

Material waste recovery rate on the rise

The statewide solid waste recovery rate for 2001 is 46.8 percent, according to the Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ), which recently released figures from its 10th annual survey of garbage haulers and private recycling companies.

The new rate reflects a 3.7 percent increase in actual material waste recovery in Oregon, plus another 4.2 percent increase attributable to new ways of calculating the rate, as directed by the Oregon Legislature. Last year's waste recovery rate was 38.9 percent.

The 3.7 percent increase in actual material recovery can be attributed to a variety of trends that include more recycling of reusable material and improved waste recovery programs in communities throughout the state, said DEQ.

"There are many factors at work here to give us the 46.8 percent rate, which is the highest level ever," said Mary Sue Gilliland, of DEQ.

"The bottom line is that recycling is working. Efforts put into waste recovery by local governments are paying off significantly," said Gilliland.

The recovery rates include materials collected for recycling or composting, as well as some material burned for energy recovery.

Major types of materials recovered include paper, organics (wood waste, yard debris and food waste), metals, plastics, glass, used tires and used motor oil.

Among some of the more notable trends:

*An increase in material recycling of roughly 12 percent was spurred in part by more curbside recycling programs statewide, the move to co-mingle different types of recyclable items at the curb, and the identification of more

processors and end markets for Oregon recyclable materials.

*A broadening of the waste recovery rate calculation in the new statewide waste prevention and recovery legislation (House Bill 3744) passed by the Legislature in 2001.

The change in law allows the state to incorporate waste reduction credits from county washed backyard residential composting and reuse programs initiated by those local governments in the statewide recovery calculation. It also allowed Marion County to include recyclable materials burned for energy in its waste recovery rate. These changes contributed to 4.2 percent of the statewide waste recovery increase.

*A decline of roughly 6 percent in the amount of materials going to landfills, reflecting a growing effectiveness of county and local programs that encourage waste prevention and product recycling. For example, more communities are offering yard debris collection/recycling programs and are promoting residential backyard composting.

*A weakened economy, which likely encouraged people to reuse existing goods rather than dispose of them.

*A slight increase in per capita waste generation. Despite Oregonians' increased generation of waste, more of that waste is being recycled or recovered. Still, solid waste officials would like to see more Oregonians reduce the amount of waste they generate in the first place, Gilliland said.

In 2001, each Oregonian generated 2,676 pounds of waste, an increase of 1.2 percent from the 2,645 pounds in 2000. The previous year had seen a slight decrease in the amount of per capita waste

generated. DEQ believes that the 2001 increase is partially caused by improvements in data collection.

Per capita disposal decreased. In 2001, each Oregonian disposed of 1,521 pounds of waste, down 5.9 percent from the 1,617 pounds per capita in 2000. Overall disposal declined from 2.78 million tons in 2000 to 2.64 million tons in 2001. This was the second year in a row in which tonnage disposal levels declined. (2000 was the first year of a declining disposal level ever recorded.)

The total amount of recovered material collected in 2001 was 2,004,024 tons, or 1,154 pounds per person. That represents a 12.3 percent per capita increase from the 1,765,813 tons (1,028 pounds per capita) in 2000.

At the county level, total waste recovery rates ranged from a high of 55.7 percent in Marion County to a low of 11.2 percent in Lake County. The Portland metro area (Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties are calculated as one watershed) reported a 54.9 percent total waste recovery rate, up from 2000's 51 percent rate.

All counties met their required waste recovery rates with the exception of Hood River and Wasco counties. Oregon law states that Oregon should meet a statewide waste recovery rate of 45 percent for the calendar year 2005. New watershed goals, to be effective in 2005, were spelled out in House Bill 3744.

Of all the materials recovered in 2001, organics (mainly wood waste and yard debris) made up 40.9 percent, followed by paper (33.9 percent), metals (13.4 percent), glass (4.7 percent), and plastics (1.3 percent). Other assorted waste recovered (including such items as tires, paint and motor oil) totaled 5.8 percent.

Ore. Attorney Gen. requires credit card company reform

Oregon Attorney Gen. Hardy Myers recently announced the filing of an agreement with national credit card issuer First USA/Bank One requiring the company to make sweeping reforms in its business practices in order to protect consumers.

The Assurance of Voluntary Compliance (AVC), signed by First USA/Bank One, but admitting no law violation, was filed in Marion County Circuit Court and is part of a 28-state and Puerto Rico settlement.

"Businesses selling their customer lists to telemarketers must insure that those companies deal honestly with these consumers and not use deceptive and misleading trade practices," Myers said.

"This agreement will hold First USA/Bank One responsible for the way telemarketers do business with its customers," he said.

The agreement settles a two-year investigation led by attorneys general in New York, California, Ohio and Vermont looking at consumer complaints about the marketing practices of the defendants' business partners.

The investigation revealed that since the mid-1990s First USA/Bank One received a percentage of sales made by companies selling various products and services to bank customers.

Customers complained that deceptive pitches by these companies resulted in consumers being charged for products and services that they did not knowingly agree to purchase.

In some cases, telemarketers promoted free trial offers on dental plans or credit card loss protection service. When the trial period ended,

consumers did not understand that the companies would charge their credit card for continued use unless the consumers canceled during the trial period.

First USA/Bank One agreed to pay the lead states \$135,000 each to cover the costs of the investigation. Oregon and other participating states will receive \$26,041.

In addition, First USA/Bank One agreed to reforms that include:

*Prohibiting customer charges unless there is express authorization of the account holder.

*Requiring the bank to review and approve all telemarketing scripts and marketing materials.

*Requiring telemarketing firms to comply with all applicable consumer protection laws;

*And requiring clear and conspicuous disclosure of the identity of the telemarketing company if the script makes reference to First USA/Bank One.

For more information phone (877) 877-9392. Justice is online at www.doj.state.or.us.

Sports Challenge by Walter Branch

1. What did Albert Rizzo do for a record-setting 108 hours, nine minutes in the Mediterranean?
 2. Who became the first U.S. woman since Wilma Rudolph to hold a 200-meter world record?
 3. Who claimed Don Mattingly's 1987 record home run streak distracted the team?
 4. What baseball team became the first to award players an average salary of over \$700,000?
 5. What league suffered the longest player strike in pro sports history?
 6. Who succeeded Tom Flores as coach of the Los Angeles Raiders?
 7. How many light towers shine on Wrigley Field?
 8. Who threw the pitch Kirk Gibson hit for a home run to win the first game of the 1988 World Series?
 9. What National League team did pitcher Bruce Hurst leave his beloved Red Sox for?
 10. What frequently-retired boxer was lured into the ring again to battle Donny LaLonde?
- Sports Challenge Answers
 1. Tread water; 2. Florence Griffith-Joyner; 3. George Steinbrenner; 4. The New York Yankees; 5. National Football League; 6. Mike Shanahan; 7. Six; 8. Dennis Eckersley; 9. The San Diego Padres; 10. Sugar Ray Leonard
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DHS announces new leaders

Jim Neely, assistant director of Oregon Dept. of Human Services, Children, Adults & Families (DHS), was recently appointed the agency's deputy director.

Margy Johnson, DHS Health Services deputy assistant director, was named Finance and Policy Analysis head.

"Jim and Margy have long and varied experience in DHS. They'll be essential members of our leadership team," said acting DHS Director Jean I. Thorne.

Neely, 53, of Eugene, joined DHS in 1974 as a welfare assistance worker. He has

held a variety of leadership positions with the agency's welfare programs, including management of operations in Eugene.

Johnson, 57, of Salem, has been with DHS since 1982, working primarily with mental health programs and services for people with disabilities. She has agreed to hold the new position through the 2003 legislative session. A recruitment for the position will then be conducted.

DHS oversees a range of health and social services programs. The state's largest governmental agency, it has approximately 9,500 employees.

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FRIDAY, FEB. 14
 Cheeseburger, chicken sandwich, hamburger, turkey & cheese sub, roast beef sub, chef salad, Mandarin chicken salad, Hawaiian pizza, pepperoni pizza, beef tacos, hot dog & fries
MONDAY, FEB. 17
 No classes
Washington's Birthday TUESDAY, FEB. 18
 Cheeseburger, chicken sandwich, hamburger, turkey & cheese sub, roast beef sub, chef salad, Mandarin chicken salad, sausage pizza, supreme pizza, beef and bean burrito, rib-b-que, potato wedge
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 19
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