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Eco-Cycle's Mission:

We believe in individual and community action to transform society's throw-away ethic into environmentally responsible stewardship.

Our mission is to provide publicly-accountable recycling, conservation and education services, and to identify, explore and demonstrate the emerging frontiers of sustainable resource management.

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle

CHaRM Adds Another New Material

Announcing Textile Reuse/Recycling

by Marti Matsch

Open your closet and get ready to gut it of all your grubby garb, because it's time to celebrate the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials' (CHaRM) third anniversary, and that means we're rolling out yet another new material to be accepted at the facility. Since opening, the City of Boulder and Eco-Cycle have stuck to our goal of creating more recycling opportunities for you by adding at least one new material each year to the list of unusual items we'll accept for reuse or recycling. So far we've added a number of new items, including many different types of electronics, #2 and #4 plastic bags, athletic shoes and books. Our newest addition will help you purge all your torn trousers, towels, and T-shirts as well as shredded sheets, shirts and shorts. As of November 15th, textiles (clothing, bedding, towels, fabrics and



The CHaRM now accepts textiles (clothing, bedding, towels, fabrics and shoes)

We accept the following items:

- Clothes, including shirts, pants, jackets, sweaters and sweatshirts
- Uniforms
- Socks—pairs only, tied or balled together
- Shoes—pairs only, tied or banded together
- Sheets, blankets, tablecloths, linens, towels, bathrobes and other terry cloth material
- Sleeping bags

- Clean rags and sewing remnants one square foot or larger
- Belts, purses

Items may be stained or ripped, but they must be clean.

NO:

- Dirty, wet or moldy clothes
- Single socks or shoes
- Pantyhose or nylons
- Carpet or carpet padding
- Drapes with a liner
- Non-fibrous material
- Underwear

shoes) are now accepted at the CHaRM.

Before you drop items off at the CHaRM, however, remember: REUSE FIRST. If your clothing is in good, reusable shape, please take it to the great thrift stores or charitable organizations in our area for resale or redistribution. Bring us your thrift store rejects or items you know are too stained or too torn to be of interest to them. Textiles brought to the CHaRM facility will be reused whenever possible, with much of them going to African communities in need. Materials that can't be reused will be recycled as rags. A good method to determine whether or not the CHaRM will accept your textile item (shoes and accessories exempt) is to ask yourself whether it could be made into a rag. See the guidelines on this page for a specific list of materials accepted.

So what can you expect our next material to be, come our fourth CHaRM anniversary? We're not making any promises, but we're lookin' at that big blocky white stuff that comes in packaging boxes and makes us all crazy. That's all we're saying for now. ♻️

First-Ever Zero Waste Action Conference Sparks International Effort

by Marti Matsch

If you're paying attention at all, you've noticed the world has its problems. Globally, we're witnessing unprecedented environmental destruction and outstripped natural resources that cannot keep pace with our growing population and consumption. For humans, this means a rise in health problems related to environmental pollution, economic imbalances and increased conflicts due to disparities in the availability of natural resources, a loss of jobs caused by the loss of resources, and a rise in the number of poor communities that become dumping grounds for pollution and toxic waste.

Countries and communities from all over the world are awakening to the fact that these diverse issues ranging from health to economies have one common denominator—the technological systems we use to manufacture and dispose of the products in our societies and the resulting waste—and that working toward Zero Waste is working toward the resolution of these issues. For this reason, activists and professionals representing numerous states in the U.S. as well as ten other countries recently came together at the GrassRoots Recycling Network's (GRRN) first-ever Zero Waste Action Conference in Oakland, CA.

The fact that Zero Waste systems create an alternative to polluting incineration practices while generating much-needed jobs at good wages attracted activists from the Global South, who have been fighting to stop the production of expensive landfills and incinerators that emit toxic substances into the air, water and soils of their local communities. According to Von Hernandez, International Goldman Award winner from the Philippines, the industrialized nations of the world are utilizing "obscene competitive advantages" to make their profits by exploiting the people

of the Global South through dirty production systems and slave-wage environments. Activists have been working to replace these technologies with clean Zero Waste alternatives that are healthier for the local populations.

Health workers at the conference explained the enormous impact Zero Waste can make in solving the growing health crisis we all face from exposure to toxins in our environment and from the products we use. Pat Costner, Senior Scientist with Greenpeace International's Science Unit, discussed the widespread and rising rates of abnormal testicular growth at birth in boys and early breast development for girls due to exposure from different plastics that mimic hormones and act as endocrine disruptors.

According to Dr. Paul Connett of Canada, governments are



At a recent conference in Oakland, CA, more than 200 activists working on a spectrum of issues ranging from the environment and health to jobs and economic stability gathered to work toward Zero Waste—a movement that helps to address all these diverse issues.

Continued on page 7

Director's Corner



Eric Lombardi
Executive Director

Our vision is big—we're taking our Zero Waste approach to the world and bringing Zero Waste successes from other nations back home. We want to keep you updated on the global and local scene because it is exciting and positive, and that's a rare thing to say these days.

The Eco-Cycle Strategic Plan Update in the *Eco-Cycle Times*

The last issue of this newsletter (Spring 2004) was a significant issue since it unveiled our five-year plan. If you didn't see it, read the full vision online at www.ecocycle.org. This issue, and every one hereafter, will update you on how we're doing to accomplish our goals. Our vision is big—we're taking our Zero Waste approach to the world and bringing Zero Waste successes from other nations back home. We want to keep you updated on the global and local scene because it is exciting and positive, and that's a rare thing to say these days.

Happy 3rd Birthday to the Boulder County Recycling Center (BCRC)!

So how is the community's new baby performing over there on 63rd Street? I'm glad to report that the BCRC is an operational and financial success. We have generated a financial surplus every year that has gone back into the public Recycling Fund to increase that fund for future projects such as composting! Now the challenge is to stay one step ahead of our Denver competition, which Eco-Cycle aims to accomplish by proposing a significant equipment upgrade. Two years ago the Board of County Commissioners turned down our request for this upgrade, and unfortunately that has cost the facility. We've now fallen behind the competitors and have to play catch-up. There are certainly advantages to this new public-private partnership we have with the County, like having a roof over our heads. I do miss the old days, though, when we didn't have to go through government hoops or ask permission to do our jobs—we were much more responsive and competitive.

Hey Buddy, Can You Spare 10 Acres?

Within the last few months, the landfill in Weld County (where all YOUR trash goes) was granted an expansion of over 100 acres! Meanwhile, on the Boulder side of the county line, Eco-Cycle is searching for just 10 acres to allow us to take another huge chunk out of the waste stream in the form of expanded recycling and composting services. Eco-Cycle has a great plan to take huge new steps forward and keep our community on the front lines of sustainability, but we need some land to do it! So, if anyone out there wants to call me with ideas on some available acreage to help launch a couple of amazing new projects, please do! Until that happens, we are all throwing our trash over the fence into our neighbors' yard (Weld County) and polluting their groundwater and air. It isn't right, so let's do something about it.

Money is the Fuel for Social Change

The Eco-Cycle Strategic Plan will require a lot of money that we just don't have. The more money we have, the faster we can make progress on our vision. Thus, we have hired a new fundraiser, Eric Hozempa, and he is here to invite you to get on board and become a part of our vision. Of course, we value every

donation at any amount, but I really want to talk to some of you "major donors" who want to make a big impact upon the world, not just Boulder County. The Eco-Cycle vision is as big as anything else happening in the environmental movement these days, and that's why people from all over the world are calling us for help (see Eco-Cycle International article on page 4). So, I'd love to have a cup of coffee with any local folks with access to resources and a desire to make a significant difference. Give me a call.

Goodbye to June Sampson, Eco-Cycle Grandmother

In each of our recent issues we seem to be saying goodbye to yet another dear Eco-Cycle Grandmother or Grandfather who has done so much for this organization. We are sad to say that this issue is no exception. One of our greatest long-term supporters, June Sampson, passed away earlier this year. June was an essential advisor and supporter for Eco-Cycle's founders Roy Young and Pete Grogan, and she continued to share her wisdom with us throughout the years. She told us a story on our 25th anniversary about how she first got involved:



Thank you, June Sampson, for all the support you've shown Eco-Cycle over the years. We will miss you.

"I was reading the newspaper one day and there was a three-line news story about these two guys who wanted to start a recycling program. That excited me so I called them and invited them over for a "drink" – milk...and cookies, that is. I immediately liked them both immensely. I told them to get a group together to help advise them. They didn't know many people, but I did. We got a banker, a lawyer and a bookkeeper to help us. Mind you, this was way before people knew what recycling was. It wasn't even a widely used word yet. But people were ready and eager."

I was lucky to see June just before she passed. She had refused any additional care from hospice, feeling ready to go. She and I just sat holding hands and talking about her decision to leave this world. I was in awe of such a brave act, and happy for her that she was dying on her own terms. She mentioned how glad she was that Eco-Cycle had survived because what we do is so important. What we do *is* important, and it's thanks to people like June for getting us started and helping us thrive. Thank you, June. We'll miss you.



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New Ways to Support Eco-Cycle and its Mission

As you'll read in this issue of the *Eco-Cycle Times*, we have an ambitious vision for our community that's as big as anything else happening in the environmental movement these days. It's a vision that will take lots of work and funding. Please consider supporting Eco-Cycle in one or all of the following ways:

- Distinguish yourself as a member of The Founders' Society. This group of very loyal Eco-Cycle supporters makes annual gifts of \$1000 or more and receives invitations to special events such as speaking engagements with prominent leaders in the environmental movement, coffee chats with Eco-Cycle's Executive Director Eric Lombardi, and much more. These events increase Founders' Society members' awareness of and involvement in Eco-Cycle's revolutionary Zero Waste vision. More information about this opportunity can be found at www.ecocycle.org/support/founderssociety.

- Giving couldn't be any easier! You can donate in person, over the phone, or via the envelope enclosed in this edition of the *Eco-Cycle Times*, with cash, check or credit card, or now you can donate with the click of a mouse. Check out our safe and secure online gifts page at www.ecocycle.org/support.

- Donate appreciated stock before year's end. See details at www.ecocycle.org/support/stocks.

- Got an old clunker? Donate your car, truck or boat to Eco-Cycle. You get the tax benefit, the vehicle gets a new life, and Eco-Cycle gets the funding – a win for everyone! See details at www.ecocycle.org/cardonation.

- Ensure that Eco-Cycle is secure for generations to come. Include Eco-Cycle in your will with a charitable bequest. ♻️

**Recycling and Resource Conservation
Information for All Seasons**

visit us at
www.ecocycle.org
for all the info on:

- Fall Leaf Collections •
- Holiday Waste Reduction Tips •
- Holiday Recycling Guidelines •
- Environmental Gift Ideas •
- Earth Day Events and Activities •

Composting: The Next Frontier

One of the biggest pieces to getting to Zero Waste in our community is a municipal composting site. Eco-Cycle is working toward this goal while helping to turn our organic “waste” into products that enrich our depleted local soils.

Eco-Cycle Eyes Australian Composting Program for Boulder

by Dan Matsch and Linda Smith

The small city of Queanbeyan, Australia has stopped landfilling food and yard waste and started using it to nourish and build the depleted soils in neighboring agricultural lands. They call their tremendously successful program City to Soil, and Eco-Cycle intends to emulate their program here in our own community. In a world where most urbanites think their food comes from the grocery store, the beauty (and effectiveness) of this program is in the way it connects City residents to farmers, farmland and ultimately to the food they eat.

The cycle begins with the city of Queanbeyan providing curbside collection of food and yard waste to residents. This material, full of vital nutrients for replenishing the soil, is made into compost and returned to local farms to enhance soils. In turn, these soils grow better produce for the dinner plates of the City’s residents. This partnership creates a vital social and economic cycle that benefits all.

Queanbeyan is similar to Boulder in that residents there face the same challenges resulting from a fast-growing urban population, including threats of encroachment upon the surrounding rural area and the struggle to keep local agriculture viable. The intent of the City to Soil program is to support the viability of farmlands through this interdependence created between the City and the farms.

Also like Boulder, the Queanbeyan climate is arid and tough on soils. Organic matter is absolutely essential in preventing soil erosion and increasing the moisture retention of the soil, which is key to conserving limited water resources. The farmers in the City to Soil program are seeing amazing results in terms of soil health – more vigorous plants, greater crop yield and lower requirements for water and fertilizer – all of which benefit the farmers’ bottom line. The City to Soil staffers have

created a clever scheme to promote the participation of City residents and keep the compost free of contamination – the two critical elements of the program’s success. City to Soil folks in silly hats cruise around neighborhoods in a decorated van, blaring a country-style song about the program to get the attention of residents. Quirky as it may be, their message is strong and very effective: the quality of the food you eat is only as good as the soils that grow it. Unique to the program is this incentive for residents to put only good quality materials in the compost bin. The attention paid to what goes in their bin translates directly into the higher quality compost that farmers can use to grow better, healthier food for the local residents to enjoy.

The farmers in Queanbeyan’s City to Soil program are seeing amazing results in terms of soil health – more vigorous plants, greater crop yield and lower requirements for water and fertilizer – all of which benefit the farmers’ bottom line.

And to sweeten the pot a bit, all collection bins in the program come with a bar code that the collection truck crew scans into a database if the bin is free of contaminants. Every two weeks, a computer then draws a random winner from the database, and the City to Soil crew shows up at the winner’s door to present a giant basket of locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

This again reinforces the connection between the resident and their organic discards, the purity of those organic discards and the quality of the compost, and the quality of the food on their table – giving participants a whole new appreciation for the resource value of their waste stream.

So don’t be surprised if one day you find your local Eco-Cycle staffer in a silly hat, knocking at your door. You’ll know we’re implementing our own City to Soil program and eager for your participation. 🌱



This Tea’s Not for Drinkin’

Our New Microbe Brew is Key to Eco-Cycle’s Plan to Improve the Health of Local Soils

by Dan Matsch

Only in Boulder would a husband strolling with his wife at the Farmers’ Market ask her if she would prefer a cup of coffee or worm tea! Eco-Cycle’s year-old compost department was at the Market every Saturday this season demonstrating our new compost tea brewer and encouraging Market visitors to try a gallon—on their gardens and lawns. It’s not meant for drinking but for nourishing and building soil.



In our trials, plants fed with worm tea were hardier, larger and more resistant to pests. You can see the difference for yourself in this photo where basil that received only water was getting thoroughly munched by grasshoppers, while basil right next to it watered with tea once per week was virtually untouched.

Brewing compost tea for Boulder is a significant step forward in Eco-Cycle’s plan to improve the health of local soils and keep valuable organic material out of the landfill. Worms turn food waste and other compostable material into worm castings, the most balanced and microbially rich compost on the planet. We make the castings even more valuable as a soil amendment by “brewing” them in highly oxygenated water with a catalyst to boost the beneficial soil microbe populations by billions before you pour the tea on your soil.

We learned a lot about compost tea ourselves as we monitored our plant trials, which showed dramatically surprising growth and pest resistance

among the plants that were fed the tea. Next year we will be adding worm castings and, hopefully, compost worms to our offerings at the Market. We will also be establishing relationships with more local growers and parks departments to further test the tea’s performance as we did this year on the famous irises at Long’s Gardens on Broadway in Boulder.

Connections to area growers and land managers are key to Eco-Cycle’s plans, not just for compost tea, but for diverting as much as half of the waste stream away from the landfill (where organic material creates greenhouse gases) and into a local compost facility. The goal is to make high quality compost that will be a resource for improving local soils. (See “Eco-Cycle Eyes Australian Composting Program for Boulder” on this page).

By the way, all you readers who enjoy attending the Farmers’ Market take note: Eco-Cycle is now collecting food waste generated at the Market, and we will be working with food vendors over the winter to replace sources of trash, such as plastic cups, with compostable alternatives to make the Market one of the first – if not the first – Zero Waste Farmers’ Market in the nation. So stop by the Eco-Cycle booth for some tea in April, when the Market opens up again, thank Market vendors for their Zero Waste efforts, and please make sure to put your compost in the compost bin! 🌱

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Microbe Brew
Beneficial Soil Microbe Tea

Water your soil with life!

100% Natural

Contains diverse beneficial micro-organisms, plant micro-nutrients and natural plant-growth compounds.

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303-444-6634 • www.ecocycle.org
Thanks for supporting your local soils and your local recycler!

Brewing compost tea for Boulder is a significant step forward in Eco-Cycle’s plan to improve the health of local soils and keep valuable organic material out of the landfill. Look for our tea next season at the Boulder Farmers’ Market.

Zero Waste Businesses

Businesses in our community are recycling an estimated 17% of the waste they create. We'll need to turn that statistic around to get to Zero Waste.

Eco-Cycle to Make Office Trash Cans Obsolete with New Zero Waste Services

by Robin Burton and Linda Smith

Imagine the day when there is no trash can in your workplace, only recycling and compost bins. This vision is one of Eco-Cycle's most ambitious goals to date, and we're a lot closer to making it a reality than you'd think. Through a revolutionary program called Zero Waste Services, Eco-Cycle has started collecting 100 percent of discards from our commercial clients, and diverting more businesses' waste than ever before. Local businesses are signing up now to replace their traditional garbage service with Zero Waste Services and seeing dramatic results for roughly the same price they were paying for garbage service alone.

Zero Waste Services build upon Eco-Cycle's already strong foundation of business recycling offerings. To reach our Zero Waste goal, we knew we had to tackle organics next. It wasn't enough to just collect paper, bottles and cans, and hard-to-recycle items such as electronics, plastic stretch wrap and outdated manuals and books.

We launched a Commercial Composting Pilot Program this spring that was so successful, it prompted us to offer composting service to all interested Boulder businesses. We now collect all biodegradable material, including food waste (think grocery store produce, lunch scraps at the office and prep waste in a restaurant kitchen), plant waste (think florist) and non-recyclable paper products such as used paper towels and waxed cardboard. By collecting compostables and traditional recyclables, we are helping businesses divert from landfills 80 percent or more of the waste they produce. But we're not stopping there.

The rest of the 20 percent that is not recyclable or compostable will require single-stream recycling. Once the Recycling Center

is equipped to handle single stream recyclables (paper and containers mixed together), your office will no longer have a waste bin. You'll have a wet/dry system composed of a compost bin (wet) and a recycling bin (dry). Eco-Cycle will then presort the non-recyclables out of the dry bin before sending it to the Recycling Center.

The key, of course, is to eliminate those last, lingering non-recyclables. That is where our education program comes in. In addition to keeping employees informed about "what goes where," we'll work with your purchasing department to find ways of avoiding those non-recyclable items in the first place. The key is identifying and purchasing recyclable or compostable alternative products, which will get your office waste as close to zero as possible.

The response to our new service offerings and the path ahead has been great, and we're not surprised because as Chuck Holcumb, general manager of Old Chicago in downtown Boulder, recently observed, "This is Boulder. Recycling and composting isn't second nature; it's first nature."

Local Businesses Moving Toward Zero Waste

Whole Foods Market recently signed up for Zero Waste Services with Eco-Cycle, and in the first few weeks of service has seen their percentage of wasted resources decrease dramatically – and for the same cost as traditional trash and recycling services alone!

Check out the green Eco-Cycle compost compactor behind Whole Foods. It's taken the place of the garbage dumpster, and Eco-Cycle has already hauled over 50,000 pounds of compostable material from Whole Foods to a compost facility, all of which was previously being sent to the landfill.

Camp Bow Wow, a dog day care and kennel that opened in Boulder in August, is also going beyond recycling with Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Services. Eco-Cycle collects mixed paper and commingled containers for recycling, and subcontracts collection of trash, so Camp Bow Wow enjoys the convenience of one invoice for collection of 100 percent of its discards. The total volume of recyclables is two and a half times that of their trash, for a total diversion rate of 60 percent by volume.

Jimmy John's, a sub and pizza shop on The Hill in Boulder, is moving toward Zero Waste in some innovative ways as well. In addition to being certified with the City and County of Boulder's Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE) program and considering participation in Eco-Cycle's composting program, Jimmy John's employees get their exercise on the road to Zero Waste by delivering their grub by bicycle. Way to go, Zero Waste businesses!

To learn more about Zero Waste Services or to sign up, visit us on the web at www.ecocycle.org, call Eco-Cycle at 303-444-6634 or e-mail us at businessrecycling@ecocycle.org.

Through a revolutionary program called Zero Waste Services, Eco-Cycle has started collecting 100% of discards from our commercial clients and diverting more waste from businesses than ever before.



Whole Foods' workers like Chris Wallenmeyer are now depositing biodegradable materials into a large compost bin outside of the store, which has taken the place of the garbage dumpster. Eco-Cycle has already hauled over 50,000 pounds of food scraps, plant materials and waxed cardboard boxes to a compost facility, all of which was previously being sent to the landfill.

Eco-Cycle International

Our newest department is making progress in providing local and global thought leadership for a Zero Waste future.

Reaching the International Community with New Coalitions and Services

by Eric Lombardi

Eco-Cycle's newest department, Eco-Cycle International (Eco-I) is headed in the very new and exciting direction of "going global." The world outside the U.S. is waking up to the fact that the bury/burn approach (i.e. landfills and incinerators) to handling society's waste is expensive, polluting, dangerous to our health and just plain illogical in a world of increasing population and decreasing natural resources. As the world wakes up, people are finding Eco-Cycle via the Internet or through word-of-mouth. It appears that our 28 years of community-based experience in making a big impact with very few dollars is of great interest across the globe.

- Just in the past few months, Eco-I has been making some significant progress:
- We became a founding member of the Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA), a new global organization based in England with a mission of clarifying and promoting the evolving definition of Zero Waste and becoming the centralized authority for credible information about the global Zero Waste Movement. The ZWIA founders represent eight different nations, including France, Wales, England, New Zealand, Australia, Philippines, India, and the U.S.
- Eric Lombardi was invited to France this spring as one of the leading global Zero Waste activists to speak with top national and Parisian officials. The group advised more than 300 mayors on Zero Waste policies and practices as alternatives to landfills, which are being phased out under European Union law. Since the meetings, Paris has laid plans for an international Zero Waste conference and one of the provinces was inspired to stop an impending incineration project.

- Marti Matsch released a six-minute video about Zero Waste that was broadcast to 17 million homes via satellite on Free Speech TV.
- Eric Lombardi has been asked to keynote a conference and meet with officials in Alaska in February 2005.
- Eco-Cycle has been asked to help on Zero Waste efforts in Afghanistan, Rwanda, Ghana, and India.

The Eco-Cycle staff has many years of experience and acquired wisdom, and we see an opportunity for creating a new revenue source for the organization through consulting. But also of great importance and value is the opportunity for us to go outside our beautiful Boulder County and learn from others how they are proceeding upon the path to Zero Waste. We will bring those lessons home and keep Boulder County moving forward as a model Zero Waste community for the U.S.



ZWIA founding members gather in France for their first conference. Executive Director Eric Lombardi (third from right, first row) joined Zero Waste experts from eight nations to form ZWIA, a global organization with the mission of promoting Zero Waste.

CHaRM: Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials

CHaRM continues to add new materials for recycling and is pursuing an important link to Zero Waste: holding manufacturers and retailers responsible for the products they create.

Successful Styrofoam Recycling Pilot Leads to Regular Collection Events

by Linda Smith

Polystyrene, Styrofoam, no matter what you call it, that big white blocky packaging stuff is something none of us likes to throw away. It takes up a lot of space in the trash can, and it just seems wrong to put it in a landfill. So Eco-Cycle has been experimenting with recycling #6, white block Styrofoam (the material typically used to pack and ship electronics), and the results have been outstanding. With the financial support of the City of Boulder, McStain Neighborhoods and Lexmark, Eco-Cycle held for the second time a one-day collection in Louisville and a one-week collection in Boulder in August. The community showed up in droves to recycle three 53-foot trailers full of Styrofoam—the equivalent of filling a 1,300 square-foot home from floor to ceiling.

Twice now, the special collection events have been well-attended, and the materials you brought us met the required recycling guidelines. This gives us the confidence that we can offer these collection events on a more regular and permanent basis. So Eco-Cycle has decided to adopt these collection events as semi-annual events. Our first round of collections in 2005 will be held in January. Look for us in Longmont on January 15th, in Louisville on January 22nd, and in Boulder during

the week of January 17-22. The second round is scheduled for August. If you'd like to receive an email announcement for these events, call us at 303-444-6634 or send an email to recycle@ecocycle.org. We promise not to spam you or share your information with anyone else.

If these twice-yearly collections continue being successful we'll consider adding this material to those we collect on a daily basis at the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) and at the special CHaRM collection days we hold in cities throughout the county. ♻️



At the last Eco-Cycle Styrofoam collection, we received enough of the big blocky white stuff to fill a 1,300 square-foot home from floor to ceiling.

Get in the Loop on New CHaRM Materials and Special Collections Sign Up for Email Alert Service

The Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder CHaRM adds a new material every year to the list of unusual items we'll accept for reuse or recycling. We also offer special collection events like our semi-annual Styrofoam collections. The best way to be in the loop and find out when we've added a new material or to get the dates of our special collections is to sign up for our email alert service. Once or twice per year (that's it!) we'll send you a brief email. We're not spammers and we don't share the information with anyone, so your address is kept absolutely private. To sign up, write to recycle@ecocycle.org or call us at 303-444-6634.

Heads Up, Corporate Sponsors!



Eco-Cycle's Green Tie Gala will be held on May 13, 2005, at the University of Colorado in Boulder. This annual fundraising event will feature a silent and live auction of environmentally-friendly products, luscious desserts, an open bar and a Green Tie Contest for the most original tie created from recycled materials. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities or to contribute an auction item, please contact Eric Hozempa at eric.hozempa@ecocycle.org or at 303-444-6634.

CHaRM Goes for Producer Responsibility

Manufacturers and Retailers Are the Missing Link in Recycling

by Dan Matsch

Three years ago when we started accepting electronic materials at the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM), we did so because we couldn't stand to see them going into landfills where the toxins they contain would likely leak into groundwater. It's costly to handle electronic materials in the most environmentally and socially responsible way possible, and currently those costs are paid for with Eco-Cycle's non-profit funds, with trash tax funds from the City of Boulder, and by dedicated recyclers like you. Who's missing in footing the bill? According to visitors surveyed at the CHaRM, it's time for manufacturers and retailers to ante up. They want to see retailers and manufacturers start to pay some attention to the disposal problem all their products eventually become. That has always been part of the CHaRM's master plan, so we've created an ambitious new program to get manufacturers and retailers to support recycling. Wouldn't it be great if the next time you went to purchase an electronic item, the store rewarded you for recycling your old electronic equipment? That's the idea, but we'll need your voice to make it a reality.

Extended Producer Responsibility Promotes Profound Change

A key ingredient in a Zero Waste system is Extended Producer Responsibility, or EPR. The premise of EPR is that if manufacturers are required to be responsible for the recycling of the products they produce, a profound change will come about. Suddenly, product designers will have a motivation to make their product less expensive to recycle than the competition's model, just as they work to make their product less expensive to purchase.

Producer Responsibility



Wouldn't it be great if the next time you went to purchase an electronic item, the store rewarded you for recycling your old electronic equipment? That's the plan for a new Extended Producer Responsibility program at the CHaRM.

EPR is a valid concept for the manufacture of any kind of product, but it is especially pertinent for the electronics industry, in which a complex and difficult to recycle piece of equipment like a computer currently becomes outdated within about three years of purchase. With EPR, we would quickly find that our computers contained fewer hazardous materials like lead and brominated flame retardants, we would likely be able to upgrade them rather than throw them away when new technology comes along, and when their useful life was finally over, they would be easier for a recycler to dismantle.

The EPR movement is gaining momentum in other parts of the world, primarily by government mandate, but here in the U.S., manufacturers and their retail partners haven't been sufficiently motivated. Eco-Cycle recently received two small grants to see if we could once again make Boulder County a model for the rest of the country by finding a few willing retailers to partner with us in a simple, local form of EPR.

Grassroots Efforts Will Get Us There

Here's what we envision: you bring a worn-out electronic component to CHaRM and pay for its recycling, and we hand you a receipt that lists CHaRM's retail partners, which you then present to the participating retailer as a coupon toward the purchase of any new electronic item that entitles you to, say, 10 percent off the price.

It's a simple idea that you would think would be attractive to a store manager eager to increase foot traffic, but it's actually a pretty daunting sell. Typically, corporate headquarters orchestrate even the smallest management details of a store from somewhere far away where nobody has heard of Eco-Cycle, so they aren't easily convinced that it's worth changing their policy in one store way over in Boulder County.

But you can help convince them, because this challenge will be won with grassroots efforts by the consumers. So here's what we need you to do – tell the manager at your favorite store that you support the CHaRM and you would like to see them participate in the program as well. Tell them to give us a call and we'll take it from there. ♻️

Zero Waste Communities

Boulder and Broomfield County Communities are making strides toward a Zero Waste future.

Eco-Cycle Celebrates its 20th Anniversary in Longmont

by Erin O'Leary and Marti Matsch

1984: Early Pioneers Bring Recycling to Longmont

It was 1984. Reagan beat Mondale in the presidential elections, the “Where’s the beef?” commercial was all the talk ‘round the office water cooler, and philosophers were wondering if Orwell’s predictions would come true. But in a then-little town called Longmont, an inspired group of people were focusing on something else—

making history by being one of the first communities in the nation to implement citywide curbside recycling services. Eco-Cycle Board Members Neal Renfroe and Mary Wolff, Longmont City Councilmen John Caldwell, Dan Benavidez and Tom McCoy, Eco-Cycle staffers Kat Bennett and Pete Grogan, and volunteers like Mary Sucke and countless others were the original pioneers responsible for bringing recycling to Longmont.

With the City’s support, Eco-Cycle Longmont opened its doors in the spring. That first Saturday in May, four school buses took to the streets collect-



Founders of the new Longmont Eco-Cycle program were on hand back in 1984 for the Grand Opening of the new Drop-off Center.

ing recyclables such as newspaper, cardboard and aluminum cans. A Block Leader Network was established to alert neighborhoods that “Saturday is Eco-Cycle pick-up day” and volunteers staffed the school buses. Kat Bennett, Program Manager, was thrilled with the early success—30 percent of the households were participating in this crazy new thing called “recycling,” and the community loved being part of this new program.

1991: Grassroots Support Thwarts Trash Company’s Overthrow Attempt

The buses were rolling, the materials were coming in, but then at the age of seven, Eco-Cycle Longmont nearly shut down. In 1991, the City Council started to consider a different recycling and trash service that would put Eco-Cycle and this grassroots effort out of business. Western Waste Industries and XTRA Corp. entered into the picture, offering to build what we in the business call a “dirty Material Recovery Facility.”

“You don’t have to sort recyclables,” was their lure. “You can throw your trash and recyclables together and we can pull out 80 percent of it for recycling.” It was a false promise many trash handlers were making at the time to try to put recyclers out of business. But Western Waste underestimated their opponent—or opponents. Hundreds of volunteer Block Leaders and committed recyclers packed City Hall and convinced Council to stick with their local recycler. It was a significant victory that not only kept this kind of illegitimate technology out of Longmont, but helped to kill it nationwide.

1992: Longmont Creates Unique Public-Private Partnership with Eco-Cycle

A year later, the number of households recycling had increased, overfilling the eight school buses in operation. The buses were wearing down and had to be retired. To meet the growing recycling needs of the community, the City of Longmont and Eco-Cycle entered into what has become an enduring and incredibly successful model of public-private partnership. The City purchased recycling bins for each household as well as new trucks to provide weekly curbside pickup. Eco-Cycle continued to handle the processing, marketing, commercial collections and education. Longmont is the only city in Boulder County to keep public control over their entire waste system by doing their own collections. As a result,

Longmont residents have enjoyed one of the most comprehensive and inexpensive programs available in Boulder County, one that has earned the City national recognition in waste industry publications.

1995-2004: Longmont Becomes a Model for Volume-Based, Zero Waste Programs

On our eleventh birthday, Longmont took a progressive step toward resource recovery that put them in the spotlight once again. To reduce waste and boost recycling, Longmont adopted a volume-based, pay-as-you-throw “Volume Buster” trash program in May 1995. Former Longmont Mayor Leona Stoecker recalls that the decision was a political risk:

“We received a lot of negative citizen input, but once the measure was introduced, residents were pleased with the increased services and that there were fewer trash trucks on the streets,” Stoecker said. “Looking back, it was one of the greatest things to happen in Longmont.”

Clearly the decision was good for recycling and for residents—household recycling participation rates skyrocketed to 90 percent!

In 1996, Longmont became a pacesetter once again. The first Zero Waste event in the County was organized for Longmont’s Rhythm on the River Festival. “This event qualifies as an important moment in the history of recycling in Boulder County,” said Eco-Cycle Executive Director Eric Lombardi. “Since the Longmont event opened the door, other groups around the nation and the world are holding hundreds of Zero Waste gatherings each year.”

At the age of 20, Eco-Cycle Longmont has matured and grown into one of the best recyclers in the country. The 36 tons of recycling collected in the first month of operation have expanded to 640 tons per month. The successes can only keep coming with the December Grand Opening of the new Eco-Cycle/City of Longmont Drop-off Center, located just up the road from our humble beginnings. Congratulations Longmont, for taking risks, making a difference, and serving as a model for other communities. Happy Birthday! 🎉



Twenty years later, the new Drop-off Center just up the road at 140 Martin St. is open for business.

New Contract Results in Additional Services for Longmont

It’s all for you! We’re making some upgrades and changes for the Longmont community. In addition to all the services you’ve received in the past, our new contract and location will bring you these great additional services:

- A new Drop-Off Center at 140 Martin St., open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Four hard-to-recycle materials collection events each year where we’ll take your electronics, books, athletic shoes, plastic bags, and textiles
- An annual newsletter dedicated to what’s happening with recycling in Longmont
- Monthly educational presentations and workshops on subjects like Recycling 101, non-toxic household cleaners, how we get to Zero Waste, and more

Toward Zero Waste in Boulder

The Boulder City Council is aggressively working to divert more waste from the landfill, and has asked City staff to work with Eco-Cycle and other local stakeholders to develop a plan for getting Boulder on the path of Zero Waste. The request came at a May 25th Study Session where attendees discussed the use of private and public lands along 63rd Street between Arapahoe and Valmont (near the recycling plant) as a focal point for new recycling facilities and projects.

Eco-Cycle Executive Director Eric Lombardi spoke at the meeting and asserted that a combination of new technologies and new government regulations could result in a dramatic increase in the resource recovery activities in Boulder. The three areas that need the greatest attention at this time are business recycling, composting and construction/demolition recycling.

The Zero Waste plan for Boulder is scheduled to be presented to Council early next year.

Broomfield Taking Action to Increase Recycling

The Broomfield City Council is getting serious about recycling collection and trash reduction. On their agenda: taking steps that have the potential to bring not only substantial quality of life benefits to Broomfield residents such as reduced truck traffic, lower city costs for road maintenance, more curbside service at a lower cost and increased recycling, but also making Broomfield a model for other Colorado cities seeking to be more environmentally responsible and sustainable.

A task force appointed by the City and County of Broomfield has been researching various ways to increase recycling in its community. The task force is considering a citywide curbside recycling program accompanied by a trash fee structure known as “Pay As You Throw,” and will deliver a recommendation to Council when it settles on the proposal it believes best serves the community.

Under a “Pay As You Throw” fee structure, every bag or can of trash costs incrementally more while recycling is unlimited at no extra cost. This gives residents the financial incentive to shop smart, throw away less and recycle more – just what Colorado needs.

Louisville and Lafayette Events Go Zero Waste

For the first time ever, uneaten bites of peach cobbler from Lafayette’s Peach Fest and leftover hot dogs from Louisville’s Fourth of July celebration were hauled away to a composting site rather than a landfill, where they were turned into soil amendment. These two cities have teamed up with Eco-Cycle to decrease the amount of waste produced at their community celebrations and educate the public about a Zero Waste world.

Lafayette was successful in composting and recycling nearly half of their event’s discards by weight, and Louisville composted and recycled 86 percent by volume of their waste.

Congratulations Lafayette and Louisville, and thanks to all their resource conservation advisory board members and volunteers who made it happen! 🌱

Zero Waste Around the World

by Kate Mangione

Nelson, British Columbia: Full Speed Ahead to Zero Waste

For a city with no curbside collection of recyclables, the transition to Zero Waste may appear a daunting task. But when landfill rates surged from \$65 to \$100 per metric ton, the City of Nelson, British Columbia, stepped up to the challenge and adopted a Zero Waste Action Plan. Known for arts and recreation, this city of under 10,000 residents thrives upon tourism. Their embrace of Zero Waste offers Nelson an opportunity to become a focus for eco-tourism, a plus for the local economy and the environment. According to Donna Macdonald, Chair of the Nelson Waste Management Task Force, "This is a significant step forward for Nelson to view our wastes as resources. Our Council supports Zero Waste as a goal because it will be good for our local economy as well as good for the environment." Sounds like a viable strategy for some Colorado towns...

Maine and California: EPR from Sea to Shining Sea

From coast to coast, Extended Producer Responsibility for electronic waste is taking the country by storm and Eco-Cycle would like to see these policies continue to march inland. On the East Coast, Maine will require computer monitor manufacturers to fund the free-of-charge collection and recycling of their products as of 2006. A time-of-purchase fee ranging from \$6 to \$45 will fund the collection and recycling of televisions until 2012 when their manufacturers will assume full responsibility. On the West Coast, California became the first state to mandate a free-of-charge reuse and recycling program for cell phones. Retailers must have a system in place by 2006 for the acceptance and collection of cell phones for reuse, recycling, and proper disposal. According to the legislation, "It is the intent of the Legislature that the cost associated with the handling, recycling, and disposal of used cell phones

be the responsibility of the producers and consumers of cell phones, and not local government or their service providers, state government, or taxpayers."

Taiwan: Save Those Food Scraps

Your mother always said that wasting food should be a crime. Beginning in 2006 it will be in Taiwan when mandatory food recycling is enacted. Households and restaurants will no longer scrape valuable food leftovers into the trash. These organic resources will be used, among other ways, in livestock feed and the production of compost. Recovering these otherwise discarded resources means a real economic boost. According to Lin Tzo-hsiang, Chief Inspectorate for the Taiwan Environmental Protection Agency, "We estimate that the economic benefits resulting from the program will amount to about NT\$2.4 billion [US\$71 million] annually." How much money is on your plate?

European Union: Recharging the Responsibility for Used Batteries

While they might claim to keep going and going, all batteries eventually die, leaving us to deal with the disposal of billions of small concentrations of cadmium, lead, and mercury. Europe addressed this problem in 1991 by reducing the legal levels of these toxic metals; similar 1998 legislation slashed acceptable mercury levels by a factor of 100. While these policies succeeded in cutting toxicity levels, their voluntary approach to battery recycling failed, and the landfilling of batteries continued largely unabated. Under the new 2003 directive, battery producers will finance the treatment, recycling, and sound disposal of all spent batteries. Member states must establish free-of-charge collection schemes within one year and recycle 55 percent of the batteries' contents within three years. In contrast, here in the U.S. the voluntary EPR network, the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation, has largely floundered since its inception ten years ago. Initially setting a 70 percent recycling rate for Ni-Cd batteries by 2001, the program gradually phased out a recycling goal as observed collection rates around 25 percent fell far short of expectations.

Zero Waste Action Conference

Continued from page 1

advising all young girls to limit their consumption of fat because fat is where serious and persistent toxic chemicals are being stored in our bodies and in animals' bodies. Connett pointed out that rather than offering this kind of advice, governments should act preemptively to help people avoid exposure to toxins that have serious health effects by holding industry to clean production practices and other tenets of Zero Waste.

Many activists and government officials around the world are considering Zero Waste as a way to boost their local economies. For example, the First National South African Solid Waste Management Plan of South Africa referred to Zero Waste as a "poverty abatement strategy."

According to Resa Domino, GRRN President, "Zero Waste policies, such as

Extended Producer Responsibility and Maximum Recovery could create a huge number of sustainable jobs." In support of this statement, Brenda Platt of the Institute for Local Self Reliance shared statistics to demonstrate that reuse and recycling can create tens and even hundreds of times the number of jobs created by landfilling and incinerating.

To build upon the momentum established at the Conference, the 200 representatives strategized Zero Waste campaigns, including a ban on toxic plastics such as PVC, "End Landfilling" and "End Incineration" campaigns, and a "Zero Waste Communities Network" campaign. GRRN will keep the network active and connected and plans to hold a second conference in the summer of 2005. To learn more about these campaigns or the upcoming conference, visit www.grrn.org.

CU Recycling Update

This photo depicts the potential amount of recyclable materials generated by an average CU student in two semesters.

Every day, the average American generates 4.4 pounds of solid waste. Of that solid waste, 2.4 pounds per person per day—or 55 percent—can be recycled! The average recycling rate is 1.3 pounds per person per day. CU-Boulder recycles one-third of its waste and saves \$235,000 annually through everyone's recycling efforts. It really does add up! We need to CU recycling!

Source: Characterization of Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 2001 Update, US Environmental Protection Agency



Eco-Cycle Wishes to Gratefully Thank:

- The City of Boulder for generous support of the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM).
- The Friendship Fund and the Bradley Family, as well as the Governor's Office of Energy Management and Conservation, for supporting Eco-Cycle's Extended Producer Responsibility project.
- McStain Neighborhoods for sponsoring one-day block Styrofoam collections in Louisville in January and August 2004.
- Lexmark for sponsoring a week-long block Styrofoam collection at the CHaRM in August 2004.
- Liquor Mart, Spice of Life Catering, the Flagstaff House, Mateo, the Boulder Cork, the Boulder Co-op, Boulder Blooms, and Third Street Chai for in-kind support of Eco-Cycle's Earth Day 2004 event.
- Environmental Design Associates, Inc. for their financial support of Eco-Cycle.

- Weyerhaeuser for supporting Eco-Cycle's ReGenerations event.
- The Community Foundation Serving Boulder County for its continued support of Eco-Cycle.
- The Weaver Family Foundation for its support of our Green Star Schools program.
- George Blevins for sharing his artistic talent.
- The following Eco-Cycle members for their recent financial contributions to Eco-Cycle:
- Founders' Society**
 - Mary & Ed Wolff
 - Lester Karplus
 - Alan Shapley
 - Dale & Katy Hess
 - Josie & Rollie Heath
- Director's Circle**
 - Joe & Pam McDonald

- Patron Level**
 - Chet Tchozewski & Susan Carabello
 - Nikki Kayser
- Contributor**
 - Christine Arden & David L. Newman
 - Cynda & Marcel Arsenault
 - Lisa Bailey & Bill Byrnes
 - Joan & Allan Graham
 - Jan Hartlove
 - Ellen Klaver
 - John & Jann Kloor
 - Leonard & Daphne Lewin
 - Danny & Samantha McBride
 - Frank Orsino
 - Bill & Susan Pedrick
 - Lucille Piety
 - Janet Roberts & Evan Freirich
 - Jennifer Rosenbaum
 - Mary Siems
 - Barbara & John Taylor
 - Dianne V. Thiel
 - Peggy Wrenn



Why do I support Eco-Cycle? Long-term Eco-Cycle Board Member and volunteer Mary Wolff.

"I have been deeply involved and committed to Eco-Cycle for over twenty years because of the deep personal satisfaction I've experienced in watching and participating in Eco-Cycle's ever-expanding success in moving toward its goals. Now Eco-Cycle is leading us locally, nationally and internationally toward the goal of Zero-Waste. What could be more exciting?"

Join Eco-Cycle in making our community a model for Zero Waste!

Yes! I want to support Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Future Fund.

NEW way to contribute – secure, paperless, and easy. Donate your support online at www.ecocycle.org.

Enclosed is my ☐ \$20 ☐ \$500
membership gift of: ☐ \$40 ☐ \$1,000 (Founders' Society) – Find our more about the Founders' Society at www.ecocycle.org/support/foundersociety

☐ \$75
☐ \$120
☐ \$240
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All memberships include a subscription to the Eco-Cycle Times

Payment Method: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Amex
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☐ Please accept my donation in honor/memory of _____

Please send me additional information about:

- ☐ Including Eco-Cycle in my will. Please call/email me
- ☐ Giving a gift of appreciated stock to Eco-Cycle
- ☐ Becoming an Eco-Cycle volunteer at a Drop-off Center or as a Eco-Leader for my neighborhood
- ☐ Eco-Cycle's Business Recycling Program

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Email _____

Thank you for your support. Eco-Cycle aims to be as responsible when it comes to your privacy rights as we are when it comes to the environment. To this end, Eco-Cycle will not trade, rent, or sell member names, phone numbers, addresses, or emails to any individual or organization.

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Community Based Recycling
P.O. Box 19006 (5030 Pearl Street)
Boulder, CO 80308

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Local and Global Updates: How Are We Doing on the Path to Zero Waste?

eco•cycle TIMES

FALL 2004 – SPRING 2005

COMMUNITY-BASED RECYCLING SINCE 1976

CHARM Adds Another New Material for Recycling: Textiles!



But keep your pants on, we don't want ALL your clothes, just your rattiest rags.

INSIDE

See Center Pull-Out for RECYCLING GUIDELINES