



Curbside Compost:
It's not just for food
and yard scraps!



Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste
Business & Community
Award Winners



CHaRM: Now
accepting bikes
and bike parts!

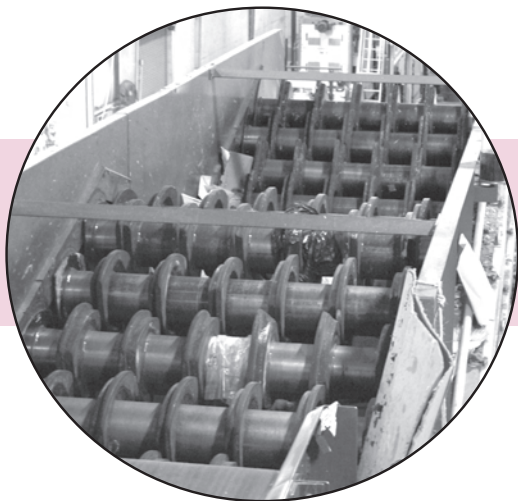
eco-cycle

Working to Build Zero Waste Communities

Volume 33, No. 1 | Spring / Summer 2009

times

**THIS IS OUR SORTING
EQUIPMENT...**



**...THIS IS OUR
SORTING EQUIPMENT
ON PLASTIC BAGS.**

HELP!



Please keep
plastic bags out
of your curbside
or business
recycling bin!

They end up at the recycling facility,
choking our equipment, costing
the program thousands of dollars in
inefficiencies and adding to the items we
have to pull out and send to the landfill.

See story page 1.

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Our Mission
Eco-Cycle's mission is to identify, explore and demonstrate the emerging frontiers of sustainable resource management through the concepts and practices of Zero Waste. We believe in individual and community action to transform society's throw-away ethic into environmentally-responsible stewardship.

eco-cycle times

Working to Build Zero Waste Communities

Curbside Recycling's #1 Worst Contaminant: PLASTIC BAGS

by **Marti Matsch**


Boulder and Broomfield County recyclers, we need your help! Please spread the word that plastic bags—either loose or with recyclables inside—are the WORST contaminant in the curbside recycling bin. They get wrapped around our sorting equipment, binding the axles and choking the screens that help us separate paper items from containers.

Eco-Cycle workers have to shut down the conveyor belts so they can cut the bags off the equipment. These inefficiencies cost the program big bucks, the bags cause wear and tear on the expensive equipment and since plastic bags in curbside recycling bins get wet and dirty from the other materials, they cannot be recycled. Instead they head to the landfill, adding to the cost of the program.

This also refers to recyclables placed in plastic bags. Recyclables should be loose in your bin, never bagged. Workers have to slow the conveyor belts to rip open bags that contain recyclables and then add the bag to the heap of bags bound for the landfill.

Want to help? (Please!) See right.


5 THINGS YOU CAN DO to help keep contaminants out and make recycling a success

1


View a one-minute video demonstrating what happens when bags go in your curbside bin or when recyclables are bagged and share the video with a friend at ecocycle.org.

2


Download a printable version of the full Dirty Dozen at ecocycle.org and post it at a recycling bin near you—at work, home, your place of worship, etc.—to help us keep these contaminants out. These materials are also available in Spanish.

3

Learn where you CAN recycle plastic bags: Plastic bags with a #2 or #4 CAN BE recycled at the CHaRM if they are clean, dry and empty (see page D). They may also be recycled at participating grocery stores. Find locations at ecocycle.org/htrg or call 303-444-6634.

4

Become a fan of Eco-Cycle on Facebook and post this information on your wall. (MySpace page coming soon!)

5

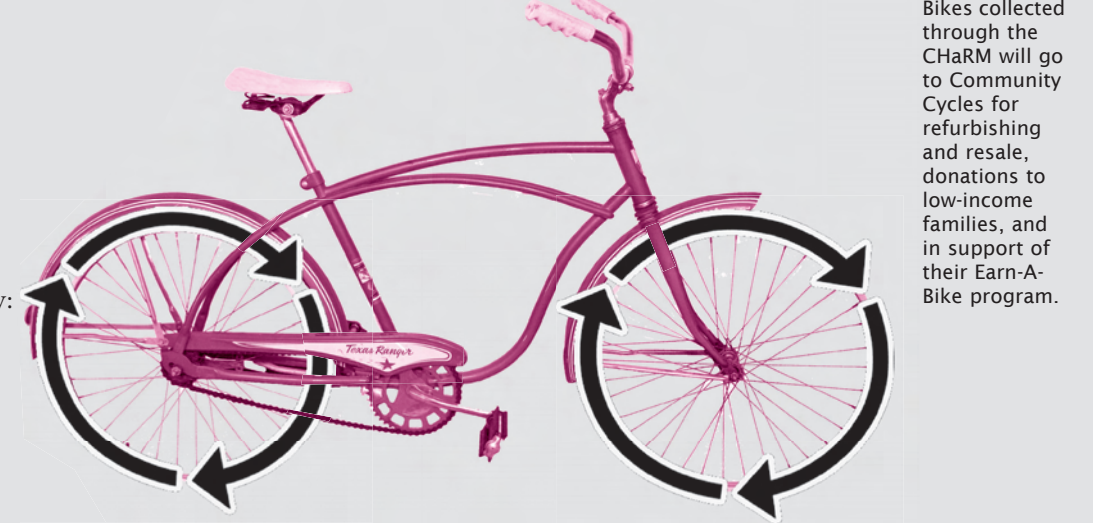
and of course... Just say NO to plastic bags. Purchase a reusable shopping bag on our eStore at ecocycle.org/estore and BYOB all over town.

CHaRM Now Accepting Bicycles and Bike Parts

by **Dan Matsch**

Do you have an old bike gathering dust in your garage? Perhaps it's stuck in limbo between "worthy of your time to fix it up" and "scrap metal." In celebration of Earth Day, the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) is very pleased to announce yet another new material accepted for recycling at our facility: bicycles and bike parts. Thanks to our new partnership with Community Cycles, you now have a convenient location to donate your old bikes and parts to those in need of basic, earth-friendly transportation in our community.

Boulder-based Community Cycles, founded in 2006 by bicycle enthusiasts, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate and advocate for the safe use of bicycles as an affordable, viable and sustainable means of transportation and personal enjoyment in our community. They provide refurbished bikes and a welcoming space to learn about bicycle repair, maintenance and operation through a variety of programs. Best known is their "Earn-a-Bike" program where by volunteering 15 hours of service, anyone can put together their very own bike. The organization also offers regular bike maintenance classes, grants members access to their shop, tools, parts and expertise, and works with many other



organizations to further bicycle advocacy. Learn more at www.communitycycles.org.

Beginning Earth Day, April 22, 2009, the CHaRM will accept bicycles and bicycle parts in any condition. Bike parts are defined as any part that is integral to the bike such as seats, pedals, handlebars and wheels. We will also accept metal cargo racks and metal baskets. We will not accept other bike accessories or sporting goods as part of this program. If you have worn-out bike tires and/or bike tubes, the CHaRM accepts those separately, and there is a charge of 50 cents for each tire.

Community Cycles will sort through all bikes and parts collected at the CHaRM. Most of the bikes and parts they can use will support the Earn-A-Bike program. Some bikes will be introduced into bike fleets around town, while others will be donated to low-income families. Community Cycles occasionally sends bikes abroad to countries like Ghana and Namibia. Other bikes are refurbished, set up commuter-style with accessories like cargo racks and bells, and sold at fair market value. Refurbished bike sales make up 65% of Community Cycles' annual income. Items they cannot use will be recycled as scrap metal.

Pull-Out Recycling Guide

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Preparing Recyclables C

CHaRM Recycling Guidelines D

Hard-to-Recycle Materials D



Eric Lombardi
Executive Director

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Defining the Zero Waste Community

The idea of Zero Waste has spread across the planet and grown to the point where people in power are wanting to implement Zero Waste strategies and are starting to ask what a Zero Waste Community really is. Does it literally mean no waste whatsoever? Is that even possible? This issue has been discussed since the conception of Zero Waste in the 1990s and a consensus among the early pioneers was reached: A Zero Waste Community (or business) aims to recover at least 90% of its resources through waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting and redesigning the products and packaging of our lives to be less toxic and easily recycled. Most importantly, Zero Waste is a journey more than a destination, and a Zero Waste Community is constantly striving to reduce environmental impacts and waste.

Once a community commits to Zero Waste, a second critical question arises: What do you do with the waste, the “residuals” as we like to call them, until and after you reach 90% recovery? I say this issue is critical because getting it wrong could be the defeat of Zero Waste. And getting it right creates a bridge to a truly Zero Waste future.

Zero Waste Means Zero Burn

First, it's essential to declare, for Boulder County and every other community working toward Zero Waste, what a Zero Waste Community truly IS and what it is not. Zero Waste does NOT include incineration—for both environmental

and economic reasons. Some communities are trying to redefine Zero Waste to say it's OK to recover only 70% of our discards and “make energy” with the remaining 30% residuals through so-called “waste-to-energy facilities.”

This 70/30 vision of the future must be resisted for several reasons, most importantly because burning society's discards creates only a fraction of the energy saved by recycling and requires us to destroy more natural resources in the manufacturing of new goods. In addition, modern incinerators release toxic substances of varying degrees into the air, many of them serious cancer-causing agents. These facilities cost hundreds of millions of dollars to build and millions more to operate, but worst of all, they require a huge amount of waste to burn on a consistent basis for 20+ years to pay the bank back. Thus, there is incentive to keep waste levels up, making the Zero Waste System a threat to the financial sustainability of the incineration path, and vice versa.

The Bridge Strategy

The time has come for us to clearly define the correct approach for dealing with the residuals. As we work toward Zero with 50%, 30% and finally less than 10% residuals, we need a bridge to get us to our goal. Eco-Cycle proposes a bridge strategy that involves sending the residuals to a “new” kind of landfill system that:

- Stabilizes the biodegradable materials (food scraps, paper, etc.) in the residuals to eliminate the potent methane and toxic leachate emitted from landfills today. This requires maximum source separation and then pre-treatment to ensure the landfilled materials are inert. It is the law in Germany (since 2005), and it is the correct path for America now.

- Creates an enforceable “rates and dates” schedule over ten years that reduces the amount of mixed waste coming to the landfill down to no more than 10% of the total waste stream.

- Holds manufacturers responsible for the products that end up in the 10% residuals, requiring them to either take those materials back or redesign them to be reused, recycled or composted.

Bridging the Gap Among Zero Waste Leaders

If well-meaning people insist that absolute zero is the only true definition of a Zero Waste Community, it gives our opponents an easy way to shut down our efforts. Case in point: officials in the capital city of Canberra, Australia announced that they had failed and abandoned their goal of reaching “no waste” by 2010. Failed? Canberra reached a 75% recovery rate, one of the highest in the world for a major city! This is a victory to be celebrated and built upon, but because of the earlier over-reach of making the goal literally “zero” waste, the powers-that-be

continued on page 7

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Eco-Cycle, Inc.
P.O. Box 19006 • Boulder, CO 80308
Phone: 303-444-6634
Fax: 303-444-6647

Eco-Cycle Broomfield
225 Commerce St.
Broomfield, CO 80020
Phone: 303-404-2839
Fax: 303-404-2583

Eco-Cycle Longmont
140 Martin St.
Longmont, CO 80501
Phone: 303-772-7300
Fax: 303-772-1688
www.ecocycle.org
e-mail: recycle@ecocycle.org

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Managing Editors
Iris Sela, Marti Matsch

Associate Editor
Kate Bailey

Contributing Editors
Anne Mudgett, Eric Lombardi

Contributing Writers
Kate Bailey, Eric Lombardi, Erin Makowsky, Marti Matsch, Kary Schumpert, Iris Sela

Layout and Design
Iris Sela

Eco-Cycle Board of Directors
Allyn Feinberg, *President* • Dan Benavidez, *Vice President* • David Miller, *Treasurer* • Caron Ellis, *Secretary* • Steve Bushong • Steve Kaverman • Tom McCoy • Matt Moseley • Pat Shanks • John Tayer

PARTY WITH THE PLANET!

Zero Waste B-earthday Parties

Eco-Cycle B-earthday parties combine fun activities with green values. Suitable for ages 4 and up. Choose one of these exciting themes:

- 🌱 **Eco-Art:** Recreate, Reinvent, Recycle
- 🐛 **Green Thumbs Garden Party:** Buds, Bugs, Bees & More!
- 📄 **Creative Papermaking:** Make Paper with Pizzazz
- 🌍 **Green Teams:** Ultimate Planet Challenge
- 🐼 **Jungle Jam:** Frogs, Toucans & Monkeys, Oh my!

All parties include 1.5 hours of games and activities tailored to each age group. We bring all materials needed, including our special compostable PARTY WITH THE PLANET plates, cups, napkins and utensils. You provide the food, location and kids who are ready to have fun.

Proceeds benefit Eco-Cycle's School Recycling and Environmental Education Programs (a portion of the cost is tax deductible).



Now taking reservations!
www.ecocycle.org/kids/parties
303-444-6634, ext. 103
schools2@ecocycle.org

Eco-Cycle's 2009

Zero Waste Business & Community Awards Finalists and Winners

On Earth Day, April 22, our community's best Zero Wasters got together to recognize those who are setting examples both locally and globally with their efforts.

And the Zero Waste Award finalists and winners are...

BUSINESSES: This year, YOU voted for our Zero Waste business winners. Eco-Cycle staff chose the finalists in three categories from all the businesses that partnered with Eco-Cycle in 2008. Winners were not known when we went to print. Visit www.ecocycle.org to find out who won and to view videos of what each business is doing for the environment. The finalists are:

LARGE CORPORATION

Pearl Izumi
REI

RESTAURANT OR HIGH ORGANIC PROCESSOR

Boulder Blooms
V.G. Burgers

OFFICE-BASED BUSINESS

Boulder Valley Credit Union
Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce

GREEN STAR SCHOOLS: This year, we recognized three of our newest Green Star Schools:

Summit Middle School
Community Montessori
Louisville Elementary School

ZERO WASTE COMMUNITY EVENT:

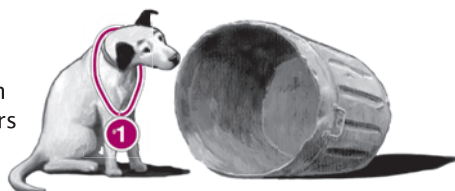
Asian Festival, Boulder for its great crew, enthusiasm and close adherence to Zero Waste practices.

VOLUNTEERS: Our 800+ volunteers are essential to our outreach and education efforts. Here are the winners in their respective communities:

Boulder: Barbara Taylor
Broomfield: Ashleigh Gutierrez
Lafayette: Julie Piller
Longmont: Mark Umile
Louisville: Bonnie Lucara
Superior: Rachael Bray

LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

Many of our local governments made great strides in 2008 with new policies and practices that will help their populations get closer to Zero Waste. This year, the **City of Louisville** won the Zero Waste award for its



leadership in adopting community-wide recycling and composting, becoming the second city in Boulder County to do so.

MARY WOLFF ZERO WASTE COMMUNITY LEADER AWARD

in honor of our longest-standing board member and one of Eco-Cycle's founders. This year's winner: **Rhythm on the River, Longmont** for being our first and longest-running Zero Waste event, now in its 14th year.

Click it!

Read more about these awards at ecocycle.org/events/communityawards

Curbside Compost is Here!

by Iris Sela

Q. What do oily pizza boxes, spoiled foods and toilet paper rolls have in common? (Hint: It has nothing to do with your old college roommate.)

A. They are all prime candidates for your curbside compost bin!

In 2008, the city of Boulder and unincorporated Boulder County introduced curbside compost collection along with single-stream recycling. Having a three-bin collection system—for recycling, compost and “whatever’s left”—is crucial in helping Boulder County reach its goal of Zero Waste by 2025 and to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. In mid-2009, the city of Louisville will also adopt three-bin collection while other communities are considering the same (see page 4).

Putting biodegradable items in the compost bin instead of the trash is one of the easiest and most effective first steps you can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And, it turns what would be “garbage” into a nutrient-rich soil amendment that restores our farmland and promotes sustainable agriculture. Not bad for one little bin.

Your curbside compost goes to an industrial composting facility where giant compost piles can reach up to 150 degrees, allowing them to break down many of the items that wouldn’t break down in your backyard compost pile. This process also destroys pathogens, making it safe to compost paper towels, tissues and raw meat. Within four months, your leftover food can be returned to the earth to feed plants or improve degraded land.

COMPOST GUIDELINES

LOW-GRADE PAPER

(not accepted in your curbside recycling bin)

- Tissues
- Paper towels and napkins
- Paper towel / toilet paper rolls
- Paper bags (great for storing kitchen scraps or grass clippings)
- Greasy pizza boxes and wet or waxed cardboard
- Small paper items and packaging (pill bottle boxes, price tags, other small items)
- Wrapping paper (no ribbons, foil or tape)
- Tissue paper
- Shredded paper
- Neon, fluorescent, goldenrod and dark paper (not recyclable due to their high ink content)
- Dark-colored envelopes (see above)



- Coffee grounds and filters
- Loose tea and tea bags (no tea bag wrappers or plastic tea bags)
- Leaves, weeds, twigs and branches (check with your hauler for details)
- Grass clippings
- Potted plants
- Flowers



MORE COMPOSTABLES

- #7 PLA bioplastic made from corn (can include cups, containers, straws, lids and utensils); trusted brands include Eco-Products®, NatureWorks® and Biocorp®
- Compost bags made from PLA bioplastic; trusted brands include BioBag® and Bag-To-Nature®
- Chinet® (plain paper plates and bowls without a plastic coating)
- Plates, bowls and containers made from sugarcane
- Paper cups with a wax coating (no Dixie® cups ; if you can’t scratch off the coating, it’s not compostable unless it is specifically labeled as compostable (see below)
- Paper cups with a PLA lining (should say “compostable” or “lined with PLA”)
- Zero Waste Event Kit™
- Wax paper



PLEASE NO

- Plastic items of any kind, including plastic bags and Styrofoam®
- Plastic-coated paper plates, cups or other items
- Frozen food boxes
- Popcorn bags
- To-go soda or coffee cups
- Sugar packets
- Liquids, including cooking oil or grease
- Milk or juice cartons (recycle with commingled containers)
- Dryer lint
- Foil or metal
- Tape
- Biohazards, including diapers or sanitary items
- Soap
- Cotton balls or cotton swabs (Q-tips®)
- Pet waste
- Fabric scraps or string (they become tangled in shredding equipment or may be made of synthetic fibers)
- Plastic or Nylon twine (for branches)
- Construction debris

COMPOSTING IN YOUR BACKYARD?

Visit ecocycle.org/compost or call 303-444-6634 for how to start a bin, where to find a bin and for guidelines.

KITCHEN SCRAPS & YARD TRIMMINGS

- Fruit and vegetable scraps, including pits and seeds
- Meat, including bones (NOT IN THE CITY OF BOULDER)
- Dairy products (NOT IN THE CITY OF BOULDER)
- Breads and sandwiches
- Eggshells
- Spoiled/moldy food
- Chopsticks and wooden stir sticks



Shop the Eco-Cycle eStore to Green your Growing Season

Find compost bins, kitchen compost totes, compostable bags, push mowers, stainless steel yard tools and more.



A portion of each sale benefits Eco-Cycle.

Shop @ ecocycle.org/estore

Water your soil with life!

eco-cycle
Microbe Brew
Beneficial Soil Microbe Tea



Made from worm castings, this Brew is packed with nutrients and live microbes!

- Grow hardier, more pest-resistant plants and lawns
- Decrease plant stress during hot summer months
- Replenish depleted or pesticide-treated soil.

Where to find it:

Saturdays:
Boulder Farmers’ Market

Wednesdays:
Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) 5030 “Old” Pearl St.

CLIP THIS AD AND RECEIVE 50% OFF YOUR PURCHASE!

Zero Waste Around the World

by Kate Bailey



➤ Despite the shipping, recycling is still a winner

Recycling naysayers continually attack the extra trucks and transportation needed to haul recyclables to market, but this view only looks at one stage in the entire life cycle of recycling a material. New research from the United Kingdom shows that recycling paper and plastic, even when these materials are shipped to China, generates fewer greenhouse gas emissions compared to landfilling the discarded materials and creating new products from virgin resources. In fact, the greenhouse gas emissions avoided by recycling and remanufacturing were anywhere from 6 to a whopping 64 times greater than the emissions produced from exporting recycled paper and plastics overseas. This only serves to underscore the incredible potential of recycling as a climate change reduction strategy. However, domestic reprocessing of recyclable materials is always preferred, both environmentally and economically—the more local the better. We need to reinvest in our national processing and remanufacturing businesses as the foundation for a new green economy. Until then, recycling STILL wins, even with the extra mileage.

➤ Follow the paper trail

The numbers don't add up: In the United States, we make up 4.6% of the global population but consume one-third of the planet's timber and paper. This is almost two-thirds more paper per capita than our counterparts in Western Europe, making our excessive consumption uniquely American. Then, instead of recycling all that paper, we throw about half of it in the trash. (Paper is still the most abundant material in our waste stream.) Not recycling paper is problematic for two reasons: 12 to 24 trees must be cut down to make 1 ton of paper, and deforestation is responsible for 25% of global CO₂ emissions. Plus, paper decaying in a landfill will release greenhouse gases as well, this time as methane, which has 72 times the global warming impact of CO₂ over the short term. The numbers are dizzying but the solution is simple: Use less paper, buy paper with the highest recycled content, make sure it's certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and recycle. Massachusetts is one state that's gotten the message—its "Mass Recycles Paper" campaign estimates the state wastes \$100 million every year throwing away paper, and they are working on education and policy initiatives to change this. Learn the impact of your choices on paper consumption and recycling at www.whatsinyourpaper.com.

➤ Rage against the packaging

It's called "wrap rage," and we've all had it after spending 30 minutes trying to unwrap a product from its plastic casings, bindings and wire ties, only to be left with a knee-high pile of packaging and cuts all over our fingers. Amazon.com is plotting the end of "wrap rage" by forming a partnership with manufacturers that could reshape the way products are packaged. Called "Frustration-Free Packaging," select Amazon.com toys and consumer electronics now come in cardboard boxes straight from the manufacturers. The company hopes to eventually offer "Frustration-Free Packaging" for all of its products. Amazon.com's initiative comes two years after Wal-Mart launched a packaging reduction challenge to its suppliers. In response, HP has developed a laptop bag that uses 97% less packaging than a typical laptop, leaving consumers with only a few plastic bags, no packing foam, and a single piece of paperboard. Hooray for fewer sore fingers and destroyed natural resources!

➤ Free your mailbox

Unsolicited phone calls were the first to fall, thanks to the national do-not-call registry, and now, the first blow has fallen upon the junk mail empire. In March 2009, the city of San Francisco passed a resolution calling upon the state of California to create a do-not-mail registry to give citizens a choice to stop receiving unwanted junk mail. What some may consider a small annoyance is actually a national epidemic of waste—more than 100 billion pieces delivered in the U.S. annually—and with no small climate impact either—the production, distribution and disposal of junk mail releases as much greenhouse gas emissions as driving nine million cars for an entire year, according to ForestEthics. Whether you want to save time or trees, protect your privacy or guard against predatory marketing, stopping junk mail is the ticket. Tell your congressional leaders you support a national do-not-mail registry at donotmail.org and visit our website for a step-by-step guide on how to reduce junk mail. Short on time? Sign up at 41pounds.org and they will reduce your junk mail for you *and* make a \$15 donation to Eco-Cycle.

Click it! 

For more about what's happening with Zero Waste around the world, visit ecocycle.org/zerowaste

National Garbage Report: Colorado's Recycling Rate Worst of the Worst

Colorado is ranked among the most beautiful states in the nation and we're proud of it—our postcard worthy views, our outdoor adventure opportunities, our 300 days of glorious sunshine. That's why we're also one of the best states for recycling or composting—or so you'd think. But shockingly, in this category, Colorado sits at the BOTTOM of the heap—the fifth worst state.

According to "The State of Garbage in America," a new report released by *BioCycle* magazine in late 2008, while the national recycling and composting rate is 28.6%, here in Colorado it's an embarrassing 5.5%. That is 23% below the national average!

This means we throw more than 94% of our materials into a landfill! And, the news gets worse: Colorado placed in the top five generators of waste per capita, meaning Colorado residents use and consume more finite resources than other states' populations.

What's to be done?

Leadership from communities like Louisville (see article, right) will help boost recycling rates and reduce waste, but we also need individual commitments and state initiatives to raise ourselves and our planet above this excess and irresponsibility. Write your state elected officials and express your concern about the state of recycling in Colorado at www.leg.state.co.us.

Click it! 

Read the report "The State of Garbage in America" online at ecocycle.org/tidbits

Helping Pull Colorado Out of Last Place, Louisville Votes for Curbside Recycling and Composting

Colorado's recycling rate may be a national embarrassment (see article, left), but Boulder County and its municipalities are setting a different standard for the state that may help us reach a rating that makes us proud. These communities are taking great strides toward recycling, composting and Zero Waste, and putting ordinances and practices in place for other Colorado communities to follow so we can get our collective waste recovery act together.

Louisville is the most recent community to step it up. City council members there voted to take responsibility as a community for recovering natural resources through a community-wide curbside recycling program. They were following the lead of neighbor Lafayette whose council voted in 2007 for a single-hauler contract to provide curbside recycling in their community.

Louisville even went one step further and added curbside composting collection as well, becoming the second city in the county to do so. (Boulder added compost service in 2008.) Composting service for food and yard waste was added when it appeared that many people who opposed the program might become supportive if it included this

service. Like Lafayette, residents will also have an economic incentive to reduce, recycle and compost as much as possible with a new "pay-as-you-throw" system that views trash as a utility—the more you use, the more you pay.

With the new program, residents may choose among three levels of trash service, ranging from a 32-gallon trash container for \$7.95 per month to a 96-gallon container at \$20.65 per month. Recycling is included at no fee. Compostables are picked up curbside for \$2.75 for a 32-gallon container, \$5.50 for 64-gallon service and \$8.25 for a 96-gallon bin.

The change in Louisville came at the urging of residents who were tired of having to pay extra for curbside recycling. They wanted an affordable, universal curbside recycling program like others in the area, so they organized a group called the Louisville Citizens for Community Involvement to become educated on the subject and gauge the interest of others.

Residents were joined by council members and city staffers who also wanted to make this change for their community. According

to Malcolm Fleming, Louisville City Manager, the city wished to accomplish five goals with the new program: 1) Provide convenient recycling services, 2) Reduce recycling and trash costs, 3) Increase waste reduction, 4) Reduce the volume of heavy truck traffic on the city's residential streets and 5) Ensure high quality customer service.

"Thanks to the significant community organizing that happened in Louisville, a very responsive hauler [Western Disposal, who won the bid to provide hauling services] and to the success of a similar program in our neighbor, Lafayette," said Fleming, "it looks like we will be able to achieve all of these goals."

Go Louisville! Now it's time to get all communities in our area on board with providing basic recycling and composting services for their residents and put pressure on the rest of the state to ante up. Lyons? Broomfield? Nederland? Your turn.

Click it! 

See how your Boulder County community is doing on the road to Zero Waste at ecocycle.org/zerowaste/governments

State Helps Eco-Cycle Recycle Foam with a Reduced Carbon Footprint

by Dan Matsch

It’s always been Eco-Cycle’s goal to make sure our recycling efforts are as sustainable as possible on a number of fronts. In the case of #6 white block foam (commonly called Styrofoam®), we have a particular challenge since the material is super lightweight but takes up a lot of space, making it difficult to maximize the weight of each load we transport for processing.

Thanks to a grant from the State of Colorado, we have a new piece of machinery at the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM)—a densifier—that compresses the bulky foam into less than one-tenth of its original volume, significantly reducing the financial costs and carbon footprint of transporting the material.

Before getting the densifier, the average amount of loose material we could load onto a trailer was only about 1,500 pounds. That’s a good load weight for a pickup truck but not for a semi. Now we can ship full 40,000-pound truckloads to recycling markets.

The densifier works by squeezing the block

foam so hard that even the little beads are compressed. A large hydraulic ram squishes the material through a constricted chamber. What comes out looks like a white railroad tie—and weighs about as much too. We break these extrusions off when they are about four feet long and then stack them on a pallet for shipping.

The best part of having this new equipment is that for the first time we have a revenue source for this material. Our grant from the state allows us to gather real data on the costs and profits of densifying foam to share with recyclers all over Colorado, which can help them justify getting a densifier for their communities.

According to Marjorie Griek, Executive Director of the Colorado Association for Recycling, “This Eco-Cycle project will help other Colorado communities develop a sustainable model for diverting Styrofoam® from the landfill and put it to good use.”

The funds for the Colorado grant came from a new state law that puts a small surcharge on trash received at landfills. That money is then set aside in a fund for innovative recycling efforts.



Thanks to a grant from the State of Colorado, Eco-Cycle has a new densifier that compresses bulky #6 white block foam to less than one-tenth its original volume, significantly reducing the financial costs and carbon footprint of transporting the material.



¡Sí, Se Puede Reciclar!

by Kary Schumpert

While getting out the vote was in full swing last fall, getting out the recycling was too. Spanish-speaking Eco-Cycle volunteers and outreach staff went door-to-door in an effort to distribute recycling information to Spanish-speaking Longmont residents. After weeks of chatting about the details, answering questions and distributing our new Spanish single-stream recycling brochure, the results were inspiring—recycling participation rates in the targeted neighborhoods nearly tripled!

As part of a pilot Latino recycling outreach program, we focused on several Longmont neighborhoods to spread the word about the new single-stream recycling program.

In addition to talking with Spanish-speaking residents in person, Eco-Cycle created a video public service announcement about single-stream recycling in Spanish with English subtitles. Check it out on www.ecocycle.org/espanol, YouTube and Longmont’s Channel 3.

Nationally and locally, Spanish-speaking Americans are underserved when it comes to

recycling education. Eco-Cycle, in cooperation with the city of Longmont, created the Latino Recycling Outreach program to help fill this gap. The remarkable increase in recycling participation on a local level has been tremendously rewarding for the community, future generations and the environment.

While efforts have been concentrated in Longmont for now, our goals are to expand the program to the rest of Boulder County and then to share our successes and tools with other recycling programs across the country.

Eco-Cycle would like to thank the Argosy Foundation, Friendship Fund, Longmont Community Foundation and Microbreweries for the Environment 2008 for the financial support needed to jumpstart this pilot program and create important outreach tools for Spanish speakers.



Spanish-speaking Eco-Cycle volunteers and outreach staff went door-to-door distributing newly created recycling information, such as this brochure, to Spanish-speaking Longmont residents. After just a few weeks, recycling participation rates in the targeted neighborhoods nearly tripled!

Click it!

¿Habla Español?

¡Necesitamos su ayuda!

Learn more about how you can get involved in reaching out to our Spanish-speaking community members and download recycling information in Spanish at ecocycle.org/espanol.

ATTENTION CHaRM RECYCLERS: New Car Fee Begins May 1

Beginning May 1, 2009, Eco-Cycle will charge a \$3 fee for every vehicle coming to the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) to recycle materials. The fee is in addition to the recycling fees that apply to specific materials like electronics, bike tires and porcelain.

WHY?

The CHaRM is financially subsidized by three partners: the city of Boulder, Eco-Cycle and dedicated recyclers like you. In these difficult economic times, the city of Boulder and Eco-Cycle are not able to cover the cost increases for CHaRM services without you, our third partner.

The benefit of the car fee is not only economic, but it is also environmental. Some visitors to the CHaRM come in a virtually empty car just to drop off a bit of white block foam or a small bundle of plastic bags. We don’t want the environmental gains of the CHaRM to be negated by the carbon emissions of vehicles, so our hope is that the fee will encourage recyclers to economize their trips to the CHaRM by storing their materials until they have one big load.

THREE WAYS TO SAVE ON THE CAR FEE AT THE CHaRM:

We know times are hard for you, too, so we have three suggestions for saving on the car fee.

FREQUENT RECYCLER CARD: You can purchase a Frequent Recycler Card that gives you five trips for \$10, saving \$1 per visit. The card doesn’t expire, and it’s virtual—we’ll keep a record of it at the CHaRM, so it’s Zero Waste and you won’t lose it. Purchase your card at the CHaRM on your next visit.

CARPOOL: Pool your materials together with your neighbors’ and friends’, so you only have to pay one car fee.

BIKE IT IN: If you are one of the many recyclers who visit us on a bike, you will not be charged a car fee. The CHaRM is right by the junction of the Goose Creek Path and the Boulder Creek Path, so it’s easy to get to us. (Fees to recycle specific materials, such as electronics, bike tires and porcelain, will still apply.)

NOTE: There will be no charge for customers dropping off only single-stream recycling or scrap metal.

GIVE OUR CUSTOMERS A CHALLENGE...



One of our favorite frequent CHaRM customers came by in his car, heard about the new fee, went home and then came back with a grin after having figured out how to haul his recyclables on his bicycle and save on the new fee!

FOLSOM FIELD: Zero Waste Update

by CU Recycling Staff

In fall 2008, there was a stampede at Folsom Field, but it wasn’t a dangerous crush of crazed fans.

As you may have heard, “Ralphie’s Green Stampede” is a Zero Waste and carbon reduction program initiated by the University of Colorado.

Through this ambitious conservation effort, the Buffs’ home turf became the first major sports stadium in the nation, professional or collegiate, to reach for Zero Waste by replacing all trash cans inside the stadium with recycling and composting containers.

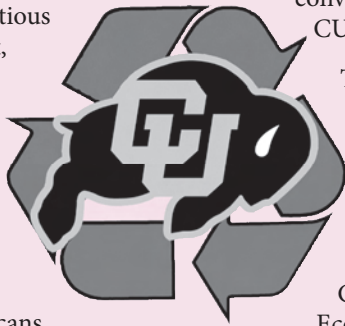
As a result, 80% of the discards generated inside the stadium was diverted from the landfill! This is a tremendous accomplishment in working toward Zero Waste—CU’s success even made the *New York Times* and other national news outlets.

Here are some of the season’s Zero Waste highlights:

- More than 40 tons of recyclables and compostables were collected (200% more than 2007).

- New materials were diverted from Folsom Field including 14 tons of food waste and biodegradable packaging. This organic material will be turned into compost, a portion of which will be used for campus landscaping.

- Fry oil from food preparation at the stadium was recycled for the first time. More than 300 gallons (2,500 pounds) were refined and converted into biodiesel for CU’s buses.



This significant waste reduction would not have been possible without the outstanding support of the CU Athletic Department, CU student government, Eco-Cycle, WhiteWave Foods, Eco-Products, Centerplate Catering and, of course, the fans.

CU is already making plans to divert an additional 10-15% of materials next season with better employee training, more compostable packaging and greater promotion of the program to Buffs’ fans.

For more information about “Ralphie’s Green Stampede,” visit cubuffs.com/green.

Local Businesses Reach for Zero Waste

by Erin Makowsky

Your personal Zero Waste efforts are propelling our community toward Zero Waste, and you're not in it alone. A multitude of local businesses is taking similar actions, giving you the opportunity to go even further toward Zero Waste by choosing to patronize businesses that share your concern for the environment. Look for Eco-Cycle Zero Waste window clings (right) at the many local businesses who have partnered with us. Here are four businesses that recently joined or upgraded their services in our Zero Waste Services program.



After more than 12 years of recycling with Eco-Cycle, the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless expanded its program to include composting.

Boulder Shelter for the Homeless, Boulder

www.bouldershelter.org

The Boulder Shelter for the Homeless is a busy place, serving 360 meals a day and housing 160 residents every night. Last summer, in addition to answering this important community need, the shelter's staff also stepped up efforts to protect our environment by reevaluating their waste reduction program. After more than 12 years of recycling with Eco-Cycle, Volunteer Manager and Zero Waste Program Coordinator Gina Barajas and Kitchen Manager Alex Bloomfield expanded the shelter's recycling program and set up a composting program.

The shelter's Zero Waste program relies on the active involvement of nightly residents and volunteers: Residents are responsible for emptying recycling and compost bins and volunteers sort recyclable and compostable materials during food preparation. Since June 2008, the shelter increased its recycling volume, kept roughly six tons of food waste out of the landfill and reduced waste from disposable containers by switching to reusable and compostable "to go" containers. Shelter staff has received lots of positive feedback from residents and volunteers who take pride in knowing they're doing their part to help the shelter work toward Zero Waste and be part of a larger community effort.

photos by David Reindel



Pearl Izumi has committed to working toward Zero Waste by partnering with Eco-Cycle to handle 100% of its discards: recycling, composting, unusual items and whatever's left!

Pearl Izumi, Boulder

www.pearlizumi.com

If you're an avid biker, runner, cyclist or outdoor enthusiast, there's a good chance you've sported the Pearl Izumi brand. Now you have more than just great technical gear to applaud—Pearl Izumi has committed to working toward Zero Waste by partnering with Eco-Cycle to handle 100% of its discards including recyclables, compostables and hard-to-recycle materials such as plastic film, scrap metal and wood scraps. Employees worked tirelessly to set up the program, and the benefits are proving to be twofold: significant trash reductions and cost savings, resulting in less impact on the planet and on the company's budget.

Like an athlete who pushes her/himself to go that extra mile, Pearl Izumi didn't stop there. Employees came up with the clever idea to create custom reusable bags made from extra fabric scraps for any purchases they make in the store. Pearl Izumi's green team is also reassessing their purchasing and packaging practices with reuse and recycling in mind and moving forward with implementing other sustainability programs.

NOTE: Pearl Izumi is an Eco-Cycle Zero Waste Award business finalist! Visit ecocycle.org/events/community awards to watch a short video about their eco-friendly efforts and to find out who won.



For The Organic Dish owner Beckie Hemmerling, going for Zero Waste was a "no-brainer decision."

The Organic Dish, Boulder

www.theorganicdish.com

What's for dinner? If "skip it" is an all too common answer, you might consider purchasing a healthy, ready-to-cook meal at The Organic Dish. The staff does the prep work and will even deliver your meals so you get to enjoy a delicious, organic meal despite a hectic schedule. For owner and operator Beckie Hemmerling, partnering with Eco-Cycle to set up a Zero Waste program was a "no-brainer decision to make," she said. "It was really easy. There was no reason not to do it."

After setting up its Zero Waste program, The Organic Dish now produces less than half a small bag of trash per week. All four employees are well-versed in the guidelines for recycling and composting and are constantly sharing their knowledge with friends, family and customers. Customers are encouraged to return used plastic bags from meal kits to The Organic Dish where they are recycled at the CHaRM. Next time you're feeling too tired to cook, swing by The Organic Dish to grab some gourmet grub, ask Beckie about their Zero Waste initiative, and skip rocks, not dinner.



Roche Colorado Corporation teamed up with Eco-Cycle for a waste sort and found it could reduce its waste by 64% through education and compost service.

SPECIAL FEATURE Roche Colorado Gets Messy (and closer to Zero) with a Waste Sort

www.rochecolorado.com

There's only one way to figure out how to get that trash dumpster nearly empty—take a look inside! Roche Colorado Corporation did just that. Its staff got down and dirty to evaluate their waste reduction program by conducting a waste assessment with Eco-Cycle. The objectives? To identify any items in the trash that should have been recycled, to assess the type and quantity of compostable materials in the trash and to discover where changing their purchasing practices could reduce waste and their environmental impact even further.

A 21-yard dumpster of trash was collected over a three-day period and physically sorted and measured. The sort revealed that through increased education and training, improved container placement and by upgrading their collection service to include composting, Roche Colorado Corporation has the opportunity to decrease its trash by 64%! With the waste evaluation complete, Roche now has a baseline for program improvement and a plan to get closer to Zero.

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO REDUCE WASTE AT YOUR BUSINESS?

Contact Erin Makowsky at 303-444-6634 ext. 141 to schedule a waste sort and get your business closer to Zero.



Set up a FREE Cell Phone Recycling Program at your Business!



Let's face facts: Despite the love affair you have with your new cell phone, national statistics show you'll either break it or upgrade it within the next 18 months. Until cell phones are designed to last longer, recycling them responsibly is your best course of action. Rather than driving your cell phone to the CHaRM for recycling, you can now set up a free collection program at your business for your staff and customers!

Eco-Cycle has partnered with The Wireless Alliance to provide our business customers with an easy, convenient and free cell phone recycling program. When you sign up, you'll receive a cell phone collection box. When the box is full, seal it up and send it back to The Wireless Alliance at no charge and take pride that your cell phones will be recycled responsibly. **Take advantage of this great opportunity by calling The Wireless Alliance at 303-543-7477 or sign up at our website at ecocycle.org/zws.**

JUNK MAIL WASTE IS NOT INEVITABLE.

We've partnered with 41pounds.org to help you eliminate 80-95% of your junk mail, support Eco-Cycle and save
— time — trees — water — climate — planet —
ecocycle.org/junkmail

Thank you to the following donors who contributed to Eco-Cycle from Oct. 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009.

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Founders’ Society

In 1976, Eco-Cycle rolled out a fleet of old school buses onto Boulder streets to collect recyclables. The vision of our founders made us part of the dawning of recycling in America. Today, Eco-Cycle is a leader in the new revolution in resource conservation: Zero Waste. The following individuals are part of the Eco-Cycle Founders’ Society, a group of loyal supporters who have committed to annual gifts of \$1,000 or more.

Cindy Carlisle
Lee Ann Cast
Deborah Crowell
Steve Demos & Sheryl Lamb
Bradley Feld & Amy Batchelor

Richard Matsch
Dr. Sally Parsons
David & Janet Robertson
Edwin L. Wolff
Mary Wolff
Eriks Ziemelis

Zero Waste Champions

The following individuals have chosen to make an automatic, monthly contribution to Eco-Cycle. Their continual commitment and generosity help sustain our mission to build Zero Waste communities.

Laura Doane
Christina & Jeremy Haley
Jabe Hickey
Dr. Sally Parsons

Janet & William Kuepper
Eric Roth & Vicki Tiedeman
Linda Silverthorn

Defining the Zero Waste Community

from page 2

are framing it as a failure so they can build an incinerator for the remaining 25% residuals. Instead, they should be convening an international conference to share how they got to 75% and explore the frontiers of how to get from 75% to 90% over the next few years!

The biggest barrier to Zero Waste is the “mixed waste” single trash can. When a community adopts a three-bin collection system—for recycling, composting and residuals—then miracles can happen and the incinerators are beaten by their own economic folly. The three-bin system is a big vision but a reachable goal over the next decade. And once we’ve arrived, moving ever closer to 100% will become our next achievable challenge.

7

Take Action for Zero Waste!

The global financial meltdown has hit recycling market prices hard—our revenues from the sale of materials dropped 50% in 60 days! That equals about \$200,000 per month that just evaporated. We're scrambling, along with all the other recyclers of the world, to keep our heads above water until the prices rebound. We'll survive—we always have and always will—since the Zero Waste approach is the cleanest, most efficient and most economical way forward for the 21st century.

Your support this year is especially needed to help us get through this tough time and continue to do our good work, which is now more important to our environment and our future than ever before.

Along with making a personal, tax-deductible donation to Eco-Cycle, there are many other ways you can help move our community toward Zero Waste included in this issue of the *Eco-Cycle Times*:

- Keep the #1 contaminant—plastic bags—out of curbside recycling (p.1)
- Recycle your bicycle and bike parts at the CHaRM as our newest material (p.1)
- Support the winners of the Zero Waste Business & Community Awards (p.2)
- Make the most of curbside composting with new guidelines (p.3)
- Learn more about the city of Louisville's victory to introduce recycling and composting (p. 4)
- Spread the word about recycling to our Spanish-speaking community (p.5)

To donate, please clip the coupon below or visit www.ecocycle.org.

Here is my gift of ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 Founders' Society ☐ Other \$ _____

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☐ Contact me about setting up a recurring monthly gift to Eco-Cycle through my credit card.



Donate online at www.ecocycle.org

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