



# RECYCLING ADVOCATES

www.RecyclingAdvocates.org

June 2007

*Involving people in creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle*

## WE DID IT! Updated Bottle Bill and electronic waste legislation passes legislature

By Katy Daily

May 25, 2007 marks the historic day when, after 36 long years, the Oregon Legislature finally passed legislation expanding Oregon's landmark Bottle Bill to include water bottles. As much as any other piece of legislation, the Bottle Bill defines how we Oregonians think of ourselves and our environment and is the single most effective recycling program in American history. SB 707 will go a long way in increasing our overall recycling rate for beverage containers and will address the largest growing segment of empty containers that Oregonians currently aren't recycling.

The other major victory for the those of us interested in comprehensive recycling standards for the state of Oregon was the unanimous passage by both chambers of the Oregon legislature of the e-waste recycling bill, HB 2626. Some coined it the "feel good environmental legislation of the session" since there were no votes against it. The moniker shouldn't take away from the strength of the bill. For the first time in Oregon's history, this bill will create a program that establishes manufacturer responsibility for the end of life handling of covered products and is backed up with a strong landfill ban for those products.

On Thursday, June 7, Governor Kulongoski will sign into law both of Recycling Advocates' legislative priorities! Thanks to the work of many supporters, Oregonians can look forward to a convenient, free, environmentally responsible electronic waste recycling program and an expanded bottle bill that will take more than 100 million plastic water bottles out of our landfills and roadsides. Both bills will come into effect in January, 2009.

The overwhelming support the Electronic Waste Recycling bill, HB 2626, received in the legislature, is a testament to the great work that went into creating strong, diverse coalitions rather than an indication that it isn't a strong bill. It also shows that this issue really resonates with everyone, and that the legislature was motivated to find a solution to this ever growing 21st century problem.

HB 2626 creates a free, convenient and environmentally responsible recycling program that is financed by manufacturers who sell products into Oregon. Initially it will cover televisions, personal computers, laptops and monitors. It is free to anyone with 7 items or less to recycle. In 2010, these items will not be accepted at Oregon landfills.

We are very encouraged that HB 2626 creates a model where manufacturers are responsible for environmentally

sound end-of-life management of their products. We hope this model encourages the design of electronic products that are more durable, recyclable and less toxic. We also are confident that this bill will create the economic development for a robust electronic waste re-use and recycling industry in Oregon. There is also talk that HB 2626 may be the model for national legislation.

SB 707 could not be labeled the "kumbaya" bill of the session. Although there was bi-partisan support for expansion of Oregon's 36 year old Bottle Bill, the complexity, and at the same time the simplicity, of the current system made complete overhaul of the Bottle Bill very difficult to accomplish in 2007. In the end, a much scaled back SB 707 overwhelmingly passed the Senate (23-7, 20-8 concurrence) and the House (42-16) in what is still the most significant expansion of Oregon's Bottle Bill since its inception.

SB 707 will add bottled water to the list of covered products under the Bottle Bill in January 2009. It will also establish a 9 member task force that will be charged with looking at, among other things, establishing redemption centers, expanding the list of covered beverages and increasing the deposit. With Oregonians throwing out an estimated 125 million water bottles every year, this expansion represents a significant step in the right direction.

Even though there was widespread legislative and public support for expansion of the Bottle Bill, some of the biggest national grocers are threatening to undo SB 707 at the ballot box in November 2008. We hope the Bottle Bill Task Force is able to make recommendations, possibly as early as the shortened session in February 2008, and the legislature will pass even more comprehensive Bottle Bill reforms.

In the meantime – it is time to celebrate. The signing will be in the Governor's office, 9:30am on June 7. Recycling Advocates is hoping to co-host a party sometime in the next month (more details to follow.) We should all collective step back, take a deep sigh – then get back to advocating for more and better recycling!



## Earth Day 2007 - Portlanders Celebrate Earth Day in the rain

The Earth Day celebration at Woodlawn Park on Saturday, April 21 started under cloudy skies, but Portland being Portland, everyone came geared up for the weather. A good early crowd got the event going, wandering amongst the dozens of booths, tents and pavilions that had transformed the park into a mini eco-village.

Recycling Advocates volunteers were busy all morning setting up the events recycling stations and sorting area, with lots of help from some really enthusiastic Americorps volunteers that were helping out for the day. At our booth, lots of friendly folks were dropping by to check out all the recycling information we were giving out.

The rain began shortly before noon and remained pretty steady into the late afternoon. Fortunately, Portlanders don't let rain get in the way of a good Earth Day and the crowds of people kept flowing into the late afternoon. As dusk approached and the booths were starting to break down for the day, the event organizers decided to wrap up the music stages early. They were scheduled to go until 9:00pm, but the hours of rain and the dropping temperature thinned the crowd down to the point the event was finally shut down at 7:30pm. Despite the rain, Recycling Advocates did get a lot of people to engage and share our mission and recycling expertise. Board President, Betty Patton, and volunteers Kelly Caldwell and Gail Simmons all spent time during the day helping us spread the word.



Recycling Advocates did the event recycling throughout the day – it was hoped we would create an interactive experience for the event goers to participate in the event recycling. The rain did cause us to lower our expectations on that part of the program. However, the cleanup and recycling efforts proceeded with the dedication of a few outstanding volunteers who brought the bags of trash to a designated recycling area, which was covered by a 10' x 20' tent, complete with tables and chairs. Collection stations were located throughout the park. Sorting the trash began on Saturday evening, and went into full swing on Sunday. Buckets of water and brushes were used to clean food residue from the plates and cups, and compost was collected in 5 gallon buckets. Sorting the trash was accomplished by folks using plastic gloves, and each item that could be recycled was cleaned, and put in plastic bags and labeled.

Recycling Advocates owes a big thank you to both Marken

and Lindsey Newkirk who did most of the extensive separation of recyclables during and after the event. Recycling efforts resulted in less than one 35 gal. bag of waste that was sent to the landfill.

The recycling volunteers that took part in the sorting, cleaning, and bagging were Beth, Gail, Kristian, Lindsey, Margaret, Marken, Megan, Oso, Rachael, Shirl, Rick, and Tova. Thanks to all these folks for a great job well done, and to all those who supported the efforts of the cleanup.

The results of what was successfully (and unsuccessfully) recycled are as follows, with each bag weighed and recorded:

- ◆ **Paper:** including newspaper, plates, cups, signs, etc., 191 lbs.
- ◆ **Compost:** 156 lbs.
- ◆ **Cardboard:** 120 lbs.
- ◆ **Plastic:** bags, bottles, utensils (excluding the corn plastics below), 21 lbs.
- ◆ **Glass:** 15 lbs.
- ◆ **Corn plastic items:** utensils, plates, etc., 8 lbs
- ◆ **Aluminum foil:** 5 lbs.
- ◆ **Aluminum cans:** 2 lbs.
- ◆ **Flashlight batteries:** 1 lb.
- ◆ **Trash:** Items that could not be recycled, 21 lbs.

Out of a total of 540 lbs. of trash left behind after the event, all but 21 lbs was recycled. What a wonderful accomplishment! It proved to be the best results in recycling since recycling efforts began at the 2002 City Repair Earth Day Celebration.

- Oso Martin



### RECYCLING ADVOCATES

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## New Bottle Bill taskforce to recommend further enhancements of our bottle return system

Our new bottle bill legislation introduces a multi-step process for further improvements to our bottle return system. SB707 (see page 1) has added water beverages to our container deposit legislation. Another key provision of the new legislation sets up a task force to look into other changes to truly modernize our approach. This nine member task force is charged with studying and making recommendations on beverage container collection and refund matters. Some of the topics for this task force are (1) establishing and paying for redemption centers, (2) expanding the list of beverages covered, (3) increasing the refund value, (4) limiting the redemption of containers purchased out of state, (5) and collecting and utilizing the unredeemed deposits. This is not an exhaustive list; but a suggested starting place. The membership of this task force has been defined in the legislation to avoid too much industry involvement, but to include process and industry knowledge.

The new bill directs the task force to return to the legislature with recommendations by November 2008. However, the way this is playing out now, many suspect an effort will be made to move this forward to have recommendations ready by a special legislative session planned for February 2008.

As information from the task force becomes available during their deliberation process, we will present our members with the highlights of the task force's recommendations.

## Speak up to protect the Earth

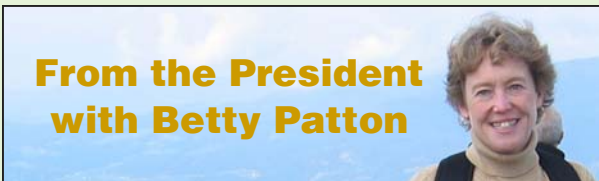
So many issues, so little time. It is not always easy to find the best way to have our message heard and we're grateful that you have answered the call. For a number of years, Recycling Advocates has been able to reach a broader audience through our membership in Earth Share of Oregon. And we could use your help this year.

Earth Share of Oregon is a nonprofit organization that collaborates with businesses and public agencies to enable their employees to support 68 environmental groups through workplace giving campaigns. Last year, more than 4,000 Oregonians supported Earth Share through giving campaigns in 100 workplaces.

Recycling Advocates was able to use the funds raised through Earth Share to pass electronic waste and updated bottle bill legislation.

In order to get the word out to their employees about the giving options available, many workplaces invite Earth Share members to give brief presentations about their projects. If you have a passion for Recycling Advocates work, a small amount of time to volunteer to make a 5-10 minute presentation, and a willingness to overcome stage fright about public speaking, let us know! We'd love to have you represent us as only you can do it as a generous and committed supporter.

If you'd like to learn more about Earth Share and about their business partners in your area, you can visit the Earth Share website at [www.earthshare-oregon.org](http://www.earthshare-oregon.org). To join the team of speakers for the 2006 Fall Charitable Giving Campaign, please contact Meghan Humphreys: (503) 223-9015 or [meghan@earthshare-oregon.org](mailto:meghan@earthshare-oregon.org).



**From the President  
with Betty Patton**

Dear Members,

The City of Portland has presented some ideas to the public to modify both the residential recycling system and the commercial recycling structure. The motivator for this action is that the Office of Sustainable Development wants to increase the percentage of recycled materials in our city. Recycling Advocates should always take pride in the fact that the City wants us to study their proposals and respond. The board members are in the process of doing that. So please submit your own comments to the city and share them with Recycling Advocates.

Another way to adjust those percentage numbers is to drastically reduce the amount of total materials

generated. In other words, don't generate so much stuff. If it isn't recyclable, don't buy it. And even if it is, think first about real need and alternatives.

Consumption is so hard to reduce. We are advertised to at great expense. Our garbage collection is so convenient. The garbage can even has a lid on it so we never have to see the stuff again.

So maybe I can approach this like I have other issues in my life. Focus on waste prevention one day a week. (For example, I am not a full time vegan, but I do have vegan Wednesdays.) Once I pay close attention to the source of my garbage during one day, the thought process will probably spill over into other days, eventually.

I believe that as a grass roots organization we have the opportunity and the responsibility to encourage each other to approach sustainable lifestyles. And that is what we need to do, one decision at a time.

- Betty

## Recycling Advocacy Calendar for June 2007

### ◆ Closing the Loop: An Update on the Life Cycle of Electronics

Thursday, June 7, 2007

Breakfast meeting in Portland on electronic waste, with speakers Wayne Rifer (Green Electronics Council, RA board) and Sego Jackson (Northwest Product Stewardship Council and Snohomish County). Discuss the EPEAT electronics procurement tool and whether we are moving to cradle-to-cradle model of electronic products management. Sponsored by the Oregon Natural Step Network. \$35. More info at 503-241-1140 or www.ortns.org.

### ◆ Sustainability Using the Natural Step Framework

Thursday, June 14, 2007

One-day program in Portland introducing the Natural Step framework, with business leaders who have used it. Sponsored by the Oregon Natural Step Network. \$175 - \$195. More info from www.ortns.org or 503-241-1140.

### ◆ AOR 2007 Conference & Trade Show

Thursday-Saturday, June 21-23

AOR's 29th Annual Conference & Trade Show, with a special training on health and safety for

MRF operators, sponsored by the Solid Waste Association of North America's (SWANA) Oregon Beaver Chapter. AOR's annual business meeting and board elections will take place during the conference, too. At Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond. More info at www.aORr.org, or call Patty Morgan at 503-223-8633.

### ◆ Recycling Advocates board meeting

Monday, July 2, 7:00 p.m.

For location and information call 503-777-0909



### Join us as a Member of RECYCLING ADVOCATES

\$25 Advocate  \$50 Friend  \$100 Sustainer  \$10-24 Living Lightly

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