



Waste Wise e-News

A Tool for Environmental Sustainability Resources and Networking

January 10, 2012

FOOD WASTE

In 2010, organic waste, which includes yard trimmings, food scraps, wood waste, paper, and paper board products, comprised approximately two-thirds of the U.S. municipal solid waste (MSW) stream. This means that of the 250 million tons of MSW generated in 2010, around 85 million tons were classified as organic (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). Although paper/paper board and yard trimmings still make up a significant portion of U.S. MSW (28 percent and 14 percent), there are increasingly more opportunities to recycle these waste streams across the country. However, food waste (14 percent of total MSW) still remains largely unaddressed in the United States, and a significant portion of food waste, as much as 30 percent, thrown away by both the commercial and residential sectors is unnecessary.

Consequences of throwing away food waste go beyond the impact of the landfill. Wasted food is also money out the door both in purchasing and disposal costs. According to a recent BSR report, "[Waste Not, Want Not](#)," food wasted in the United States each year is worth about \$48.3 billion. Food can add substantially to a business's disposal costs, especially for those paying for weight of the trash. Wasted food product as a result of food prep, manufacturing processes and surplus stock can add up to thousands of dollars in lost revenue for businesses.

In addition to affecting a business's bottom line, food waste can be connected with freshwater usage. According to a 2009 study published in PLoS called "[The Progressive Increase of Food Waste in America, and Its Environmental Impact](#)," it is estimated that more than a quarter of all freshwater use in the United States can be linked to food waste, assuming that agriculture uses approximately 70 percent of the freshwater supply.

Tackling food waste requires addressing steps throughout the supply chain, from pre-production (agriculture) to consumption, and every step in between. Improved methods of labeling food can reduce confusion over whether a food product is truly expired. Addressing logistics by sourcing locally whenever possible should eliminate loss (and increased costs) from transportation. And formal training processes for food handlers will improve knowledge about handling and preparation processes to decrease waste. For waste that is generated after prevention strategies are implemented, the United States needs to look at more diversification of food waste/organics reuse and recycling opportunities such as donating to people, food-to-livestock, commercial composting, and anaerobic digestion to provide more wide scale options for communities to better manage the waste. In addition to being more consistently widespread, food waste management options need to be perceived as cost effective and convenient for the businesses that participate, as well as for the service providers/managers of the waste.

For more information on the impact of food waste in the United States or for assistance managing your food waste/organics waste stream, contact Minnesota Waste Wise.

EVENTS

Minnesota Green Chemistry Conference 2012

U of M Humphrey School of Public Affairs Conference Center

Thursday, January 26

8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

For more information, [click here](#).

WASTE WISE FEATURED AS MISSISSIPPI MARKET'S JANUARY ECO STAMP NON-PROFIT

Minnesota Waste Wise member Mississippi Market has selected Waste Wise as its nonprofit recipient of January's Eco Stamp donation program. Each time you shop at Mississippi Market and use your own reusable bags, you earn 5¢ per bag to either discount your own groceries or donate to a worthy nonprofit organization. While 5¢ might not sound like much, it adds up quickly! Your efforts help save resources and benefit local organizations, such as Minnesota Waste Wise and the *It's in the Bag* program. For more information on the Eco Stamp donation program, [click here](#).

WASTE WISE FREE RECYCLING PROGRAM NOW ACCEPTS LAPTOPS & SMALL ELECTRONICS

Participate in our free recycling program for printer cartridges, cell phones, laptops and small electronics. To order boxes/mailing labels or for more information, go to www.mnwastewise.org.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Thank you to our new and renewing members:

PATRON

Minnesota Beverage Association (St. Paul)

CORPORATE

General Mills (Golden Valley)

Pearson (Bloomington)

Peer Engineering (Eden Prairie)

Seelye Craftsman Co. (Plymouth)

Thomson Reuters (Eagan)

SUPPORTER

City of Burnsville (Burnsville)

Daily Journal/North Star Publishing (International Falls)

DecoPac (Anoka)

Fairview Southdale (Edina)

Fairview Ridges (Burnsville)

Fairview Riverside (Minneapolis)

John Roberts Company (Minneapolis)

Mackenthun's Country Market (Waconia)

North Anoka Control Systems (Ham Lake)

S & T Office Products Inc. (St. Paul)

Schlagel, Inc. (Cambridge)

Sico America Inc. (Minneapolis)

St. Cloud VA Healthcare System (St. Cloud)

The Inn on Lake Superior (Duluth)

SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Is your business interested in promoting its services to more than 1,000 businesses statewide? Would you like to position your business as a sustainability leader? For \$199, your business will become the sole sponsor of a monthly Waste Wise e-News edition to include premier logo placement and an advertisement. Contact Sam Hanson at (651) 292-4675 or shanson@mnchamber.com to secure your sponsorship today!

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Not a member but would like to join? Want to take full advantage of your member benefits? Contact Sam Hanson at (651) 292-4675 or shanson@mnchamber.com.

Disclosure: Waste Wise e-News is a tool to inform our members of current events or waste issues. The content of Waste Wise e-News is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Minnesota Waste Wise does not endorse any of the following waste services, organizations or events. Any such portrayal is unintentional by Minnesota Waste Wise.

