

Larimer County Solid Waste Department

2007
A N N U A L R E P O R T



Contents

From the Director's Chair	1
Recycling	3
Hazardous Waste	5
Landfill	7
Waste Transfer Stations	9
Education	11
Environmental Compliance	13
The New Solid Waste Administrative Office	15
A Look Ahead	16

From the Director's Chair

2007 seems to have gone by in a flash, but it was full of great accomplishments for the Solid Waste Department. The year provided us with many opportunities to enhance the services we offer to Larimer County residents. Department goals are set annually, and we evaluate how they fit into the County's vision statement (see below).

In May, we received the final results for the waste characterization study that had been conducted in September and December 2006. The study provided a measuring stick with which to compare the composition of the landfill in 1998 (when a similar study was done) with where we are today. Although we know that recycling in the county has increased during that time, the results suggest we still have work to do. The study reveals that a large amount of paper products and organic wastes continue to be buried in the landfill; most of that material could be easily diverted from

the waste stream instead.

More visitors than ever experienced the Garbage Garage Education Center this year. In a fun and interesting way, the center provides visitors with the information they need to help them make smart decisions about managing their trash. This year, innovative classes were offered both in the summer and during the fall/winter season to bring important topics to our residents.

Another valuable part of our solid waste system is the hazardous waste program. Customers stop by the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility to drop off household chemicals that should not be buried in the landfill. Some items are then offered back to the public for free, so they can be used for their intended purposes. The program continues to grow in its use, in both the residential and business divisions.

Transfer stations are provided to our rural residents in Estes Park, Berthoud, Wellington, and Red Feather Lakes.



The Estes Park transfer station is a larger facility than the others and takes both commercial and residential waste, whereas the other transfer stations accept only residential trash. Transfer stations bring convenience to our rural residents, even more so this year as recycling bins were added to some sites.

Landfill trash volumes increased by only 5.9 percent in 2007. The volume increases over the past few years appear to be in a downward trend. This is due to recycling and the current decrease in the residential building market. A new state law came into effect in July, making it illegal for landfills to accept car batteries, waste oil or residential tires for burial. The Larimer County Landfill had in place an oil collection tank and car battery recycling program before this law was enacted, so no changes were necessary for handling those materials. Tires, however, had been previously buried at our landfill. We still collect them, but have since contracted with a tire recycler in Sedalia, Colo., to haul them

Larimer County Vision Statement

Larimer County will add value to the lives of its citizens by:

- * Building partnerships
- * Being customer driven
- * Empowering people to take responsibility
- * Being a fulfilling and enjoyable place to work
- * Being a good steward of public resources

away to be baled or shredded for beneficial reuse.

Recycling is an integral part of our solid waste program. The recycling center has been in operation since 1992. In 2007, the amounts of recyclables processed at our facility decreased, probably attributable to businesses going directly to processors in Denver. Most of the material we process is also transferred to a single-stream processing plant in Denver. Still, our baling machine is being worked hard, and late this year it was decided that our baler and its accompanying conveyor will have to be replaced in 2008.

An exciting change occurred in October with the opening of a new administrative building on site at the landfill. Since 1975, when Larimer County first took over operation of the landfill, office staff had always been located



Kids have fun learning about composting in one of the summer classes offered at the Garbage Garage Education Center. See page 11.

several miles away in downtown Fort Collins. Many staff members would have to drive back and forth between sites, wasting time and resources. As landfill expansion and recycling has provided a longer lifespan for our landfill, we determined that moving the office to the landfill would be worth it, not only due to resources saved, but also because it would allow us to offer better customer service and provide a much needed training room for landfill staff. The new

building was built with many “green” features, including a ground-source heating system, the use of recycled materials, and six inches of insulation throughout. We are very proud of our new building and happy to have all department staff at one location.

The Solid Waste Department is always looking for new ways to better serve our customers, work more with our partners, empower people—both

staff and customers—to take responsibility, and to be a good steward of our resources. In addition, we strive to make the department a fulfilling and enjoyable place to work. Comments and suggestions are always welcome; call us at (970) 498-5760.

Stephen Gillette
Director



Jeff Leleszi, left, and Juan Felix, hazardous waste technicians, assist a business customer. See page 6.



Tires brought to the landfill are now collected separately and sent off to be recycled. See page 7.

Recyclables are Rising in Value

Success can mean many things. In recycling, we're at the point where success means that we are no longer the only game in town. Recycling has become a source of money for some businesses. Previously, recyclables did not have a significant monetary value attached to them. Now, however, with the rise in value of recyclable commodities, some are being diverted from the Larimer County Recycling Center to markets in Denver and elsewhere.

Aluminum has always been the "cash cow" of recycling. While it remains the top dollar commodity—worth about \$1800 per ton—plastics, paper and steel are catching up. Some plastics are close to \$800 a ton, for example. This is a great thing, but it also means that businesses are looking for ways to get the biggest bang for their buck.

Recycling is all about diverting resources from the landfill, and with recycling tonnages increasing, the Solid Waste Department needed to decide what to focus on next. To help direct us, the department contracted with MSW Consultants (Atlanta, Ga.) to conduct a waste characterization study at the Larimer County Landfill. The study was designed to be comparable to a similar 1998 study so that we could see where recycling has taken us over the years. The results will

also help us make future decisions about our recycling program.

The study involved sorting the trash coming to the county landfill into more than 40 categories, with separate totals for residential, commercial, and self-hauled waste, as well as construction and demolition debris. Combined totals for each category were also provided. The construction and demolition section was new for this study, but with more landfills and customers wanting to

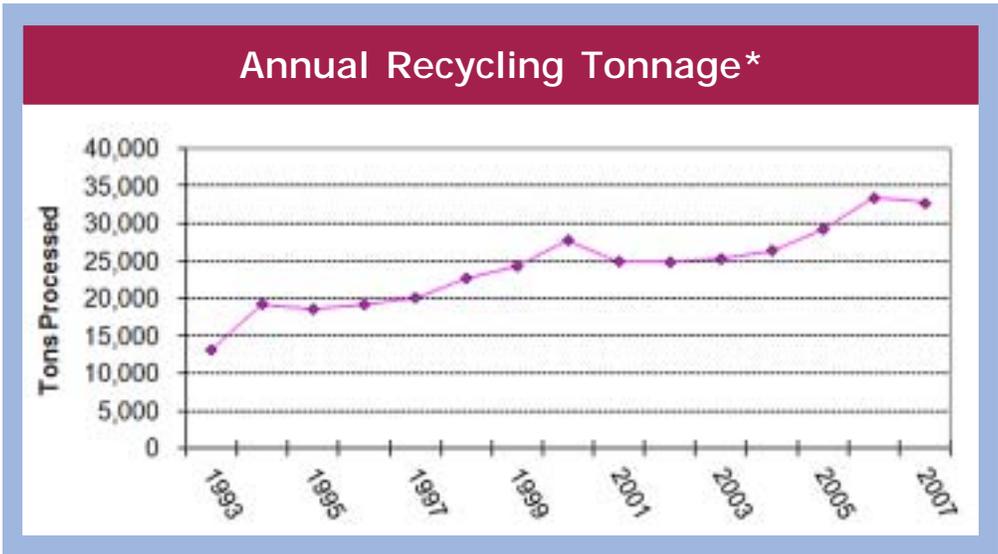


Saturdays bring many recyclers to the county's recycling drop-off.

recycle building materials, we determined it to be a useful description. A comparison of results between this study and the previous one gave us useful information, which helped us decide our next focus. According to the results, large quantities of valuable paper materials are still being buried at the landfill; as markets for this material are readily available, the department wants to find ways to encourage more paper recycling. For complete study results, visit our website at www.larimer.org/solidwaste

The last 10 years have shown some fluctuations in the tons of recyclables processed at the Larimer County Recycling Center, but the overall trend has been an increase in the amount.

*Includes only recyclable material from sources within Larimer County, as reported by Recycle America Alliance, contracted operator of the recycling center.



Annual Recycling Tonnage*

YEAR	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
JAN	1,652	1,831	2,031	2,190	2,040	2,061	2,161	2,146	2,709	3,112
FEB	1,530	1,688	2,004	1,901	1,857	1,690	1,894	1,886	2,124	2,468
MAR	1,689	2,048	2,384	1,995	1,902	1,862	2,278	2,257	2,821	2,722
APR	1,769	1,991	2,204	2,053	2,076	2,077	2,186	2,119	2,261	2,663
MAY	1,792	1,917	2,432	2,266	2,206	2,112	2,067	2,442	3,095	2,936
JUN	1,849	2,095	2,451	2,049	1,898	2,058	2,316	2,542	3,006	2,657
JUL	1,920	1,998	2,275	2,020	2,114	2,276	2,185	2,423	2,616	2,683
AUG	2,262	2,065	2,490	2,255	2,135	2,196	2,367	2,831	3,143	2,897
SEP	2,325	2,159	2,334	1,835	2,083	2,273	2,227	2,641	2,764	2,551
OCT	1,962	1,986	2,508	2,200	2,226	2,281	2,143	2,713	3,203	2,851
NOV	1,969	2,205	2,379	2,186	2,095	1,994	2,219	2,652	3,326	2,747
DEC	1,993	2,335	2,288	2,008	2,233	2,414	2,381	2,613	2,371	2,462
TOTALS	22,713	24,316	27,779	24,958	24,863	25,295	26,424	29,267	33,441	32,748

and click on “publications.”

At the Larimer County Recycling Center, 2007 processed volumes of recyclables were down by 693 tons, a 2 percent decrease from last year. This doesn't mean that recycling in this area has decreased, but rather that, as previously mentioned, some customers are choosing to take their materi-

als elsewhere. The department views competition as good, helping keep the playing field even.

Recycling does make a difference. It helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions, saves resources, and conserves landfill space. We appreciate the recyclers among our county residents, and hope that even more join the recycling bandwagon.



Hazardous Waste Program Serves More Customers Than Ever

The Household Hazardous Waste program, begun in 1989, has over the years kept more than 21.3 million pounds of hazardous material out of the landfill. This is especially important since our landfill has no liner underneath like modern landfills do.

The total waste received through the program in 2007, however, decreased; compared with the previous year's 1,925,334 pounds of waste collected, only 1,875,077 pounds was brought in this year. Happily, though, customer participation skyrocketed, with about 400 more customers served this year in the residential program. This trend is an indication that residents of Larimer County are keeping hazardous waste from accumulating in their homes. The number of residents dropping off waste increased by nearly 600, while those picking up others' usable waste from our Drop 'n' Swap store decreased by 200. Still, the Drop 'n' Swap continues to save the program money on disposal costs by eliminating the need for disposal of about 9 percent (based on weight) of the total amount of waste received through the residential program.

A welcome addition to the Drop 'n' Swap is an educational poster created by hazardous waste technician Jeff Leleszi. The poster depicts what happens to the waste processed at our site for treatment or disposal, and it was made in response to the many questions we receive from users of the facility.

Aside from our permanent collection facility, the hazard-

ous waste program provides a limited number of one-day rural on-site collection events each year. This year, we held events in Estes Park and Berthoud.

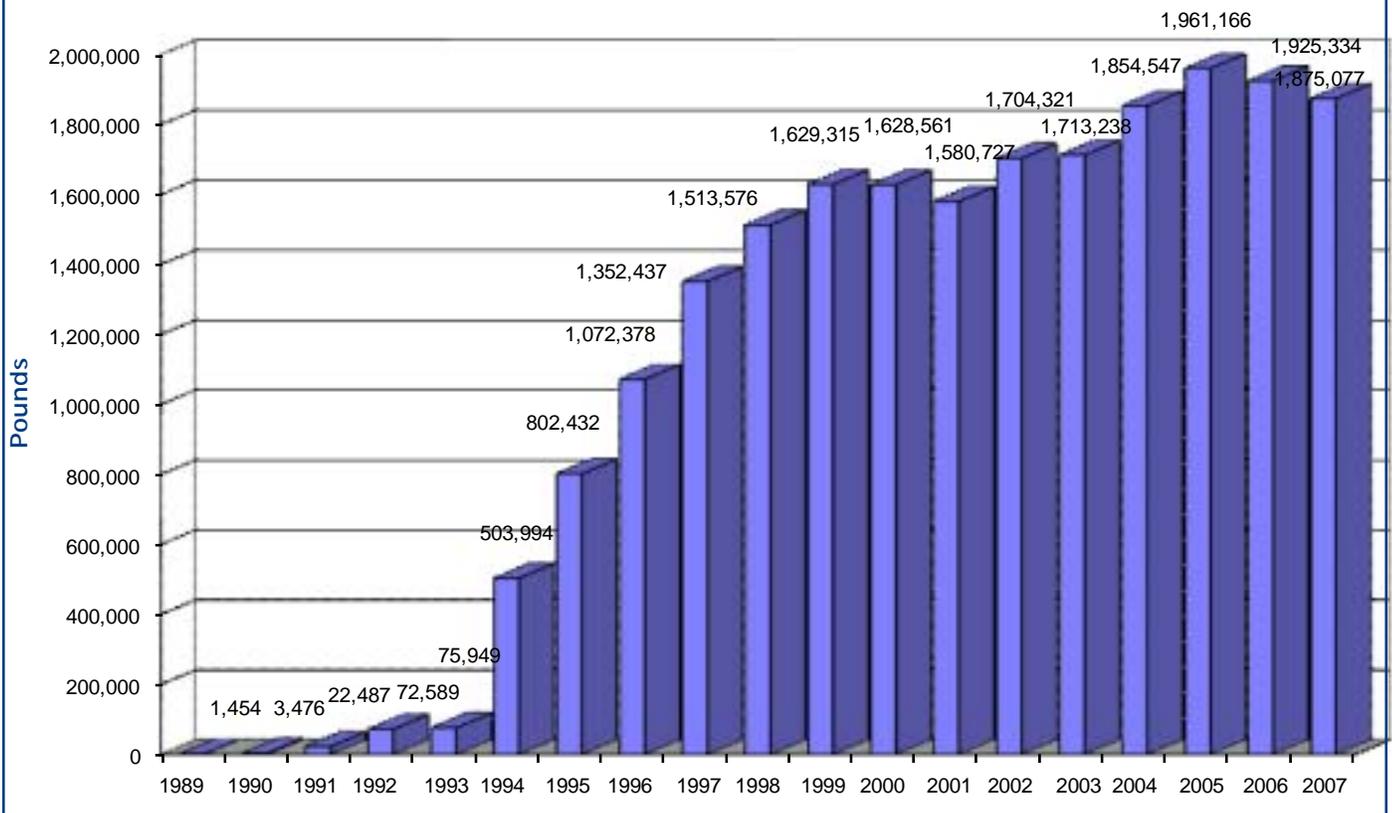
The June collection held in Estes Park was phenomenal, serving 350 residents, breaking the record for participation at any one-day event we've held. The incredible help provided by the Town of Estes Park employees made it so successful, and we applaud and appreciate the efforts of the Estes Park Utilities Department in making this day happen.

The Berthoud collection event, held in conjunction with a town clean-up day in May, was also very successful with 167 participants. A big thank you goes to the town administrator for working so hard to keep this event going from year to year for Berthoud area residents.

2008 Survey

The hazardous waste program will be conducting a customer survey to find ways to better serve county residents' and businesses' needs. If you'd like to participate in the survey, contact Linda Hayden, hazardous waste manager, at (970) 498-5771. Or simply give us your comments and suggestions anytime throughout the year. Customer input helps make this a better program for everyone.

Combined Waste Totals (hazardous and non-hazardous wastes)



Since opening in 1989, the hazardous waste program has kept 21.3 million pounds of hazardous and otherwise regulated waste out of the landfill. The program is subsidized by landfill revenues.

County Businesses Continue to BHAPE

The **B**usiness **H**azardous waste **A**ssistance **P**rogram and **E**ducation (**BH**APE) was designed to provide an appropriate and feasible disposal option to qualified local businesses and organizations that operate in Larimer County. Many businesses in the county take advantage of the program, and we appreciate those who use this opportunity to properly dispose of their waste.

In 2007, the BHAPE program experienced 226 visits from 154 customers, 74 of which were first-time users of the program. Total hazardous waste collected through the business program for the year was 11,892 pounds (up from 9,663 pounds in 2006), with the non-hazardous waste total at 43,722 pounds (down from 46,609 pounds in 2006). Some liquid wastes, such as latex

paint, are non-hazardous but still not accepted for disposal at the landfill.

The BHAPE program serves a variety of business types. Government agencies, including city, county and federal entities, are the largest group of customers. Construction companies, property management firms and laboratories also rank among the top groups dropping off waste through the program.

More Trash Buried Even as More Items are Recycled

The Larimer County Landfill opened in 1963, at that time owned by the City of Fort Collins. Over the years, the landfill has seen many changes, including a switch to the current joint ownership among the City of Fort Collins, City of Loveland and Larimer County, with the county managing all operations. Two vertical expansions were approved in 1995 and 2004, and we estimate that—based on current fill rates—the landfill will not reach capacity until about 2031.

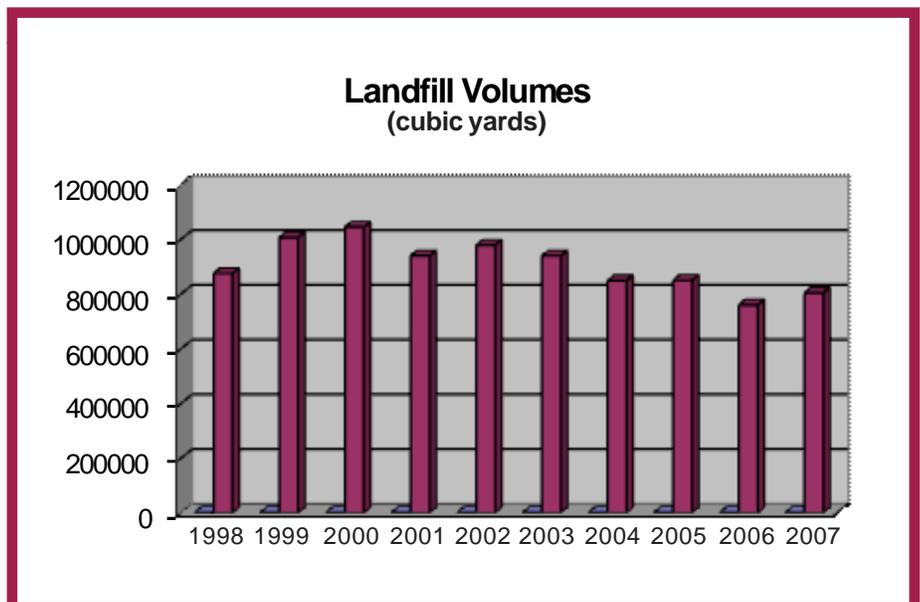
This year, the amount of trash buried at the landfill increased to 804,854 cubic yards, up about 5.6 percent from 2006. This is the first rather significant increase in several years. (See graph below.) Even so, the landfill continues to recycle several materials—including appliances and scrap metal, lead-acid batteries, and new this year, residentially generated tires. The batteries and tires, along with motor oil, were banned from disposal in Colorado landfills beginning

July 1, 2007. As the Larimer County Landfill already had been recycling motor oil and batteries for years, we only had to add a recycling program for the tires. More detail on this program can be found on page 12.

As we do every year, the landfill collected Christmas trees for free over the holiday season, and also kept clean loads of tree limbs separated from regular trash throughout the year. In 2007, about 2,540 cubic yards of trees were collected through both of these programs. In spring, the Solid Waste Department will hire a contractor to grind the trees for mulch, and we'll offer the mulch free to the public.

We also collected about 6,000 tons of concrete rubble this year. The rubble will be ground into road base and used on the landfill roads. This saves us money, as we won't have to purchase any road base from outside sources.

Seven acres of the Phase 2 area of the landfill (see map at right) were temporarily seeded



and will be permanently seeded in summer 2008. Unfortunately, in August the landfill property experienced the worst flooding we've seen in several years, causing damage to the fence just south of the recycling center where the creek runs, requiring rather extensive repair. To help prevent erosion in several areas of the property, we purchased a truckload of baled recycled tires that were then placed in runoff areas to slow the force of the water.

One of the biggest expenses of the year was the purchase of a new Terex landfill compactor, costing \$655,000. The Solid Waste Department has an equipment replacement fund that money is put into each year so that large purchases like this are planned for.



Heavy summer flooding caused extensive damage to the southeast fenceline.



Landfill workers place tires in strategic places to help prevent erosion around the property.



The landfill equipment operators' newest toy is a Terex TC550 compactor.

Two Transfer Stations Get Recycling Containers

The Solid Waste Department operates waste transfer stations, where rural residents can conveniently dispose of their household trash, in Berthoud, Wellington, and Red Feather Lakes. The department also owns the Estes Park transfer station, but it's operated by Waste Management, Inc. The trash collected at these sites is periodically hauled to the Larimer County Landfill.

The Red Feather Lakes waste transfer station made recycling easier for area residents with the placement of a new recycling bin in the fall. Now customers can lower their charges for dropping off household trash by throwing away less and recycling more. Nancy Fleischhacker is the attendant at Red Feather.

In late 2007, the Town Board of Berthoud voted to relocate the Solid Waste Department's recycling drop-off from a location downtown to the transfer station. The decision was made because the downtown site had been plagued with problems, namely with bins overflowing and people leaving recyclables and trash lying around on the ground, making the area an unsightly mess. With the move to the transfer station, dropping off recyclables will be more controlled, as transfer station attendant Denise Duval oversees the site and answers customers' questions. The Solid Waste Department agreed to

pay for and build the concrete pad to help the town. We also installed a video camera to monitor illegal dumping outside the gate when the site is closed. The actual move of the recycling containers (one owned by the department and a cardboard recycling bin owned by Waste Management) occurred in January 2008.

The Wellington Transfer Station, run by Lois Schwindt, continues to operate smoothly. See the chart at right for the number of customers served at each site.

The Estes Park Transfer Station has been in operation the longest, since 1984. Estes Park residents and visitors can take their household trash as well as recyclables to the transfer station. The site also provides a drop-off for some household hazardous wastes. In 2007, the transfer station collected more than 53,000 cubic yards of waste, equal to 607 tractor-trailer loads hauled to the landfill.

Unfortunately, the transfer stations are not self-sustaining economically. The Berthoud, Red Feather, and Wellington sites were subsidized \$47,136 this year. Additional costs for 2007 included extended maintenance and warranty agreements for the compactors at Berthoud and Wellington (\$20,000), the concrete pad for the recycling containers at the Berthoud site (\$3,628), and snow removal due to the heavy snows early in the year (\$3,575).



A Berthoud transfer station customer makes use of the new recycling bins on site. Denise Duval, transfer station attendant (not pictured), is keeping a close eye on the recycling bins and helping educate customers about proper recycling.

2007 Transfer Station Customers*	
Berthoud	954
Wellington	1,176
Red Feather	479
TOTAL	2,609

**Figures not available for Estes Park Transfer Station.*

Lois Schwindt, gate attendant at the Wellington transfer station, awaits a customer on another windy day in Wellington.



Nancy Fleischhacker, Red Feather Lakes transfer station attendant, stands by a compacting roll-off container at the site. Red Feather residents can now recycle there as well.

Award-winning Garbage Garage is Cornerstone of Education Program

Once again this year, the Garbage Garage Education Center saw an increase in the number of visitors. Several teachers regularly bring their classes out each year. The majority of visitors are from Fort Collins or Loveland, but many also come from Greeley and Denver. In fall, out-of-state attendees of a national recycling conference in Denver also stopped by.

When asked, many Garbage Garage visitors noted that they learned about the education center from our website or from a video airing on the local cable channel. (Another video specifically about the Garbage Garage was made and placed on the county website.) Others were repeat visitors or learned about the center through their school or from friends.

As the cornerstone of the education program, the Garbage Garage teaches visitors about reducing, reusing, and recycling; how landfills work; and about household hazardous waste. We were pleased to have the education center be honored with the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education's (CAEE) 2007 Award for Excellence in the government category.

The department's education staff consists of one full-time environmental educator, Cheryl Kolus, and one part-time education center attendant, Rose Watson. Yet providing education and outreach to Larimer County residents is something that all department employees do. Several staff members help with tours or presentations, or contribute ar-

ticles to our newsletters.

Happily, we also still have the same three enthusiastic volunteer tour guides that we've had for several years now. Wanda Mayberry and Wally Jacobsen have been with us since 2003, and Dick Rush since 2005. Much of the success of our educational program can be attributed to their involvement. In 2007, they contributed 140 hours at the Garbage Garage and at other educational events that we've participated in. The Solid Waste Department is thankful to have such a dedicated group.

Rose really earned her keep this year. She is tireless in promoting the Garbage Garage and is continually reaching out to the community and making our programs known and accessible to various groups.

Since 2005, we've offered creative and hands-on summer classes for kids, including "Edible Landfills," "Paper You Can Plant," and "Where Does Garbage Go?" New for this year were fall/winter family-oriented classes held on Saturdays. All classes in 2007 were very well attended. And the move of the department offices from downtown Fort Collins to the landfill site has made it easier to accommodate last-minute tours.

The annual Earth Day open house at the Garbage Garage continues to be successful, and considering what it's all about, we always hold it as a zero-waste event. In the interest of reducing waste, we also make sure nearly all of our giveaways and promotional items are truly useful to those who take them.

“Reuse” is the theme of our annual Reusable Art Contest, and the 2007 contest had more participants than ever. It’s always fun to see the creativity shown by Larimer County students as they make trash into treasure. This was the first year we offered a county employee Reusable Art Contest, as well, in celebration of America Recycles Day in November. The entries were impressive in quality if not in quantity.



Finalists from the department’s annual Reusable Art contest, in which K-12 students from throughout Larimer County participate, are displayed at the Garbage Garage.

Not only do we have visitors touring the Garbage Garage, recycling center, landfill and hazardous waste facility, but we also occasionally go to classrooms and scout meetings to do presentations on recycling, as well as present to adult groups and workplaces. A sampling of groups we presented to in 2007 include Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) in Wellington, the Estes Park Women’s Club, and a U.S. Department of Agriculture office. In addition, Cheryl gives a recycling talk at the county’s monthly New Employee Orientation.

Each year, we also have booths at several events throughout the community, from Earth Day celebrations at a local business to children’s fairs to the summer’s Holistic Arts Fair.

Partnerships are an invaluable part of the education program, and once again we teamed up with Colorado State University’s Writing for the Sciences class, through which a student works with us to develop writing materials that we use in our education program. This year’s participating student wrote take-home handouts to go with each of our summer classes and an article for *The Recyclone Times* newsletter.

We work closely with our colleagues at the Cities of Fort Collins and Loveland on educational materials, as well. Fort Collins staff and the Solid Waste Department collaborated on a 4-page “Garbage and Recycling Guide” in the Dex phonebook. In addition, Fort Collins is an important partner in the publishing of *The Recyclone Times* newsletter, distributed once yearly in rural newspapers and promoted online. In 2008, we are moving toward more frequent, subscription-based online versions as well as a summer print version. Due to budget concerns, the Cities of Fort Collins and Loveland no longer fund the printing and inserting of copies in their respective local newspapers.

The Landfill Update, another newsletter the department publishes biannually, reports news specific to our facilities. The newsletter was initially implemented as a way to meet a state requirement to provide education on groundwater testing at the landfill to nearby residents. It has since grown to a subscription base of 450.

Rose and Cheryl are both members of the Colorado Association for Recycling and attended its annual Recycling Summit in May. Rose is also a member of CAEE and Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA), a local volunteer management group. She attended the CAEE annual conference in April, where she networked with other educators and picked up great ideas for providing environmental education through our program.

Empowering people to take responsibility is one of the county’s missions listed in its vision statement (see “From the Director’s Chair,” page 1). This is what our education program is all about. We believe in offering the public information that will allow them to make their own educated decisions about how best to manage their trash. We realize that the “ideal” is not necessarily for everyone, and encourage little steps toward sustainable waste management. For every participant in one of our programs, for every person that visits one of our informational booths at an event, and for every reader of one of our newsletters, we are one step closer to the goal of sustainability.

Weather and Other Issues Contribute to Environmental Compliance Challenges

Protecting the environment around the landfill and complying with regulations was challenging in 2007, as we dealt with weather-related difficulties, extra monitoring needs, and new state regulations. All Solid Waste Department employees did their part to help control landfill gas, prevent water pollution, minimize air emissions, and keep hazardous materials out of the landfill.

The year got off to a rough start at the landfill as heavy snow and prolonged cold made access difficult and led to a problem with gas migration. Two feet of snow in late December 2006, followed by sub-zero temperatures, resulted in frozen ground and snow cover that lasted for more than two months. With the deep snow, many areas of the landfill property were inaccessible by truck or ATV, so inspections and gas monitoring had to be done by snowshoe in January, and groundwater sampling was postponed for a month.

January gas monitoring results unfortunately revealed a methane problem related to the weather. The frozen ground and snow cover prevented landfill gas from venting as it usually does, leading to a buildup of pressure that caused explosive gas to migrate across the landfill's north property boundary. To help relieve the gas pressure, a small blower and flare were purchased and installed in the north landfill area, eliminating the gas migration within a couple of months.

The biggest challenge of the year was a flood that struck

the landfill in late summer. On the evening of August 2nd, a heavy downpour dumped five inches of rain on the landfill within about two hours, causing flooding and significant erosion and property damage (see photo on page 8). Solid Waste staff spent weeks afterward cleaning up debris, repairing erosion, and cleaning out ditches, culverts and sediment ponds. While the closed areas of the landfill stood up very well to the heavy runoff, the flood showed that we need to make some stormwater management improvements in the active areas of the landfill.

Steve Harem, the Solid Waste Department's environmental specialist, continued to monitor groundwater around the landfill to identify and track water quality changes. In addition to routine quarterly sampling and analysis, extra groundwater monitoring was conducted in the north landfill area to address concerns about potential pesticide and cyanide contamination. Monitoring results from October 2006 showed minute levels of cyanide and a pesticide, so additional testing was done throughout 2007 to see if the landfill was leaking these chemicals. Fortunately, the testing results showed no trace of pesticides in the groundwater, indicating that the 2006 hit was probably a false positive.

The results also showed that there are trace levels of naturally occurring cyanides throughout the region, but concentrations are not elevated downgradient from the landfill.

Minor volatile organic com-

pound contamination, which has existed for many years at the northeast corner of the landfill, changed very little over the past year. The water table, meanwhile, remained low as Fort Collins experienced a second consecutive year of below-average precipitation.

To protect the surface water around the site, landfill personnel continued to use a spill prevention program that has functioned well over the last several years. The program incorporates preventive maintenance, regular inspections, and operating procedures to ensure that fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid and other petroleum products are properly handled and stored. That there were no spills in 2007 shows that the program is effective.

Landfill personnel also kept busy controlling so-called “nuisance conditions,” such as blowing litter, fires, and odors. To minimize blowing litter, the landfill closed 17 times during periods of high winds. Even so, we still had to expend over 2000 man-hours picking up the paper and plastic that the wind scattered around the site and on the fences. We received no odor complaints in 2007.

Compliance with air quality regulations was fairly routine, as the Solid Waste Department worked to monitor air emis-

sions and control fugitive dust. Landfill gas emissions, measured as non-methane organic compounds and volatile organic compounds, were well within permit limits in 2007. Fugitive dust emissions, too, were below permit limits, as



The Solid Waste Department purchased and installed a landfill gas blower and flare to help control gas migration.

we used more than 1.3 million gallons of water to control dust on landfill roads. To protect the ozone layer, we recovered fluorocarbon refrigerants from 1,358 appliances before recycling them. An official from the state Air Pollution Control Division inspected the landfill in May and found the facility to be in compliance with air quality regulations.

New state regulations concerning the disposal of batteries, oil and tires went into effect July 1, 2007, requiring some changes to the way we handle and track these particular wastes. The regulations prohibit us from burying resi-

dentially generated lead-acid batteries, used oil, and waste tires in the landfill. The battery and oil restrictions have had little effect on our operation, as we have been collecting and recycling these items for many years, but landfill procedures for handling tires had to be changed to comply with the tire restriction. We can still bury tires from commercial customers, but all residential tires must now be either recycled or sent to a tire landfill.

To continue to serve our residential customers, we started a tire collection program in July. Residential tires are stockpiled and then shipped to a Denver-area recycler where the tires are baled or shredded and sold for various uses. There is not much demand for waste-tire products, so we've been helping the recycler by purchasing some of their materials for use at the landfill.

In addition to operational changes, the new landfill restrictions—like most environmental regulations—require more recordkeeping, so we have more paperwork to do as well. We collected and recycled a total of 1,083 lead-acid batteries, 29,913 gallons of used oil, and 1,674 tires in 2007.

The New Solid Waste Administrative Office A Prime Example of Green Building



Features

- Geothermal heat pump
- Reused exterior stone**
- Reused exterior siding
- Recycled concrete foundation**
- Reused interior paint
- South-facing energy-efficient windows**
- 6-inch insulation
- Reused floor tile**
- Timer-controlled utilities
- Energy-efficient appliances**
- Non-disposable dinnerware
- Waterless urinals**
- Designated low-emissions space



A Look Ahead

We expect 2008 to be an exciting year full of challenges and decisions about where the Solid Waste Department needs to go next. To help with these decisions and challenges, a "Summit for Solid Waste" is being planned. The summit will provide a chance for stakeholders, customers, elected officials and concerned residents to offer their input on the future of solid waste management in Larimer County.

Another anticipated event for the coming year is the installation of a landfill gas collection system, through which methane and other gasses will be collected and

sent off-site to be reused in other capacities.

Recycling and composting can also help divert usable resources from the waste stream, and the feasibility of a program for the collection of organics will be examined more closely.

We will be closing a section of the landfill that will be filled to capacity and installing the final cover on it. The cover consists of 18 inches of compacted clay, 18 inches of dirt and 6 inches of topsoil; then it's revegetated with native grasses.

In addition, about \$2 million will be spent to replace two pieces of heavy equipment at the landfill as well as the baling ma-

chine at the recycling center.

As new opportunities present themselves in the coming years, Marc Engemoen, public works director for Larimer County, has a vision for the Solid Waste Department: In 10 years, the department will be renamed the Resource Recovery Department. As we head into the next decade, we'll move away from disposing of resources and instead find ways to reuse them.

This challenge to better manage our resources is one we look forward to tackling. As we all know, trash thrown away never really goes away.



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