

Recycling in Cyberspace



So, you want to be a recycling coordinator? Part 3

by Roger Guttentag

Welcome to a new year of Recycling in Cyberspace! This month's column is part three of a series that started last November, in which I began developing a comprehensive Webliography of information resources aimed at new and veteran recycling coordinators.

Its purpose is to provide the equivalent of a "virtual" reference library on a wide range of topics I believe most recycling coordinators should know something about. The choice of sites is based primarily on their value to serve as a good starting point, either in providing a good introduction to a specific topic or providing links to other Web resources. As a reminder, the November and December columns listed Web sites that can serve as general libraries on all topics addressed by this series, thus should be consulted in conjunction to the sites listed below.

Commercial recycling

- Alameda County, California (StopWaste.org) – StopWaste Partnership
- Institute For Local Government – Commercial Recycling Resource Center
- Miami-Dade County, Florida – Reduce Your Waste
- Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) – Smart Paper Programs

The commercial waste stream (this includes industrial and institutional generators) can often equal or exceed residential waste in many communities. However, unlike residential waste, commercial waste sources can be very diverse in terms of the quantities and material types disposed, location, infrastructure and service requirements. In addition, there may be pre-existing recycling arrangements for certain high-value commercial waste streams that should not be disturbed by public programs.

For these very reasons, raising com-

mercial waste recycling rates can be very challenging. It can be done, however, and the Web sites listed for this topic can certainly show you how. Each site provides many links to different commercial recycling program resources, as well as offers practical methods and tools. Particularly noteworthy is the Reduce Your Waste site, which is an online tutorial for developing a recycling program that is tailored to a specific industry waste profile.

Construction and demolition (C&D) materials recycling

- Boston Society of Architects (BSA) – *Recycling Construction and Demolition Wastes*
- Construction Materials Recycling Association (CMRA) – Materials Web

sites

- Deconstruction Institute
- Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) – *Recycle Construction and Demolition (C&D) Debris*
- Whole Building Design Guide (WBDG) – Construction Waste Management Database

C&D recycling is a major low-hanging fruit with respect to diverting very large amounts of waste tonnage from local disposal facilities. The challenge presented by C&D materials is that C&D generation points can be very diverse, as well as transient, and the materials they produce are generally low value, meaning that, in order to be beneficial, applications for the materials need to be found close to their sources.

Nonetheless, much progress has been experienced, and gained, in developing

Web Address Directory

StopWaste.org
BPI

BSA – *Recycling Construction and Demolition Wastes*

Conservatree

CMRA

Deconstruction Institute

GEN

GRRN – Zero Waste

Green Seal

HGAC – *Recycle Construction and Demolition (C&D) Debris*

Inform – Waste Prevention
Institute For Local Government –
Commercial Recycling Resource
Center

Miami-Dade County (FL) –
Reduce Your Waste

NWPC

NRDC – Smart Paper Programs

PNPPRC

PSI

Reuse Alliance

WBDG – Construction Waste
Management Database

<http://tinyurl.com/stopwastepartnership>
www.bpiworld.org

<http://tinyurl.com/bsarecyclingguide>

www.conservatree.com

www.cdrecycling.org/materials

www.deconstructioninstitute.com

www.globalecolabelling.net

www.grrn.org/zerowaste

www.greenseal.org

www.recyclecddebris.com/rCDd

<http://tinyurl.com/informwasteprevention>
www.ca-ilg.org/commercialrecycling

<http://reduceyourwaste.org>

<http://tinyurl.com/nwpcjunkmail>

<http://tinyurl.com/smartpaper>

<http://pprc.org/hubs>

www.productstewardship.us

www.reusealliance.org

www.wbdg.org/tools/cwm.php

effective C&D recycling practices. Start with the BSA manual, which was written specifically for architects, contractors and other professionals who would be involved in managing these materials. Then go on to the Houston-Galveston site and consult their “resources” section, which has links to other sites, PDF guides, case studies and C&D composition data. Supplement this information with research from the other sites recommended, especially the Deconstruction Institute, and you’ll possibly learn how to prevent C&D waste in the first place.

Environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP)

- Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI)
- Conservatree
- Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN)
- Green Seal
- Pacific Northwest Pollution Prevention Resource Center (PNPPRC) – Topic Hub: Purchasing

We are constantly reminded of the fact that, without markets, there is no recycling. And, markets exist only if we buy the products they make. For many years, this logic has been the foundation for Buy Recycled programs. However, we also know that purchasing can have other environmental goals, such as preventing global warming, toxics reduction and energy conservation. The result is that Buy Recycled has now been folded into the more comprehensive EPP framework.

The PNPPRC has put together a good EPP overview with supporting Web links. Green Seal develops EPP standards and certifications for various products, such as cleaners and paints, and conducts research involving the development of EPP best practices. If you want to know about international organizations operating in a manner similar to Green Seal’s, then go to the GEN Web site. Conservatree is probably the best starting point for learning about paper products containing recycled content, and the BPI is devoted to promoting the use of compostable products.

Waste prevention and reduction

- Grassroots Recycling Network (GRRN) – Zero Waste

- Inform, Inc. – Waste Prevention
- National Waste Prevention Coalition (NWPC)
- Product Stewardship Institute (PSI)
- Reuse Alliance

Waste reduction is part of the waste management hierarchy, but it doesn’t often receive the attention it deserves. Each of these Web sites detail how waste prevention methods, such as re-use, product stewardship (producer responsibility) and smart (e.g. efficient) product utilization, can be effective solid waste management strategies. Even more so, and as argued by GRRN,

these methods can also be the central focus of a strategy leading to a zero-waste society.

Next month

This series will conclude next month, as I look to address such topics as school recycling and hard-to-recycle materials, like tires.

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