

Trash talk? No, it's solid waste, recycling, hazardous waste, etc!



**Solid Waste Coordinator
Roy Weedman**

What do you know about solid waste, the stuff that used to be called garbage? Columbia County's new Solid Waste Coordinator, Roy Weedman, knows a lot about solid waste. With the new term comes new ways of handling, such as recycling, E-Cycling, and hazardous waste handling.

Most of us know who picks up the garbage we put in our garbage can, because we pay their bill. Some of us are still getting used to curbside recycling. In the early days of curbside recycling, paper/cardboard and glass, each had its own container. Many now have a big green rollcart and can combine

metal, cardboard, some plastics, paper, even empty aerosol cans. Glass is separate, but all colors now go in the same bin.

Since starting last September, one of Weedman's jobs is to oversee the Columbia County Transfer Station, where the contents of our garbage cans and recycling are collected. Another part of his job is handling Household Hazardous Waste events and disaster debris. He also took over Dump Stoppers; trying to keep people from (or catching people who are) dumping in the forests and off roads in Columbia County.

His goal is to help everyone in Columbia County, "be responsible for your waste. Hopefully this would deter people from illegally dumping their garbage and foster a sustainable lifestyle that includes reducing what they purchase, reusing items, then recycling them once the product has used up all of its 'life,'" Weedman said. His job description includes education and outreach regarding waste minimization, hazardous materials/waste, and recycling.

Weedman also provided some specific information. E-Cycling is the program for recycling computers, computer

monitors and televisions by taking them to the county Transfer Station, 1601 Railroad Ave., St. Helens, on the last Saturday of the month from 8:00 a.m. to noon, when they also accept Hazardous Waste Materials. E-Cycling does NOT include mice or keyboards, printers, copiers, scanners, cell phones or other electronics or appliances. On the other hand, the Columbia County Transfer Station is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and will take cell phones, keyboards, printers, fax machines, old phones and rechargeable batteries.

Materials that shouldn't go into the garbage can these days include paints, solvents, pesticides, herbicides, needles. These items, plus other chemicals, propane tanks, fluorescent lamps and ballasts, batteries, used oil, gasoline/diesel, antifreeze, even fireworks, can and should be taken to the Columbia County Transfer Station when they accept Hazardous Materials on the last Saturday of the month. And, yes, they take these hazardous items free of charge.

With a degree in Environmental Studies from Portland State in 1999, Weedman has worked for a number of compa-

nies in various recycling and solid waste positions. Before coming to Columbia County, he was working for the Port of Portland handling waste minimization and hazardous materials, in addition to recycling. When they downsized, the job was parceled out to other departments. Now he commutes from the home in Clackamas that he shares with girlfriend, Cynthia, three kids, two dogs, two cats, pet rats and lizards.

Now, for answers to a couple of recycling mysteries. Why can't we put plastic grocery bags in our recycle? They jam up the machine that sorts the combined recycling. Many grocery stores have containers just for that purpose, so take them back to those stores. Or,

better yet, replace the plastic bags with your own reusable grocery bags.

Next question – Do we still have to take off the paper and crush our cans? No, not with the new commingling of recyclables. In fact, it is preferred that cans and containers, including milk cartons, not be crushed. The machine they go through expects flat items to be paper, so other items should have air space in them allowing the machine to sort them correctly.

Weedman's final piece of advice on solid waste, "Try to be responsible for your waste – call me for help." Weedman can be reached at 503-397-7263 or email him at roy.weedman@co.columbia.or.us .

Mayor, councilor now questioning Development Plan

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this doesn't feel right to me. My preference is to adopt the old one but incorporate the good stuff from this." As a result, the 1997 plan, with changes, received a first reading at the May 3 meeting as a resolution.

A number of resolutions or ordinances were adopted at the two meetings, including the following:

- The second reading of Resolution 864 – providing new standards and rules for the building code ordinances;

- The first and second readings of Ordinance 865, vacating a portion of the alley between Maple and Cougar (where the FEMA trailers were);

- Resolution 05-10 amending 14-08 on the fee schedule for administrative and planning fees;

- Resolution 06-10 declaring the Hillsboro Argus Courier-Mail to be the official newspaper for the City of Vernonia, to be used for publishing public

notices;

- Resolution 14-10 establishing new disposal fees. Waste Management has increased their garbage rates effective April 1 and this resolution allows the new rates to go into effect in Vernonia. The increase for one 32-gallon can per week went up by \$1.20 per month, for example;

- Approved a resolution declaring two Vernonia Police vehicles surplus so they can be sold.

In other business, council:

- Asked City Administrator Bob Young to find funds of up to \$3,000 to correct courtyard drainage and sidewalk problems at the Vernonia Community Learning Center; up to \$3,000 to seal cracks on the path around Vernonia Lake, and the amount needed to codify ordinances.

- Gave consensus for the Mayor to appoint Marilyn Nicks to the Economic Development Committee (EDC), where Nicks will act as liaison between the

EDC and the newly formed Downtown Association. Nicks is president of the new association.

- Asked Young to resolve the issue of DAD's Recycling, by the end of July. At that time, the business would either need to be moved out of the floodway or closed.

- Heard that a lease agreement has been worked out between the city and the community garden group to allow the garden to be developed.

- Denied a request by the Economic Development Committee to reduce System Development Charges by 50% for new homes for the next 24 months or 24 homes, whichever occurred first. Citing the fact that most new homes cost over \$200,000 and the amount in question would be just over \$4000, council refused to set such a precedent.

The next regularly scheduled council meeting will be held May 17, at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.

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