

RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Recycling plays an important role in reducing the amount of waste generated by Lancaster County residents and businesses. Every year, the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority manages more than 500,000 tons of waste. Countywide recycling efforts, administered by the Authority, allow for the substantial reduction of waste that would otherwise be processed at the Resource Recovery Facility or put in the Landfill. The recycling rate has grown since the Authority's plan was implemented in 1989 to reach the current rate of 36.6%. This accounts for over 186,400* tons of materials recycled in 2006.

As part of its integrated waste disposal system, the Authority has established a comprehensive program to reduce the amount of waste that requires processing. Forty-three (43) municipalities are currently served by curbside recycling programs. This means that approximately 87 percent of the county's population can participate in curbside recycling. All of these programs include newsprint, glass, plastic bottles and metal containers.

Rural communities sometimes the Authority provides drop-off-recycling centers can be found at the *Frey Farm* at the *Resource Recovery Facility*. additional centers.



do not have access to curbside recycling, so centers throughout the county. Drop-off *Landfill*, the *Transfer Station Complex* and Municipalities and other organizations sponsor

Recycling has taken hold in the Lancaster County business community as well. Managers have discovered that recycling makes economic sense. By reducing the amount of waste generated, waste disposal costs remain manageable. Many businesses are interested in protecting the environment, and in most cases recycling is the law. The same state legislation (Act 101) that mandates residential recycling in communities with 5,000 residents or more also requires recycling in commercial, industrial and institutional establishments within these communities. Materials collected in offices, factories and schools vary greatly, but most include office paper, corrugated cardboard, metal, plastic and glass containers.

In 2002, the Authority initiated a pilot curbside collection program for yard waste (leaves, woody material) in order to divert this material from the waste stream. The program was successful and quickly grew to include 39 municipalities that currently have some type of yard waste and /or leaf curbside collection program. There are also over a dozen private and public facilities where residents can drop off yard waste. The Authority also purchased a large shredder machine that processes yard waste into a coarse mulch product. The Authority provides an operator and transports the shredder to any municipality that has a large amount of yard waste to process, but doesn't have the means to do so. In 2006, 28,700 tons of yard waste was recycled.

The Authority is committed to assisting municipalities and businesses with their recycling efforts. Recycling staff members accomplish this by:

- Hosting municipal workshops that provide program details and options
- Providing model contracts, ordinances etc. that are the foundation of municipal recycling programs
- Supplying individual recycling containers to municipalities for distribution to homeowners and multi-family dwellings
- Preparing educational materials tailored to individual communities

The Authority's recycling staff also assists businesses, industries and institutions in developing and maintaining recycling programs. The staff consults with businesses, both from the Authority office and on-site, and will assist such operations by evaluating what can be recycled, how it can be collected and where it can be marketed. The Authority has produced several publications explaining office paper recycling and waste reduction options.

For the convenience of waste haulers who may have difficulty marketing recyclable materials, the Authority accepts commingled glass, plastic and metal containers at all Authority facilities and maintains a contract with a materials recovery facility for the processing and marketing of those items. In addition, the Authority accepts tires and white goods (large appliances) which are then sent to companies who process them for recycling. In 1992, the Authority began a program to recover and recycle chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) found in refrigeration units that damage the ozone layer. After CFC removal, white goods are sent to a recycling market where they are further processed.

Recycling is also practiced at the Authority's Household Hazardous Waste Facility (HHW). A computer recycling program was launched in 2001, one of the first of its kind in the northeast. In 2003, cell phones were added; residents can drop off these materials free of charge, and in doing so, keep lead, metals and plastics out of the waste stream. Other materials (or their components) that are recycled at HHW are: antifreeze, motor oil, mercury (found in fluorescent bulbs, glass thermometers, thermostats) car batteries and some household batteries.

Recycling is also incorporated into the daily operation of Authority facilities. For example, in 2006, at the Resource Recovery Facility, over 6,700 tons of ferrous metal are reclaimed from the ash and recycled. At the Frey Farm Landfill, the ash from the Resource Recovery Facility is recycled as daily cover in lieu of dirt. The Authority's offices have recycling bins for newspaper, office paper, plastic bottles and aluminum cans.

For more information about the Authority please contact our office at (717) 397-9968 or visit us at www.lcswma.org.

* Construction and Demolition waste is excluded when calculating recycling rates per the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's reporting requirements.