



Re-Co-Ver Review

Master Composter/Recycler Newsletter

From the MCR Desk - Welcome Class of 2010!

April 2010

"We must not be afraid of dreaming the seemingly impossible if we want the seemingly impossible to become a reality."

-Vaclav Havel



The Master Composter Recycler (MCR) class of 2010 graduated last Thursday evening. Twenty new Waste Reduction/Sustainability Ambassadors have joined our efforts to help dream a more sustainable future into reality!

From participating in a Green Expo (Patty Ingraham), to fixing the wheelbarrow (Barb Rider), to building an ingenious under the counter wormbin out of kitty litter buckets and other recycled materials (Mike Hamilton), the class of 2010 is already leaving an impression on the *wet clay* of the MCR program.

In the next few weeks we'll be all over Clark County; sharing, educating, and having fun at workshops and community events. At the end of this newsletter you'll find a list of many great opportunities for you to participate in. Sign up now for your favorite event!

I'm inspired and invigorated by the skills, enthusiasm and ideas of the Master Composter Recyclers and look forward to seeing what we all make happen this year!

My best,

Jo Anne Dolan

Master Composter/Recycler Coordinator

Sustainability Programs Director, Columbia Springs

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Note: Links in the MCR newsletters are live. This means that when you hold your cursor over a green-colored link and click you should be directed to the website or email referenced.

Recycling and Sustainability News



Vancouver Green Drinks is celebrating their two year anniversary April 27th at 6 p.m. at Who Song and Larry's, 111 SE Columbia Way, Vancouver, WA 98661. Vancouver's recently elected Mayor Tim Leavitt will speak about the sustainability efforts underway in Vancouver. There will be door prizes. Bring a business card to enter a drawing and wear your name tag! If you have used potato chips bags and Capri sun (and the like) juice pouches bring them for local trash to treasure artists who will re-use them to make crafts.

Solar, Wind and Biofuels Industries Grow In Spite of Economic Downturn

From the Columbian business news: The solar, wind and biofuels industries expanded 11.4 percent in 2009 to \$139.1 billion, according to a report released today by Clean Edge research firm in Portland. That growth came amidst the worst year for venture capital investment in more than a decade, with just 13 venture capital-backed initial public offerings in 2009. Worldwide, biofuels reached \$44.9 billion in 2009 and are projected to grow to \$112.5 billion by 2019, according to Clean Edge research. Wind power is projected to expand from \$63.5 billion in 2009 to \$114.5 billion in 2019. And solar photovoltaics will grow from a \$30.7 billion industry in 2009 to \$98.9 billion by 2019. Clark County is home to a growing clean technology industry that aims to capitalize on increasing global demand for clean energy. To see the full report, visit <http://www.cleandedge.com/reports/reports-trends2010.php>.

Garbage-to-gas Plant Planned in Oregon

Waste Management's Columbia Ridge Landfill in Arlington, Ore., plans to convert garbage into fuel. S4 Energy Solutions, a joint venture by Houston-based Waste Management and Oregon's InEnTec., announced that a plasma gasification plant will start up by the end of 2010. The plant's technology involves superheating waste up to 20,000 degrees Fahrenheit to convert organic material into a gas. That gas can then be converted into ethanol and diesel, or industrial products like hydrogen and methanol. It also could be used as a substitute for natural gas for heating or electricity generation. Clark County's garbage primarily goes to the Finley Butte Regional Landfill, near Boardman, which is owned by Waste Connections Inc.

Compostable Bioplastic Made by Brits

Researchers at Imperial College London have developed a way to use the sugars from fast-growing grasses and trees to create a polymer that can be used to make a bioplastic that could be potentially home composted. According to the researchers, associated with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, the degradable polymer is "made from sugars produced from the breakdown of lignocellulosic biomass, which comes from such non-food crops as fast-growing trees and grasses, or renewable biomass from agricultural or food waste." The oxygen-rich sugars in the new polymer allow it to absorb water, which means the plastic could break down in a few short months under normal home composting conditions, according to the research team. "The development of the material is very promising and we're optimistic that the technology could be in use within two to five years."

Sharyl MacKay, class of 2009 at West Van Transfer Station on our March field trip



Volunteer Meeting

April Volunteer Meeting

“Composting Livestock Manure”

Thursday, April 15th 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Clark County Operations Conference Center

4700 NE 78th St. Vancouver, WA 98665



With a little know-how, composters can take advantage of an abundant local raw material that comes from livestock. Properly managing livestock manure helps keep our water clean and our soil healthy. Lisa Schuchman, Clark Conservation District Resource Planner will be our guest speaker on the *ins and outs* of safely and productively composting livestock waste.

Volunteers In Action



Photos (clockwise): The class of 2010 at West Van Transfer Station, Mike Hamilton with his worm bin invention, Elizabeth Koch helps with the final exam at training, Kasey Welch and Patty Ingraham inspect the baler at West Van, Gregg Hayward demonstrates worm anatomy at MCR Training, handywoman Barb Rider with *like-new* wheelbarrow.

Upcoming Volunteer Events and Opportunities



There are many ways to contribute your skills to sustainability education and outreach. Help is needed for the following jobs:



Master Composter Recyclers class of 2010

Community Events: Home and Garden Idea Fair, Camas Mother's Day Plant and Garden Fair, Earth Day, the Recycled Arts Festival, etc., need you! Veterans, it would be great to have you sign up for shifts to help mentor and share your knowledge and experience with the recent graduates. Sign up sheet is on next pages.

Classroom Visits: We get many requests to visit pre-schools, elementary schools and children's groups with worm fun. Would you like to learn how to do some environmental education techniques? We need you!

Workshops: Our spring workshops season is here! Volunteers are needed to host /set up/staff the greeting table, help participants bed bins at Family Wormshops. Workshop teachers are needed too!

Writing: Write an article for our newsletter. Help develop our website content.

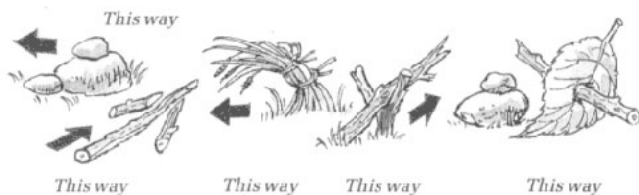
Outdoor and handy work: Help with composting demo site maintenance at Columbia Springs. Need to set sign posts in ground. Collect leaves.

CASEE Composting Demonstration Site: Want to help keep our compost demo site going at CASEE? This is an important project that provides on-site composting for the NatureScaping gardens as well as a teaching tool for the community. We need any time you can donate to help Monty keep the compost cooking! .

Home worm work: Grow redworms for our classes. Bring us shredded paper for our wormshops.

Creative work: Design and build interpretive props and augment our MCR displays!

Block Foam Collection events: These occur monthly on first Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and need your help! Contact Elsie at 360.619.4122 or Elsie.Deatherage@ci.vancouver.wa.us to volunteer for a block foam collection event.



Are You Tracking Your Volunteer Hours?

Please remember to keep a tally of your monthly volunteer hours. Thank you!



The Master Composter/Recycler Program is funded by Clark County Department of Environmental Services and administered by Columbia Springs.



Comments, questions, suggestions, brainstorm, anything at all...mcr@columbiasprings.org (360) 882-0936 x 224. Or stop on by the Heron House at Columbia Springs, 12602 SE Evergreen HWY, Vancouver, WA 98683