

CHAPTER FOUR - RECYCLING AND RESIDENTIAL COMPOSTING

Introduction:

Recycling comes after reduction and reuse but before composting and landfilling in the Oregon solid waste management hierarchy. The rationale for this placement is that recycling uses more physical and financial resources than the priorities before it but saves more resources than the ones that follow it. Recycling programs divert waste materials so they can be reprocessed and used instead of utilizing virgin commodities as raw materials for manufacturing. Examples of commonly recycled materials include office paper, newspaper, mixed waste paper, corrugated cardboard, glass containers, tinned steel cans, aluminum and other metals, plastic bottles, and motor oil. Mills and factories make new paper, containers, re-refined oil and a variety of items from these recycled materials. They are used in everything from automobiles to videotape cassettes.

Effective recycling programs conserve natural resources, reduce energy used in manufacturing, prevent environmental damage due to extraction processes, extend the life of landfill space, and decrease long-term costs of solid waste disposal in general.

Recycling programs can also confer benefits on the community by creating jobs and generating tax revenues, providing a social common ground and personal and community pride, and by educating people about taking responsibility for their actions related to waste generation and management.

Residential composting has the potential to become an important component of a Countywide solid waste management and reduction program. Residential composting programs require a relatively small initial investment to help citizens learn about and begin composting at home. The benefits for OAR 340-090-0030(3), General Requirements, states that a county responsible for solid waste management

residents are reduced solid waste volume and odor. Composting also reduces the need to purchase fertilizers and pesticides. Residential composting has further benefits such as improving soil health and fertility, providing a hands-on method of science education, increasing exercise and relaxation, and increasing a sense of personal responsibility and community pride. When households use their compost to improve the soil, they do more than just add nutrients to the soil. Compost worked into the soil increases aeration, helps control soil erosion, increases the soil water-holding capacity, reduces water demands of plants and trees, neutralizes soil toxins, and reduces mineral leaching from the soil. Plants growing in soil with added compost typically have a more extensive root structure and deeper root growth which makes them better able to withstand drought and freezing conditions.

Regulatory Requirements:

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 459 and 459A set a percentage recovery (recycling) goal specific to each county (or other designated wasteshed) and requires all counties to ensure provision of services to achieve that level of diversion from the solid waste stream. Morrow County is required to meet an 18 percent recovery rate by 2005 and a 20 percent rate starting in 2009.

Opportunity to Recycle:

OAR 340-090-4000 states that cities with more than 4,000 residents must choose among a list of recycling options, including curbside recycling. Boardman is approaching this population threshold and will be required to implement recycling programs according to OAR 340-090-0040 along with Morrow County for the Urban Growth Boundary when its population reaches 4,000 residents.

shall carry out a public education and promotion program that meets the following requirements:

1. An initial written or more effective notice or combination of both that is reasonably designed to reach each residential and commercial generator of recyclable materials, and that clearly explains why people should recycle, the recycling opportunities available to the recipient, the materials that can be recycled and the proper preparation of those materials for recycling.
2. Existing residential and commercial collection service customers shall be provided information, at least semi-annually, through a written or more effective notice or combination of both, listing the materials collected, the schedule for collection, the proper method of preparing materials for collection and an explanation of the reasons why source separation of materials for recycling is necessary.
3. Written information is to be distributed to disposal site users at all disposal sites with attendants, or alternatively, at more convenient locations. The written information shall include the following:
 - a. Reasons why people should recycle;
 - b. List of materials that can be recycled; and
 - c. Instruction for the proper preparation of recyclable materials.
4. At sites without attendants, a sign indicating availability of recycling at the site or at the more convenient location shall be prominently displayed that indicates materials accepted and hours of operation.
5. Identify and establish a procedure for citizen involvement for the development and implementation of an education and promotion program.
6. Notification and education materials

provided to local media and other groups that maintain regular contact with commercial and residential generators and the public in general, including local newspapers, trade publication, local television and radio stations, community groups, and neighborhood associations.

7. A person identified as the education and promotion representative for the appropriate jurisdiction to be the official contact to work with the other affected persons in matters relating to education and promotion for recycling.

OAR 340-090-0045(3)(a): Promotion of a residential composting program through public information and demonstration site or sites. This requirement for a composting 2% Recovery Rate Credit, includes:

- Promotion of the residential composting program through public information and a demonstration site or sites; and
- Two of the following:
 - (1) A program to encourage leaving grass clippings generated by lawn mowing on-site rather than bagging the clippings for disposal or composting;
 - (2) A composting program for local schools;
 - (3) An increase in availability of compost bins for residents; or
 - (4) Another program increasing a household's ability to manage yard trimmings or food wastes.

Oregon Revised Statute 459A.750: By January 1, 1995, the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Quality, shall integrate a recycling and waste reduction component into a required curriculum for all Oregon students in grades kindergarten through 12.

Current Recycling and Composting in

Morrow County:

Morrow County has mainly a rural population. Major commercial recycling collectors are too distant for effective use by citizens and businesses, therefore, recycling services are limited. Most of the current recycling efforts in the County are focused on providing recycling containers in various locations in the cities, the transfer station in Lexington and near Boardman, and at Finley Buttes Landfill. There have been no regular efforts on the part of the cities or the County to promote recycling.

Each city has a set of recycling containers provided by the local solid waste collector. The materials accepted for recycling are generally: flattened cardboard boxes, newspaper, glass, tin and aluminum. Recycling containers are also available at the County transfer stations near Lexington, Boardman and at Finley Buttes Landfill.

The County has no personnel dedicated to develop, implement and administer a recycling and residential composting program other than the people who run the transfer station and as occasional extra duties for the Public Works staff. The County does, however, have an informational brochure called "Recycle Today" which is available to citizens and businesses at County and city offices.

One local solid waste collector provides curbside cardboard recycling for its commercial customers. They also provide recycling information on their billing statements and in their newspaper advertisements.

Local media coverage of recycling news, efforts and methods are not printed or broadcast on a regular basis.

There is no coordinated or consistent promotional effort or policy in the County. No regular outreach is targeted to residents or businesses to persuade them to use what services are provided. Collection companies inform customers about services. The County does not supply information or promote the creation of brush and wood waste collection sites. A program in Morrow County could provide a brush and wood waste collection center, open or available,

available and how to prepare materials, but no one asks the public to participate or tells them why it is important to do so.

Opportunities for Recycling and Composting for Morrow County:

General Public Education Program Options

Education and media campaigns could be developed to promote voluntary recycling and composting activities. Without an awareness of the need and rationale for reducing waste, prevention efforts are unlikely to be successful. Both producers and consumers need to be educated about the importance of recycling programs. Information could be provided by mailings at County events such as fairs or at other scheduled community events.

Schools and Other Public Facilities

Educating school age children about responsible solid waste management including recycling and residential composting, could be an effective education tool. Formal education activities could include studying the advantages, economic and environmental, of recycling materials such as paper, cardboard, glass containers, tinned steel cans, aluminum and other metals, plastic bottles, and motor oil. In addition, field trips to local industries or agencies that practice recycling or composting; school awards programs; and, working with students to help them design recycling or composting plans for their own households could be carried out as well. Field trips to landfills and disposal sites could help emphasize the benefits of and need for, recycling and residential composting.

Youth involvement on recycling provided through school curricula has the potential to start lifelong recycling and composting habits and could often involve and educate their parents as well.

for use during normal working hours at or near every solid waste collection facility. This would count toward Morrow County's recycling recovery goal. A centralized yard debris and brush and wood waste

composting facility could be operated privately or by local government.

Private Recycling and Composting activities

Private sector businesses and nonprofit agencies in Morrow County currently provide a variety of informal recycling services, including scrap metal and cardboard recycling, and community and group recycling efforts to recycle newspapers and clothing, etc. There has been little publicity, encouragement or recognition offered to these entities for their significant contributions to waste recycling in the County.

Private recycling activities in the County are not licensed or permitted. The County would probably benefit from this licensing. A permitting process for recyclers, which would incorporate at least some of the core elements of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) program for recyclers would help assure that commercial recyclers have land use approval, have recycling knowledge and ability, and financial assurances to cover severe mismanagement of materials and facility closure.

The potential for private composting activities in Morrow County exists. The County has the opportunity to have a dialogue with private composters in the County to help promote residential composting and composting education.

The Port of Morrow

The Port has the authority and ability to encourage industries on Port property to initiate or increase recycling efforts. The Port, in conjunction with the County, could develop and circulate recycling guidelines and educational materials to these industries. The Port could also take internal action to promote recycling within the Port's jurisdiction.

Collectors

It is the responsibility of the solid waste collectors in the County to work with and inform all customers, including commercial accounts, of available waste recycling services. The franchised collectors could,

along with the County, develop and implement a robust Opportunity to Recycle program.

Reporting

Accurate, timely reporting by all recycling haulers, institution, and commercial businesses and local governments could greatly improve the likelihood of a successful County recycling and residential composting program. Recycling reporting is accomplished by several separate entities. Beverage container recycling is reported by the beverage companies and they must accurately report from which county they recovered the containers. Private recyclers, who recover scrap metal and other materials, report their recycling tonnages to the Department of Environmental Quality. Glass, cardboard, newspapers and other materials recovered by the franchised collectors is reported to the County each year in the recycling collectors' surveys.

Recommendations:

1. Add Recycling and Residential Composting to the Waste Prevention and Reuse Program discussed in Chapter 3.
2. Establish policies and programs for recycling and residential composting that support the County's efforts to meeting the recycling goals.
3. Target of at least one community or media event per year to promote recycling and residential composting.
4. Promote appropriate management of recycling businesses by requiring a permit for commercial, institutional and industrial recycling and composting activities in the County.
5. Require franchised solid waste collectors to regularly inform all of their customers of recycling and reuse services offered in the County in order to help meet recycling goals.