

Columbia River Gorge Master Recyclers

MAY 2011 EDITION

TRI-COUNTY HAZARDOUS WASTE AND RECYCLING PROGRAM

Upcoming Events:

- **Saturday, May 7th**
Master Gardeners' Annual Spring Fair at The Dalles City Park on Union Street. **Help us with a Master Recycler Table on composting and recycling! Call or e-mail Karen, if interested. 8am set-up. I really need several Master Recyclers to help me. Thank you !!**
- **Saturday, May 21st** The Dalles Annual Community Clean-up Day Master Recyclers needed at this event. More info coming! **Mark your calendar!**
- **Green Drinks**
"The Economics of Happiness" film at Springhouse Cellars on **Thursday, May 12th**, doors opening at 6:30pm, film starting at 7pm.
- **Next Master Recycler Gathering —TBA** Same venue? Field trip to Dirt Huggers? Late May? Early June? Picnic? Potluck? Evening? Featured Speaker? We would like your input on what you would like to see. Contact **Karen**.
- **September 2011** The next round of Master Recycler Classes. Start "talking up" the classes and the field trips. Suggest that interested people access our Tri-County Website and access the Master Recycler Tab at the top of our home page. www.tricountyrecycle.com



Fancy Event Signage by Rage Graphix and Design

Document Shred Events A Good Start

Over 1 ton of documents were gathered from the public at our first Document Shred Event in The Dalles, Friday, April 22nd. 2,808.7 pounds of paper were collected from the public to be shredded through the Gorge Security Shred program in Hood River. Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program partnered with Gorge Security Shred to

securely divert this paper without it having to be burned and saving it from going to the landfill. Eventually, it will be turned into newsprint after "documents of destruction" are verified. "I have always wanted to organize an Earth Day event in The Dalles and helping people securely recycle their confidential documents was the perfect opportunity. We even had some Master Recyclers on hand to answer questions about composting and



Terry Goss from Gorge Security Shred discussing the shredding procedure with a community member while others pack the van. All shredding took place at the Gorge Security Shred facility out of Hood River. Tom Morgan, far right, and Andrew Husbands, center, both work for Gorge Security Shred.



Terry Goss of Gorge Security Shred, Master Recycler, Tia Mousseau, David Skakel of Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program, Andrew Husbands of Gorge Security Shred and Karen Murray of Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling at the shred site at Cascade Square on Earth Day, April 22, 2011

Gorge Security Shred, Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program and Master Recyclers were on hand at Rosauers' Shopping Center to collect confidential documents from the public. Terry Goss, Sales Associate of Gorge Security Shred, commented, "If people want to actually see their documents being shredded, they can visit our site on Thomsen Rd, off Hwy. 35, in Hood River. Normally we charge \$.20/pound but we wanted to give back to the community for all their support for our program. Earth Day (and the day after,) were the great times to do that." A special thank you goes to the property managers of both sites: Gary Hamman of Mercury Development(Cascade Square) and Karen Ford of Current Commercial Property Management, (Rosauers' Shopping Center.)



Master Recyclers Sharree Olsen, Marilyn Wall and Cathie Kelter help with the tabling at the Hood River Document Shred Event on Saturday, April 23rd at Rosauers' Shopping Center

recycling. It was a successful event," says Karen Murray, coordinator of the project.

A second day of secure shredding happened in Hood River on Saturday, April 23, 2011, with 1,129.1 pounds being collected.

Master Recyclers Excel at Hood River Earth Day Celebration



Master Recycler Phaedra Booth as the Bag Monster in Hood River, Phaedra answered a desperate e-mail request to be the monster!



Master Recyclers Sharree Olsen and Cathie Kelter work the table at Hood River's Shred Event. A community member motors in with his bag of shreddables. Not shown is Marilyn Wall.



Master Recycler Peggy Dills Kelter is ready to answer recycling questions in Hood River with her How and What to Recycle brochures. Nice shirt!



Frank Wall as the Bag Monster with his Master Recycler wife, Marilyn Wall, attend the SustainaBall at the Columbia Gorge Hotel in Hood River on April 23rd. Look at that cool T-shirt!



Our own David Skael was nominated as one of the Columbia River Gorge's Sustainability Champions at the first annual SustainaBall at the Columbia Gorge Hotel, Saturday night, April 23rd. David is recognized for his nomination at the SustainaBall.

More Master Recycler Participation in the Gorge Earth Day 2011



Master Recycler, Liz Clark, volunteered at the Shred Event in The Dalles on Friday, April 22nd. Spot her in the photo on the left, talking to Karen and David's supervisor, Glenn Pierce. Liz works for DEQ and provides regulatory oversight for our hazardous waste collection buildings.

Master Recycler, Liz Clark, (far right) is hidden behind Glenn Pierce of North Central Public Health District at the Document Shred Event in The Dalles on Friday, April 22nd. Tom Morgan (far left) and Andrew Husbands both work for Gorge Security Shred.



Did anyone catch a picture of Master Recycler, Kris Cronkright, as the Bag Monster in the Procession of the Species in Hood River on Saturday, April 23rd? Wait, Ruth Olin did!! See next page! [\(Ask Ruth how easy it is to send pictures and articles for the Master Recycler Newsletter!!\)](#)



Master Recycler, Sarah Fierbaugh, (far left picture and above on the right) at the Hood River Bagel Company with owner/operator Autumn Wood. Sarah orchestrated an Earth Day Event for Kids at the bagel restaurant with the help of Cynthia Caudill.



Master Recycler, Cynthia Caudill recently received the [Preserve Gimme 5's](#) Pacific Northwest Regional Winner award for being one of the "Local Heroes of Recycling"

MASTER RECYCLERS! KEEP LOGGING THOSE HOURS!!

I suspect, for some of you, it might seem insignificant to keep track of your volunteer master recycler hours on our web-site. But, **IT IS REALLY VERY IMPORTANT!!** It helps us validate our Master Recycler Program, it shows involvement and it helps the overall program in terms of knowing what people are doing. **If you need log-in information, please e-mail or call me.** I love my job and helping you with your requests is one of my favorite parts. If you have been away for a while, I would love to reconnect. Call or e-mail me!

More Master Recycler Participation.....Thank You to All!!!!



Master Recycler, Ruth Olin,
tabling for The Rebuild It Center
at the Hood River Earth Day
Celebration



Kris Cronkright was a favorite with the kids
as the Bag Monster in the Hood River
Procession of Species

Did You Get Your T-Shirt? Do You Want One? Would You Wear It?

Between the "Bag It" Video Preview Night at Andrews Pizza and the Earth Day Events in both The Dalles and Hood River, I tried to find as many Master Recyclers as I could and surprise them with a new master recycler T-shirt. Did you get missed? Do you still want one? I know there were a couple of you that needed different sizes than I had so I need to get that order in. Medium? Large? Extra Large or Double Extra Large? I still have a lot of Large and Extra Large left.

I like the way the shirt has a year-round theme but I need to be ready with some ideas if anyone asks me how!!! What would you tell them? Did anyone get "asked"? Karen



P.S. I will have larges and extra larges at our Tabling Event at the The Dalles City Park on Union Street this Saturday, May 7th. Come by and help us! We are setting up at 8am and going until about 3pm. I would love to see you, even if it was for only a short time. Come by!

MRF Musings

Written by
Ruth Olin



Recycling – if you're like me, you want to do it right but find the guidelines fuzzy. Yogurt containers, neck wider than head (I thought that was for wrestlers and bar bouncers), gable tops, clam shells, aseptic containers, Styrofoam; - yes? no? And the all-pervasive: PLASTIC!!! I'm sure I'm not the only one who secretly doubted whether the material in that messy pile actually got recycled. There are many things which are recyclable, but how to know what? There are instructions, but...glass, no glass, smash, co-mingle, no garbage, plastic yes, lids no, labels on, labels off. It's difficult for even the most conscientious Recycler to (no pun intended) sort it out!



Marilyn Wall, Kris Cronkright, Karen Murray and David Skakel

MRF stands for Materials Recovery Facility. This is where your co-mingled recycling ends up. I was lucky to be a part of a small group of Recycling Warriors that ventured out to investigate this mysterious animal. Here's what I learned... recycling is a business. If it doesn't produce a product that can be sold on the market, the system won't work. Recycling is evolving. One of the main reasons it's commingled is to make hauling feasible. It was too hard for the haulers to keep the separation and fill the truck effectively, hence the co-mingled system. The MRF is set up to handle cardboard, paper, plastic containers, and metal containers – cans, both steel and aluminum. The two main items that should never appear at a MRF are glass and plastic bags.

To elaborate, glass is totally recyclable, but doesn't belong at the MRF - which is why it should never be thrown into the co-mingled container. The equipment is not set up to separate glass and what's more, broken glass very dangerous for the workers. The same with plastic bags – totally recyclable, but they don't belong at the MRF. The bags clog the equipment causing delays. Workers (who are real people) have to stick their hands in big scary moving-part equipment to untangle the mess. There is a similar lesson with steel. Steel is recyclable, but the MRF is not set up for large steel pieces. Bike frames, chairs, bed frames (all I witnessed during our short visit) should be taken to your transfer station's metal

recycling area, not the MRF. These are too big for the equipment which has magnets to pull out the steel and aluminum cans. These large items have to be pulled out by hand, which is dangerous and time consuming.



The cardboard baling Process at Far West

MRF fact – the plastic lids are recyclable, however, the equipment can't handle anything smaller than 2 inches. It falls out of the line. So that's why we are told not to recycle the lids. If you want to go the next step – and Master Recyclers do... you can put the plastic lids in a plastic container (with a plastic lid on it) so it won't fall out of the line. Why can't we just screw on the lid? Maybe because they are rarely the same plastic as the container. It's nuances like this that drive me nuts; cans lined with plastic, wet strength paper, aluminum lined cardboard, wax coated cardboard - arrrrgggh!!! So much contamination to our resource streams! I hope the evolution of recycling will purify these streams. Ironically, because paper and cardboard are the driving materials that are sold by the MRFs, shredded paper is a huge mess. They do deal with it, but it's hard to contain and bale. In our information age, shredded paper is

a fact of life. Maybe it should go in your compost bin!



The volume of co-mingled material was unbelievable!!

Research & development of more sophisticated equipment is on the design table, but currently, most of the systems employ mechanical means of separation based on the physical aspects of the material. What I mean is, wheels, air and gravity. The heavy stuff falls, and lighter stuff - paper, blows to higher conveyer belt. Magnets pull the metal containers. It ain't rocket science, nevertheless it's expensive equipment. What's more, they need a lot of material to come through to make the cost viable. That means they need to serve a fairly wide geographical area. And that means transportation - which has a cost, both financial and environmental. One has to wonder whether smaller communities can derive value from their recycle-ables locally. On the subject of quantity, it would be impossible to write about a MRF visit without mentioning the amazing volume of material they process in one day. We saw a warehouse the size of a hockey rink filled 10 feet high with material. We were told they process 3 times that much every day!!

And still, the recycling mystery areas remain: rigid plastics, gable tops, hard cover books, Styrofoam, and that ubiquitous - other plastic stuff. Beaded polystyrene (Styrofoam) is recyclable, but at this time, not at the MRF. There aren't currently many places to recycle Styrofoam, but it has been recycled for a long time. Again, what I gleaned from our MRF visit is that, if there is a market, they will try to accommodate the collection of the material. And the markets these days are moving targets. That's why it's so hard to pin down a clear cut answer to what is a co-mingled recyclable.

One important lesson I took away from our MRF visit is that real people sort this stuff. It goes by fast and they pull inappropriate material with lightning speed. Goopy sticky stuff doesn't belong here. More importantly, sharps, needles, knife blades don't belong, and pose a huge hazard to the workers. After seeing this, I want to make sure I put clean safe material in my co-mingled recycling.

Recycling (other than paper) is pretty new. Our guides spoke of work on methods of greater recovery and manufacturing with recycle-ability in mind. In other words, moving towards a Cradle to Cradle approach. But just because something is recycle-able isn't an excuse to be wasteful!!! My personal goal is to live less wastefully.

Many thanks to David and Karen our Fearless Leaders from Tri County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program. Also thanks to Jeff Murray, Far West Fibers and Ken Grossan, SP; who led our tours and answered our endless stream of questions.

PS from Karen: After Ruth saw the "Bag It!" video at Andrews last month, she wanted to write an addendum to her article. Stay tuned as I am going to try and talk her into writing one for next month's newsletter. **A BIG thank you to Ruth for contributing! Anyone else?**



Look at the piles and piles and piles....What if plastic stops the sorting?

OUR MASTER RECYCLER GROUP IS ON THE WEB!! CHECK IT OUT!
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tri-County-Master-Recyclers/107724469293841>

Do you have ideas for our next Master Recycler Newsletter? We need your input and your creativity. Please contact Karen Murray.

INTERESTING LINKS TO FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION IN RECYCLING AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 1) [The Association of Oregon Recyclers' Newsletter](#) and
- 2) [The Resource Recycling Newsletter](#).

Enjoy the links! There are always amazing articles in these newsletters.

PRESERVEWARE PARTY PACKS ARE READY!

Our Party Pack Buckets are ready for you to borrow. Having a get-together and need extra, "dishwashable" plates, silverware and cups? Don't want all that paper and plastic waste after your party? Made in the USA and from recycled #5 plastics, (used yogurt cups!), "Preserve Plastic" saves energy, water and carbon dioxide. They are BPA free. 4 buckets available, with 20 settings each. Call or e-mail Karen at



the office to reserve our Presereware Party Buckets. **David Skakel and Cynthia Caudill spearheaded the use of the Presereware at a fundraiser for Mosier Community School with 200 people!! Way to go on reducing waste upstream, David and Cynthia!**

Legislative Happenings-[The Oregon Conservation Network](#) is working on several priority bills that are now gaining momentum! Link to their site to find out more details!

1. **Modernizing Oregon's Bottle Bill** will be on the House Floor in the next few weeks. **House Bill 3145** would expand the historic Bottle Bill to include the sports drinks, teas, juices and other containers you often see littered about or simply thrown away. It also has provisions that would raise the deposit on containers if return rates don't improve. Your Representative will be voting on this bill soon and they need to hear from you. **Take action now!**
2. **Senate Bill 536** bans single-use plastic checkout bags at all retail checkout stands in Oregon. Plastic pollution has become a critical problem in our oceans, accounting for as much as 90% of the estimated 100 million tons of toxic trash that spirals 500 miles off the Oregon Coast. Plastic bags litter our natural areas, and interferes with the operation of municipal water and recycling facilities, costing taxpayers millions. More than 400 businesses have joined the bipartisan coalition that supports this bill. **Read more about this bill.**

How to get in touch with us:

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IMPORTANT!! 1 The deadline for applying for our "third position" at Tri-County HW&R will be Friday, May 13, 2011. Apparently, it did not get advertised in the local newspapers so the position is open another week and a half. The link to the job info is www.co.wasco.or.us then access "jobs."
 2. **Karen REALLY needs help this Saturday, May 7th** with the event with the Master Gardeners...8 am set-up in the City Park. We will be high-lighting composting. Red wigglers and Earth Machines will be assisting us!

Also, we are working on getting a copy of the "Bag It!" video for borrowing!