that can be purchased for the office. Binders, clipboards, file folders, clip portfolios and presentation folders made with recycled content are all readily available and affordable. There are also many recycled content plastic desktop accessories that can be purchased. In addition, office recycling containers, office waste receptacles and plastic trash bags made with recycled content can be found in the marketplace with ease. Other non-paper recycled products that are available for the office include office furniture, plastic envelopes, printer ribbons and toner cartridges. The USEPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines include information on non-paper recycled content products, as well as other recycled products. Visit www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm for details.

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