CLARK COUNTY
REGIONAL SOLID WASTE PROGRAM

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

It's all about choices...

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Solid Waste programs are regional programs for waste reduction, toxicity reduction, recycling, composting, reuse, and proper solid waste disposal. The objectives of the solid waste programs are to reduce the amount of materials generated; reduce the amount of waste disposed in landfills; increase the amount of materials recovered and recycled; and reduce toxicity in the environment.

During 2007, Clark County adopted a Sustainability Policy to foster a safe, secure future that conserves natural resources while meeting basic human needs, including clean water, air, food, shelter, education and employment. Solid Waste programs will play a key role in achieving "a sustainable Clark County".

MEASURING UP COUNTYWIDE

Annual recycling rate - ***41.4%***
Annual recovery rate - ***14.4%***

Total diversion rate ***55.8%***

Waste sent to the landfill - *273,619 tons*

Recycled through curbside residential collection
Recycling - ***33,418 tons***
Yard debris - ***21,068 tons***

Population served through curbside collection programs
Recycling - ***53,679 households***
Yard debris - ***19,344 households***

"The compost bin ate my homework."

2007 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Studying recycling carts

The County reviewed the current three-bin recycling system to see how it "stacked up" against other residential recycling programs in this region. As a result of this review, we piloted a six-month program using carts instead of bins. Recyclables were "commingled" in the cart; glass was collected in a separate bin; oil, antifreeze and batteries were collected "on the side". The pilot was in six separate areas countywide and was a collaborative effort with the cities and recycling hauler.

Data was collected and reviewed from the pilot. A variety of different sized carts were tried, as well as weekly and every-other-week collection. Over the six months, recycling tons increased an average of 25 percent in the pilot areas. Contaminants in the cart increased a small amount but the increase in total tons more than offset the contamination.

Pilot residents participated in focus groups, telephone and mail surveys. The mail survey had a 39 percent return rate and 95 percent of the respondents recommended the roll-cart based system. Some of the survey comments were: convenience of less sorting, ease of mobility of the cart, reduction in litter, and user-friendliness.

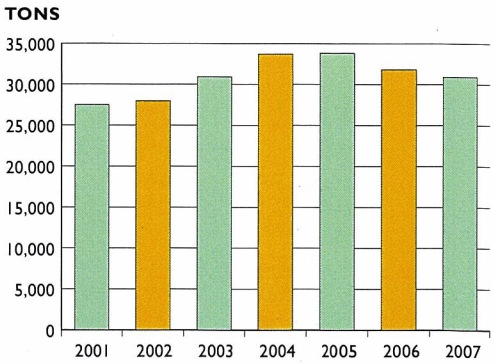
Clark County is considering a county-wide change to this system which will be in conjunction with procuring a new contract for the collection of recyclables. Any changes to our recycling program would be implemented in early 2009.

The Curbside Recycling Feasibility Study and *Clark County Curbside Recycling Pilot Program* reports are on the Web site at: www.clark.wa.gov/recycle/SWAC.html.

Eco-Clips in school

Clark County's school food waste program ended the school year with 46 elementary schools and middle schools participating. Food waste is separated by the students upon completion of their lunches; the waste is collected in bio-bags and placed in a separate container; food waste is then hauled to a facility and composted. A series of video promotion materials (eco-clips) were created for showing in the schools and the Save Organic Scraps Web site was created to provide teachers and students with additional information and resources about the program. Curriculum has been developed for teachers and is available online. Also some of the middle schools have created their own eco-clips to show at their schools and they have been included on the Web site as well. The program Web site is www.recyclextreme.com.

Annual recycling from curbside residential program (tons)



2007 PROGRAMS FAST FACTS

- Save Organic Scraps (SOS) program collected 374 tons of food/paper waste from students in 46 participating elementary and middle schools
- We Compost! – 144 tons of food waste collected from businesses
- 2good2toss.com – 658 postings with a total of 1,863 members
- BEN (Business Environmental Newsletter) – 3 issues distributed to 325 individuals/businesses
- Collected over 3 million pounds of hazardous waste from over 70,000 residents, including:
  - 800,000 lbs. of electronic waste
  - 700 lbs. of unwanted medications
  - 2,000 lbs. of block foam
- More than 80 percent of household hazardous waste collected is recycled or reused as alternative fuel
- 9,000 holiday giftwrap bags were given out to the public to encourage recycling of wrapping paper
- Community Share Fair collected items for reuse from 160 participants
- Mother Nature's Garden Puppet Show – presented at 20 schools to a total audience of 3,066
- Gracie Learns the 3Rs Puppet Show – presented at 18 schools to a total audience of 2,810 – puppet show is now available on DVD.
- Recycleman's Rotten Road Show – presented at 19 schools to a total audience of 8,680 – road show is also available on DVD.

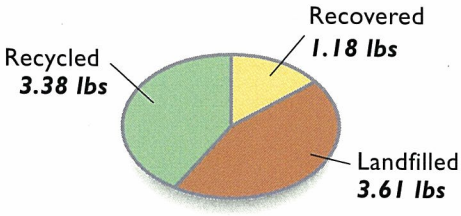
SAVE ORGANIC SCRAPS
Make compost not trash.

2007 PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHTS

- Held the first Fix It Fair; second Recycled Arts Festival; and second Earth-Friendly Garden Tour
- Working with others in the state to develop a statewide Green Schools Program; progress can be monitored at www.wagreenschools.org
- Drop-off available for mercury thermostats and rigid plastics at the transfer stations
- Recycling collection available at Vancouver Lake Park, Esther Short Park, Tri-Mountain Golf Course, and Clark County Amphitheater

- Farmers Market now has recycling collection and reusable shopping bags available for purchase
- New sites for collection of unwanted controlled substances (Medications Take Back Program): cities of Ridgefield, La Center, Battle Ground, and Washougal Police Departments and County Sheriff's downtown Vancouver station
- New Medications Take Back Program at Evergreen School District
- Food waste collection at the Dragonfly Café and the Clark County Public Service Center
- Solid Waste Advisory Commission completed its review of the *Clark County Solid Waste Management Plan* (plan adoption in 2008)

HOW MUCH WASTE DO WE CREATE?
(per person/per day)



8.17 lbs. total waste generated

OUR RECYCLING SAVES:

- Approximately 70,000 metric tons of CO_2 (equivalent) annually
- 750,000 trees annually from recycling paper
- Enough energy to power over 350,000 computers for one week from recycling aluminum cans

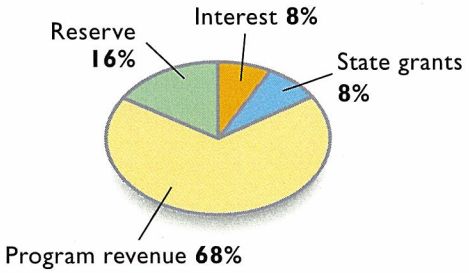
CREAM
Computer Reuse And Marketing

Recycled Arts FESTIVAL

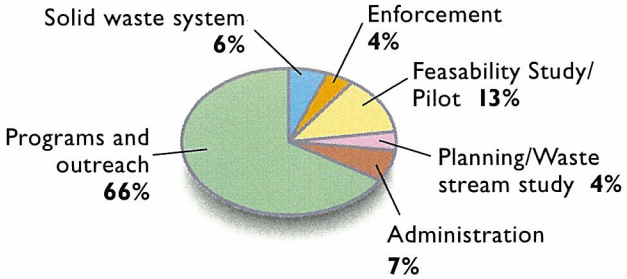
2GOOD2TOSS.COM
reusable building materials & large household items

2007 ANNUAL FUNDING $3,129,366

2007 REVENUE



2007 EXPENSES



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Web site: www.clark.wa.gov/recycle/
Recycle A to Z directory: www.recyclingA-Z.com

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Additional program information available upon request or online.

2007 AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- Presented on education and outreach for school food waste programs at the *Environmental Education Association of Washington Annual Conference*
- Participated in American Public Works Association and International City/County Management Association webcast on *Environmental Management System (EMS): A Smart Choice for Local Government*
- Panelist at EMS workshop sponsored by *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*
- Presentation at *University of Oregon Green Fleet Workshop* on EMS
- *Our Personal Best* nominations:
  Sally Fisher – Above and Beyond the Call of Duty
  Mike Davis – Innovation
  Erin Rowland – Quality
  Solid Waste Team – Team
- County and city of Vancouver celebrated the 15th anniversary for residential curbside recycling
- Hosted the *Washington State Recycling Association Annual Conference and Trade Show*

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