



County of Santa Cruz ⁰⁵⁸¹

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 500, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4069

(831) 454-2200 FAX: (831) 454-3262 TDD: (831) 454-2123

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AGENDA: 1/11/00

December 16, 1999

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: TRASH CUTTER AWARDS--CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED
WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Dear Members of the Board:

The California Integrated Waste Management Board annually recognizes the best and most innovative waste reduction programs statewide through their Trash Cutter Awards Program. Six of the categorical awards were presented to county and regional agencies on November 30, 1999, at the County Supervisors Association of California's (CSAC) annual convention in Monterey. California Integrated Waste Management Board member Linda Moulton-Patterson presented the Santa Cruz County Public Works Department with three of the six waste reduction awards as follows:

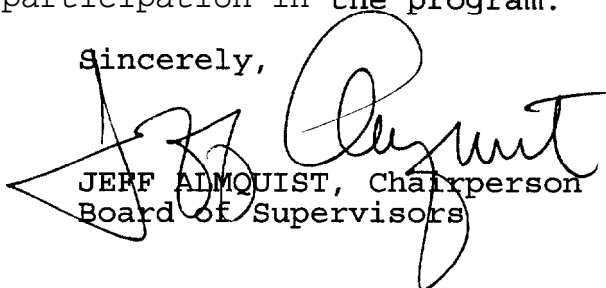
1. Best Creative Partnerships Program in California - for cooperative recycling ventures with local and national non-profit **recyclers**, such as the Grey Bears, the Valley Women's Club, Ecology Action and the Salvation Army.
2. Best Public Information Program in California - for the implementation of comprehensive public information and outreach programs, including regular radio, television and newspaper ads, aerial advertising for special events (i.e., the Beach Clean-up and County Clean-up Days), regular residential and business newsletters, phone hot-lines for key recycling programs, the informational web page, and creative informational guides on the many important recycling programs (i.e., the Home Composting Guide, the Where to Recycle Guide, the No More Junk Mail Guide, and the Business Recycling Guide).

3. Best Schools Program in California - for the development and implementation of the Countywide Public Schools Resource Conservation Program. This is a multi-jurisdictional award which includes Santa Cruz County, the Cities of Santa Cruz, **Scotts** Valley, Capitola, and Watsonville, Ecology Action, and most importantly, for the County Office of Education for their leadership and foresight in placing this important issue at the forefront of their curriculum. This program integrates resource conservation curriculum directly into the classroom along with hands-on recycling, composting, and waste reduction activities in our public schools. The County Office of Education has been instrumental in implementing this program and expanding it each year within a fixed budget supplied by all County jurisdictions, private donations and State grants.

Attached you will find additional narrative information from the California Integrated Waste Management Board on the three awards. As the Best Schools Program Award is a multi-jurisdictional effort, I recommend that the Chairperson, in consultation with Public Works, draft a letter notifying each of the involved jurisdictions and agencies of this joint award, and acknowledge their contributions and participation in the program. It is therefore recommended that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

1. Accept and file this report on the Trash Cutter Awards from the California Integrated Waste Management Board.
2. Direct the Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors, in consultation with Public Works, to draft letters notifying each of the involved jurisdictions and agencies of their Trash Cutter Award for the Best Public Schools Program, and acknowledge their contributions and participation in the program.

Sincerely,



JEFF ALMQUIST, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors

JA:lg
Attachment

cc: County Administrative Office
Public Works

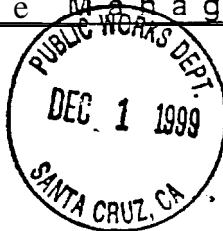
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California Environmental Protection Agency

NEWS ADVISORY

Integrated Waste Management Board



Attnr Environment Editor

November 29, 1999
99-110

Contact: Chris Peck
Lanny Clavecilla
(916) 2552296
opa@ciwmb.ca.gov
Heidi Feldman, MRWMD
(931) 384-5313

COUNTIES, REGIONAL DISTRICT EXCEL AT CUTTING TRASH

- What:** Three California counties--Lake, Los Angeles and Santa Cruz--and the Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD) have been named 1999 winners of the California Integrated Waste Management Board's Trash Cutter Awards. Innovative programs designed and operated by these entities are helping them to maximize the reduction of solid waste in their jurisdiction. Waste Board member Linda Moulton-Patterson will recognize the winning programs at the opening session of the California State Association of Counties' annual meeting in Monterey.
- When:** Tuesday, November 30, 12:30 p.m.
CSAC Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
- Where:** DoubleTree Hotel, Bonsai Ballroom
Two Portola Plaza, Monterey
- Winners/ Recipients:** **RECYCLING**--Lake County Curbside Recycling Program
Bill Merriman, County Supervisor
INNOVATION--Los Angeles County Waste Tire Management Program
Paul Alva, Public Works Engineer
REGIONAL WASTE REDUCTION--Monterey Regional Waste Management District
Dave Myers, General Manager
CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS/PUBLIC INFORMATION/SCHOOLS --Santa Cruz County
R. Patrick Mathews, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager
- Why:** The Trash Cutter Awards are issued annually by the CIWMB to recognize jurisdictions who are leading the way in keeping waste out of landfills. California cities and counties are required by law to reduce the amount of solid waste they send to landfills by 50 percent in 2000, compared to 1990 levels. They are making steady progress. While the state's population has grown by 3.5 million since 1990, landfill rates have dropped 5 million tons annually.

Statewide, Californians are now keeping 33 percent of their waste out of landfills, more than double what they were in 1990. In fact, since then we've kept more than 120 million tons of waste out of landfills. That's enough diverted material to fill a line of garbage trucks that would circle the world more than three times. Our recycling rate is the highest ever, and exceeds the national average of 31 percent.

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Best Creative Partnerships Program

Santa Cruz County Solid Waste and Recycling

Santa Cruz County's waste diversion goals are being met due to the many partnerships it has created, both with small businesses and with nonprofit organizations in the community.

The California Grey Bears, a local non-profit, seniors organization manages the County's recycling center at the Buena Vista Landfill. All revenue earned is used by the Grey Bears to deliver food weekly to over 2200 shut-ins and home-bound seniors in Santa Cruz County. The Valley Women's Club, another local nonprofit, oversees the recycling center at the Ben Lomond Transfer Station.

Both these recycling centers are located at the entrance of County sites, to allow for total recycling, prior to disposal. The recycling centers accept many varied materials, everything from cans and bottles, to scrap metal and large appliances, all free of charge. The non-profits are responsible for everything from the collection of materials, to the marketing of those materials. All revenue from recycled materials is split between the County and the non-profits, SO/SO.

The County has promoted the recycling center services through a series of display ads in local papers. To reach the entire community, these monthly ads promoting the many recycling services available at our disposal sites have been published in various local papers throughout the County. The County also developed an informative television commercial, which aired on local stations to alert the public to the accessibility of the recycling centers and the recycling opportunities available there.

A contract between the County and a local mulcher, Vision Recycling, allows recycling all of the wood and yard waste collected at the disposal sites. This partnership, helps create jobs, and of course, adds to efforts in reducing the amount of garbage that ends up in the County landfill.

The County of Santa Cruz has another beneficial partnership with a local non-profit, The Salvation Army. The Salvation Army has installed a permanent collection trailer at both of the County disposal sites, at no cost to the County. The result has been an increased amount of reusable material being diverted from the landfill. It is a win-win situation for both parties. The Salvation Army has a trailer, which is locked up behind the gates to reduce illegal dumping, which usually accounts for up to 30 percent of their trailer loads at other locations. The County increases its diversion and makes it even more convenient for the community to recycle everything, at one site. These one-stop recycling centers provide a much-needed outlet for most recyclable materials.



**1999 Trash Cutters Awards
Best Creative Partnerships Program**

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The County also works extensively with Ecology Action of Santa Cruz to increase participation in waste reduction. Ecology Action developed many of the County's informative waste reduction pamphlets, including the following:

- Buy-Recycled Guide, which contains listings of products made from recycled materials, and the businesses that sell them;
- Where *To Recycle* Guide for Santa Cruz County, which provides a complete list of buy-back, drop-off and curbside collection opportunities throughout the County; and
- *Composter's Resource Guide* that lists information on composting, including where to buy bins, and even books on the subject. Ecology Action also operates the Rotline, a phone line that dispenses a variety of information on composting to interested parties.

One of the programs that is designed for waste reduction partnerships is the County's Waste Reduction Grants Programs. Applicants must be a local non-profit, community group, or small, locally owned private business. Grants are awarded for amounts from \$1,000 to \$25,000, based on the needs of the project. Grants are bestowed on projects designed to do one of the following in the area of Waste Reduction:

- Source Reduction
- Waste Diversion
- Market Development
- Education

Currently, the County has over eleven active grants, and more pending. This program generates unique and creative ways of waste reduction, using the ideas and commitment of devoted community members. Information regarding these grants is included on the County's web page (www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us), to increase access to this outstanding program.

CONTACT:

R. Patrick Mathews
Solid Waste & Recycling Manager
(831) 454-2160
patrick.mathews@co.santa-cruz.ca.us



Best Pubic Information Program

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Santa Cruz County Solid Waste and Recycling

The County of Santa Cruz created its Public Information Program to increase waste reduction and participation in its many recycling programs. The program is funded through revenue from tipping fees and service fees. The program has come up with many unique and creative ways to get its waste reduction and recycling messages across.

To reach the average person, full-page **ads** are placed in the regional newspaper, and smaller ads in the smaller, more local papers. Each ad is titled, "Waste Reduction Tip of the Month", and contains valuable information on the many recycling opportunities that exist within the County, as well as the benefits that come with utilizing these opportunities. The advertisements are formatted to have a similar look, to increase familiarity with the programs. The County has begun to experiment with printing these ads in Spanish, to reach non-English speaking citizens.

One of the barriers to placing ads is that not everyone reads them. Many people skip over ads when they are reading their papers. To overcome this problem, a related article is now submitted to the papers, as an accompaniment to the display ads. More often than not, the papers pick up these articles, printing them as a staff article. Many of these articles have even found there way onto the front page. By preparing these, topics receive a sort of double-coverage, putting our waste reduction message out there to reach parts of the community who may have missed the display advertisements. Another benefit to these articles being published--it costs the program nothing: the message gets out at no additional cost.

Aside from display ads and their accompanying articles, other innovative and enterprising ways to encourage recycling and waste diversion are used. At a significantly lower cost than display ads, aerial advertisements are used to increase participation in recycling programs. The County's had great success with these, particularly during its biannual County Cleanup Days. They've seen a significant and immediate increase in the participation in the Cleanup Days when these flights occur, During the Spring Cleanup in May, within an hour or two of the flight, there was a line outside the gatehouse of individuals with loads of recycling. Those in line said it was directly due to the aerial flights. They noticed the banner behind the plane, and packed up their recyclables and headed to the recycling centers. This generated a notable reduction in materials landfilled.

The local CBS television affiliate has created some commercial television spots to educate the community of the recycling services available throughout the County. The **station** agreed to design, create, shoot, and edit the County's spots for only \$500 each, with the commitment of \$500 worth of airtime a month, for three months. Additionally, when the

1999 Trash Cutters Awards
Best Public Information Program

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County wanted to produce three commercials, they waived all production fees for the third commercial. They also matched the spots with free spots. For every two spots the County paid for, it received an extra airing, free of charge. These television spots have reached an otherwise, untapped market. As an added benefit, the new relationship with the station garnered more free publicity for the recycling programs. The County was invited to their live morning show, to discuss the recycling programs, reaching thousands of viewers. The station was so delighted with the show they invited the County to come back whenever it wished.

The County's used other unique ideas to get recycling messages circulated. Partnering with a local art center and mall, the County erected a recycled art display in a window at the only major mall located in Santa Cruz County. The display was comprised of art made from discarded materials. Local artists created the artwork, and the County raised a sign, explaining it was recycled art, with a mention of the art showing at the art center. The art center was instrumental in collecting the artwork, and the County worked, with the permission of the mall representative, to construct the display. Three parties, all cooperating together, for a mutually beneficial project: the art center received some free publicity for their art show and the mall received a free and unique window decoration. Most importantly, this project propelled the County's concept of waste reduction and helps people to envision new and exciting uses for things they would otherwise throw away. Another great aspect to this project--it required zero funding.

Small projects are also incorporated in the Public Information Program. The County shares its brochures and pamphlets with other jurisdictions, to increase awareness of the recycling opportunities available in the County. Pamphlets on our various recycling programs are also distributed to libraries throughout the County. These pamphlets are made available to the public for free and educate them on the many recycling services available in the County. In branches that do not have enough space to display the free pamphlets, the County distributes postcards allowing residents to order pamphlets and/or brochures.

The County is working on two additional small library projects:

- a Recycling Resource Binder for the libraries, which includes all of the recycling pamphlets and allows anyone to access them and copy them at will, and
- recycle displays to erect in various library locations throughout the County.

Lastly, Santa Cruz County has placed all of its recycling information on the County web page (www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us), establishing even more access to this valuable waste reduction information.

CONTACT:

R. Patrick Mathews
Solid Waste & Recycling Manager
(531) 454-2160
patrick.mathews@co.santa-cruz.ca.us



Best Schools Program

Santa Cruz County Solid Waste and Recycling

The Public Schools Resource Conservation Program was created in 1997 through a cooperative effort of local government, schools and community non-profit organizations. Under the guidance of the Santa Cruz County Integrated Waste Management Local Task Force (LTF), the County joined with all its incorporated cities: Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville, to solicit a proposal for a comprehensive schools program that would combine classroom teaching with hands-on recycling.

In response, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (COE) joined with the Life Lab Science Program (LLSP) and Ecology Action of Santa Cruz County (EASC) to propose the three part Public Schools Resource Conservation Program (PSRCP). This program offers

- classroom teaching focusing on solid waste issues integrated with biological science and nutrition,
- onsite, hands-on recycling, composting and waste reduction activities and
- community outreach.

The long-term goal of the PSRCP is to have a presence in all 52 public schools in the county, including elementary, middle and high schools. The program started with five elementary schools, doubled to 10 in the second year and in the third year expanded to include two high schools and a middle school.

The LTF, as the inter-agency solid waste forum for the county, provides oversight for the project through periodic reviews and annual budget development. The program operates on an annual budget under \$150,000 and is funded through a combination of local government contracts, state grants and private sector donations. Each city and the county contribute a percentage of the total cost, in proportion to its population. The primary waste hauler in the county, Waste Management of Santa Cruz County, contributes a lump sum dollar amount plus time and materials to supply and service the on-site recycling collection systems.

The COE administers the program and works with each school district to make sure that the program achievements are recognized and that cost savings from reduced disposal charges, resulting from waste diversion activities of the PSRCP, are properly acknowledged and channeled back to the individual schools. The COE also promotes the program at-large and obtains state funding where possible.

One unique feature of this program is teacher training and professional development. Each year LLSP conducts a three-day intensive teacher-training institute using curricula LLSP has developed and tailored to the specifics of Santa Cruz County. Examples in the teaching lesson are based on names, places and events that are local and easily recognizable by the students, contributing to a sense of place and bio-system. The curricula workshop also includes teacher input to updating and crafting the curriculum to



1999 Trash Cutters Awards Best Schools Program

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keep it as locally relevant as possible. During the year LLSP also conducts special topic seminars and classroom implementation workshops. The PSRCP provides funding for teacher release time to attend and arranges for continuing education credit.

The most important aspect of the program is the blending of classroom teaching and hands-on waste reduction activity at the school. When the program is first introduced at a school, Ecology Action conducts a comprehensive waste audit to establish a baseline database for existing waste reduction and disposal activities. Each year a waste reduction goal is set for each school and an end-of-the-year waste audit provides an indicator of the progress that year. The first year saw a 35 percent reduction in disposal quantities for the five schools (146 tons). The second year saw a 23 percent reduction for the second batch of 5 schools (145 tons). Projected over all 52 schools, this could total over 1,500 tons per year. Combined savings in avoided disposal costs for the 10 schools totaled some \$20,000 for the two years!

Ecology Action also provides ongoing technical assistance to the schools during the year to establish and maintain the recycling and waste reduction activities. These activities include classroom and administrative office recycling of fibers and containers; composting and waste reduction. The composting operations make use of the Life Lab Garden composting system that has received national recognition. In addition, programs to compost lunch food waste will be established this year using worm bins. Last year, "litter-less lunches" were held to demonstrate the benefits and ease of reusable food containers. The Thermos Corporation assisted this project with a donation of containers.

The use of teacher compacts has successfully avoided potential problems related to teacher participation in the program. The COE sought out highly motivated teachers and asked them to agree to both conduct the program and commit to certain leadership actions in support of the program. The response has been outstanding.

Community outreach is an outgrowth of the leadership role. Two teacher/leaders are recruited from each school to act as recycling coordinators for the students' activities and to work with Life Lab Garden experts to build and maintain their own gardens. After participating in a specially designed curriculum that incorporates environmental education and nutrition education into mainstream education (you are what you eat), students become leaders in the homes and communities when they host recycling and composting fairs at the Life Lab Gardens! One of the best methods for students to learn is to have them share what they know. These community events are organized by the teacher/leaders and are held to promote awareness within and beyond the schools out into the community.

CONTACT:

R. Patrick Mathews
Solid Waste & Recycling Manager
(831) 454-2160
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