



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

SEPTEMBER 2011

WWW.RECYCLINGADVOCATES.ORG

Film Plastic Recycling – Status and Future

by Betty Patton

Plastic bags – who knew there were so many different kinds? We have low density, linear low density, medium density, and high density polyethylene, just to name a few. This includes grocery bags, dry cleaner bags, stretch film, bubble wrap, paper towel wrapping, and newspaper bags. And all of these need to be pulled out of our garbage cans, away from our material recovery facilities, and into the right recycling stream.

Chris Thomas with Waste Connections is the Markets Chair for the Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR). He and the organization have convened a workgroup to study the current status and the future for recycling of film plastics. This group has already begun its task with a kickoff conference call and Recycling Advocates is participating. The group includes representatives from the manufacturing sector, from material recovery facilities, from end users of the collected commodity, from haulers, and from local governments. AOR is also heavily represented, showing their dedication to progress.

The group is trying to define the issue as well as define success in our efforts. Early on in this process we will define our focus. For instance, is it going to be commercial or residential generators or both? Do we have everyone we need at the roundtable for discussion? What is our motivation and what are we trying to accomplish? RA Members, I urge you to, contact us if you have input on this topic, the problem definition, or on solutions.

The group has identified some goals. These are for the most part, the motivators that brought all of us together.

1. Establish best management practices for material recovery facilities (MRFs) to handle the material.
2. Expand definition of film plastics to the public to include the full spectrum of products.
3. Involve as many players as possible, define infrastructure, expansion opportunities, barriers and solutions; do not jump immediately to legislation.
4. Expand education and outreach to the public.
5. Decrease flow of film plastic to MRFs.
6. Increase recycling infrastructure.

The City of Portland has banned free plastic check out bags at grocery stores and this will be implemented October 15 of this year. RA believes that increased recycling in tandem with the ban will alleviate many of the problems associated with these products and will get the commodities back into the manufacturing stream where they belong. Recycling Advocates has a position on this workgroup and welcomes ideas and comments from the membership. We will report on the progress as this group continues to analyze the problem and pursue solutions.

BottleDrop: Oregon Redemption Centers

Part 2—The Oregon City Bottle Redemption Center

Last month we explored the Wood Village Bottle Redemption Center. This month we will give a board members impression of the Oregon City Bottle Redemption Center. We would love for our member's and friends to also visit the new Bottle-Drop centers and let us know what you think about them.

by Rick Paul



BottleDrop Locations

Wood Village

23345 NE Halsey Street
Wood Village, OR 97060

Oregon City

14214 Fir Street, Suite A&B
Oregon City, OR 97045

Both locations open 7 days a week, 9am - 6pm

1-800-460-6128
info@bottledropcenters.com

I have visited the Oregon City bottle return center, to compare it with the one in Wood Village. They are both clean and have signs helping the customer. Oregon City's facility is smaller and its design makes it feel smaller.

Curb appeal of the two facilities is about the same. The Oregon City facility does have green bags of unsorted containers prominently visible in the window. When you enter you find that the first room to the right is for customers who are having their bags of containers counted by the staff. The back room is where the self service customers go to use the machines. There were five machines, with only one for glass and cans. There was one for just cans, where you could pour the cans. Each machine does count the number of containers.

I found the cash machine's operation unclear. I was helped quickly by the staff, who could help me without coming out from behind the counter. I suspect they have had the opportunity to help others frequently.

The Wood Village facility is designed as one large room for the self service customers to use, with large windows. I felt a bit more closed in at the Oregon City facility. Both were clean and welcoming.

Now it is your turn to visit either place and write a review. Send your impressions to info@RecyclingAdvocates.org. . . Thank you

ADVOCACY CALENDAR

AOR Fall Forum, *Oregon City* September 21

This year's Fall Forum will focus on the future of carton recycling in Oregon. The Carton Council will open the discussion with background information on their organization as well success stories in carton recycling in other parts of the country and developments here on the West Coast. *Get details at www.aorr.org/forum.html.*

Business Recycling Workshop, *Hillsboro* September 22

Join the Washington County Recycle at Work program, with the City of Hillsboro and the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, for a free business recycling workshop. Gain a marketing advantage over your competitors — learn how to reduce the amount of waste your business sends to the landfill and save money on your bottom line. *Details at www.recyclewise.org*

Recycling Advocates Board Meeting October 24, 7-9 pm

Call 503-777-0909 for details.



What's Happening in Sustainable and Green Industries? Find out at the Portland GoGreen Conference

Hear from Hannah Jones from Nike, Jules Bailey from the Oregon House of Representatives, Lorie Wigle from Intel, Matt Donegan from Forest Capital Partners, Mayor Sam Adams plus 50 other speakers, visionaries and sustainable business leaders. The GoGreen '11 Conference takes place on Tuesday, Oct. 4 at the Gerding Theater at the Armory in Portland. Cost to attend is \$150 or \$125 each for groups of two or more. Call 503-226-2377 for community partner and non-profit rates. For information visit: <http://portland.gogreenconference.net/registration>.



The Board

Betty Patton
President

Rhett Lawrence
Vice-President

Johnny Leuthold
Secretary

Rick Paul
Treasurer

Rob Guttridge
At Large

Elizabeth Goodman
At Large

Kris Olson
At Large

Staff

Richard Lee-Berman
*Administrator
Editor
Webmaster*

www.recyclingadvocates.org • info@recyclingadvocates.org

P.O. Box 6736
Portland
Oregon, 97228
503-777-0909

Become a member now. . .



- \$25 Advocate \$50 Friend \$100 Supporter \$250 Sustainer
- Other _____ *I'm giving a gift membership to the recipient below**
- Contact me about volunteering for RA* *Don't sign me up for Action Alerts*

Please enclose a check and mail to: PO Box 6736, Portland OR 97228-6736 or visit www.RecyclingAdvocates.org/join.htm and pay by credit card or PayPal.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone, Day _____ Evening _____

Email _____

*Your name, if this is a gift membership _____

Your membership contribution to RA is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law