



Waste Watcher

Winter 2002

Quarterly, electronic resource conservation newsletter for state agency resource coordinators

Energy Conservation

How are state agencies doing conserving energy? Are they meeting the Governor's mandate and state statute to save 10% over the year 2000 baseline? Even though we haven't heard too much about it lately, DAS, the Oregon Office of Energy and the Oregon University System are busy compiling and analyzing the data. There are many factors to take into account, by agency, to ensure the data is compared fairly, such as Corrections 24/7 operating facilities, State Fair and State Parks increase in visitors, etc. By July 2003, the statute takes affect and agencies' data will be available for review. Stay tuned for more info then.

Holiday Lights

Holiday lights are permitted in DAS buildings this year, with the following conditions:

- ★ Lights will only be used in common areas, such as reception areas or breakrooms.
- ★ They may be operated from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- ★ Lights may be installed after Dec. 1, but should be down by Dec. 24. This also applies to holiday trees, but please remember to water them and keep them fresh.
- ★ Only mini or LED lights should be used.

As always, these and all electrical consuming devices should be turned off and/or unplugged when staff are not in the office, which includes evenings, weekends, and holidays.

However, please note that these lights do cost money, especially multiplied around state buildings. The more we can all do with our other plug loads, such as turning off computers, monitors and task lights, can help offset this extra cost.



ANNUAL SUSTAINABLE HOLIDAYS REMINDER

Did you know that between Thanksgiving and New Year's Americans throw away 25% more trash nationwide? That amounts to about an extra one million tons of waste each week. Here are a few ideas to reducing waste during the holidays:

- ★ **Think reuse.** Need a fancy holiday outfit or new stuff for the house, think antique or consignment stores.
- ★ **Make your own gift wrap and ribbons.** Use stamps, stencils, comics, pictures from magazines, napkins, towels, or tablecloths.
- ★ **Recycle wrapping paper** curbside.
- ★ When buying electronic toys and other portable items, remember to **buy rechargeable batteries** to go with them.
- ★ **Consolidate last minute shopping trips.**
- ★ Don't forget your trusty **reusable shopping bag.**



North Mall Office Building

What is that big new building going in next to the State Lands and Employment Buildings? You may have noticed it as you drive by and would like more info.

It's a new building that DAS is constructing to house the administrative functions of the Water Resources Dept., Oregon State Parks, and Housing & Community Develop. Dept. It is 120,000 square feet and scheduled to open in Sept 2003.

It is also one of the state's first "green buildings," which means it incorporates lots of sustainable elements in its construction and maintenance. Some of these features are extensive care in site preparation, lots of windows and light shelves for daylighting and reduced glare, under floor air distribution for increased occupant comfort and control, many components that are made of recycled material or are recyclable, and much more.

It's an exciting project for the agencies moving in and for DAS. Watch in 2003 for info about the official opening. To follow along with the construction, click the web camera at <http://159.121.111.249/>.





Waste Audit Results

In March 2002, DAS, Garten Services, and members from resource committees conducted waste audits of the Public Service, Employment, L&I and Executive Buildings to research why the State's tonnage recycled has gone down

20% in 2001 and to date in 2002. The team then conducted follow-up audits in September for comparison after centralized collection and commingling had been implemented. Here's what they found at the audit in September; it closely follows the results from March. The auditors saw no major difference in recycling rate since centralized collection or commingled recycling. (The % figure represents the % of total items pulled out of the garbage that were recyclable. 100% means no recyclables were in the garbage.)

- Public Service Building – 78.8% (21.2% was recyclable – mostly paper)
- Employment Building – 89.5% (10.5% was recyclable – mostly paper)
- Labor & Industries Building – 81.0% (19% was recyclable – mostly paper)
- Executive Building – 92.0% (8% was recyclable – mostly paper)

👉 **#1 problem** – big stacks of paper in the garbage. It looked to the auditors like someone just put it in the wrong container, but please pay attention, because once it's contaminated with food and other garbage gook, it's no longer recyclable. In addition, there were items, such as interagency envelopes, that could have been reused another time.

👉 **#2 problem** – single serve containers in the garbage. This was a huge problem at all buildings, especially the ones with cafeterias and lots of vending machines. This is a tough area to control, since all cans, bottles, and containers must be rinsed and completely clean of food or liquid residue before recycling. Larger "to-go" containers are not even recyclable. However, there are red containers in every break room and cafeteria for the smaller containers with recycling symbols – it just might take a little extra work. But, realize that it's worth it, since each item recycled means less pollution and waste into the environment, as well as jobs in Oregon for the recycling industry. Here's a rundown:

- *single-serve plastics* – these are water and soda bottles from vending machines, cafeterias, or individuals' lunches. There were other kinds of plastic as well, such as yogurt containers or medication bottles.
- *glass containers* – these are mostly single serve bottles, such as Arizona Ice Tea.
- *metal containers* – these were Slim Fast cans, refundable soda cans, and other single serve metal containers

In general, the State is recycling very well. While the group did find some interesting, and surprising, results on containers, it didn't answer the question of paper recycling reduction. They concluded that state agencies are being more efficient with paper, such as making scratch pads out of overstock or draft printing, rather than buying as much new paper. Bravo! Finding ways to be more efficient and avoiding the waste in the first place is the right thing to do. Good job, agencies!



Buy-Recycled Myths

- *Recycled-content products cost too much.* Not any longer. Many recycled products are now priced competitively with their non-recycled counterparts.
- *Recycled-content products are inferior in quality.* Not anymore. These days recycled content products undergo the same stringent testing and exacting performance documentation to which virgin products are subjected.
- *Recycled-content products are too hard to find.* No longer. The average consumer can find quality recycled products everywhere from the corner grocery store to national retailers.

Source: Marion County Dept of Public Works, Environmental Services

State Agency Update

Here's an update of great projects in resource conservation and sustainability that state agencies are working on around Oregon.

Housing & Community Services - Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) has incorporated a number of energy conservation measures into the leased facilities since January 2000. To name a few, we have been conserving energy in the following ways: de-lamping light tubes from fixtures, closing blinds, turning off monitors, and heating and cooling efficiencies. We are proud to say it has paid off! Over the first eight months of 2002, we have seen an average monthly reduction all of our leased facilities of 23 percent over 2000 levels. OHCS has also incorporated recycling as another part of the conservation measures. We recycle glass, light tubes, plastic, metal, paper, cardboard, toner cartridges, and batteries. As we receive information from the "Waste Watcher Newsletter," our goal to continue to educate our staff on our commitment to energy & water conservation, as well as recycling. OHCS employees have been very supportive, and in many cases, been instrumental in implementing measures to conserve energy in their own areas. We believe our agency is an example of good conservation.



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