

Summer 2016

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**CARLTON COUNTY RESOURCE AND RECYCLING
NEWSLETTER**

Plastic bags banned in Minneapolis!

During a recent Minneapolis City Council meeting, council members moved to ban retailers from using plastic carry out bags. The ordinance was approved April 1, 2016, and will take effect June 1, 2017. Additionally, customers may be charged 5 cents per paper bag if a business chooses not to contribute to a litter cleanup fund. Although this bag ban does not include plastic bags used to contain produce, flowers, baked goods, takeout foods, newspapers, or dry-cleaning, the council approved a plan to develop a city recycling program for these materials.

The bag ban aims to change customers' habits in order to reduce waste in the Twin Cities. Plastic bags are difficult to recycle, and cannot be recycled in a normal materials recovery facility (MRF) as they get entangled in machinery. Plastic bags must be taken to a local grocery store to be recycled. Once recycled, they become plastic lumber for furniture and decking. The best replacement for your plastic bag is a reusable bag; it has fewer environmental side effects and reduces the amount of waste you produce.

There are no current plans to ban plastic bags in Duluth or surrounding areas, but that doesn't mean we should continue using them. As a whole, the U.S. consumes 380 billion bags per year which uses 1.6 billion gallons of oil to produce. The average American family uses 1,500 plastic bags in a year, and only a small percentage of these bags gets recycled. The rest of the bags are either sent to the landfill or are taken by the wind to litter our streets, parks, and water bodies where animals ingest or become entangled in bags and other plastic debris.

As Minneapolis Council Member Alondra Cano pointed out, "The human race managed to survive for a long time without plastic bags, and it can do so again."

As a consumer, you have tremendous power. For every family that stops using plastic bags, we would save 1,500 bags, 6.5 gallons of oil, and countless animals' lives. The next time you go to the grocery store, think to yourself, "Is this plastic bag worth it?"



Green Schools Project Final Update

With summer coming to a close and a new school year creeping up on the horizon, we'd like to reflect on our first year of the Green Schools Project. Eight of the 14 Carlton County schools successfully completed the grant program—\$16,000 well spent! This funding was allocated by the state from solid waste management taxes, and was made possible through the support of the Carlton County Board of Commissioners.

The majority of the schools used their grant to purchase new recycling bins for classrooms, hallways, and offices. A few schools used the leftover funds to purchase water bottle filling stations to reduce their plastic usage. Carlton High School purchased a vermicomposting kit which utilizes red worms to do small scale composting of fruit and vegetable scraps. Washington Elementary decided to ditch their plastic sporks and move to reusable silverware—a purchase that will keep over 600 pounds of plastic out of our landfills per school year!

In order for these purchases to successfully affect schools' recycling rates, there needed to be an educational counterpart. Every school adopted a recycling policy to be reviewed annually; a recycling policy is a document that dictates which materials are recyclable in a school and where these materials should be collected.

Emily Kolodge, MN GreenCorps member, was invited into some schools to present at staff meetings or student assemblies to educate staff and students what is and isn't recyclable and to debunk common recycling myths. Other schools chose to do their own education through student-made videos, posters, or assemblies.

None of this would have been possible without the work of our schools' Green Teams. Each Green Team, which consisted of students, staff, and community members, worked together with Emily to complete the grant goals. They met frequently to determine the best purchases for their school's needs, how they would educate their fellow staff and students, and to brainstorm plans and ideas for the future.

So what were the results of all of this hard work? A whopping 7,057 pounds of waste were diverted from the landfill through increased recycling at the schools. This is a 41% increase from last school year! Additionally, 7,525 pounds of waste were completely prevented; most of this is due to decreased paper usage.

Overall, the first year of the Green Schools Project was a huge success! Carlton County Zoning & Environmental Services would like to thank the Carlton County Board of Commissioners, the schools, and the Green Teams for all of their hard work and support, and we hope all Carlton County schools consider reapplying next year for even more waste reduction and recycling!



Emily Says Farewell to Carlton County

My Minnesota GreenCorps service with the Zoning and Environmental Services office has been an amazing experience! One of the first things my supervisor, Karola Dalen, told me on my first day was, "You are about to learn more about the waste and recycling field than you ever thought possible!" She was certainly right; I learned many things throughout my 11 month service.

On the surface, recycling seems like a black and white topic. When you actually work in the field, however, you get to look behind the curtain at all of the intricacies that go into it. Location, markets, politics, businesses, and consumers all play a part in the recycling industry.

I have been very fortunate to serve at this host site; I have had the opportunity to help schools, residents, and businesses make better, environmentally-friendly choices. I taught people how to recycle properly, how to compost at home, and how to convince others to participate in sustainable behaviors. The schools I've worked with have collectively contributed to over 7 tons of material that have either been recycled or reduced from the waste stream. I am so proud of my schools and Green Teams for their efforts that led to these results!

I'd especially like to thank my coworkers and supervisors for being so welcoming to me. They have done everything in their power to give me great professional and personal experiences I can carry with me into my future career.

Carlton County Zoning & Environmental Services has been granted another MN GreenCorps member who will start in mid-September. He or she will be introduced in the next newsletter!

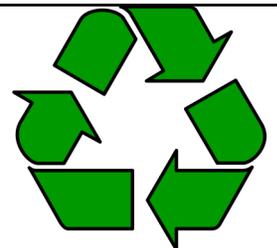
-Emily Kolodge, Minnesota GreenCorps Member

Emily's last day with Carlton County Zoning & Environmental Services is Tuesday, August 16. If you have any questions about recycling or the Green Schools Project, please direct them to Karola Dalen, Resource and Recycling Coordinator. She can be reached at (218) 384-9178 or karola.dalen@co.carlton.mn.us.



Important Recycling Changes

If you utilize Carlton County's recycling centers, you may have noticed some recent changes. Cloquet Sanitary Service has taken over our recycling contract and has put some new recycling bins in each of our recycling sheds.



We briefly allowed glass recycling to be mixed colors; however, we now ask that you separate your glass by color (green, brown, and clear). Additionally, paper is now to be collected loosely. All paper and newspaper is to be placed in the correctly marked bin with **no** plastic or paper bags. Magazines will be collected in a separate bin, loose with no bags.

We appreciate your patience with the new recycling changes; please do your best to follow these new instructions.

Store your paint indoors

Did you know? When latex paint is stored outdoors over the winter, it ruins the paint. This is because latex paint contains different ingredients that separate from the mixture when frozen.

Using latex paint that was once frozen can result in uneven coats, less gloss, cracking and peeling, etc. If you plan on using your paint again, it's best to store it inside.

If you aren't going to use your paint again, please bring it to the Household Hazardous Waste Facility where our technician can put it out for reuse! Our reuse center is open during regular Transfer Station hours until October 8th, 2016.



Follow us on Pinterest!

Our Pinterest Page is dedicated to all things waste and recycling related. Looking for ideas and helpful tips for reducing, recycling, reusing, or composting? We have it here!



www.pinterest.com/carltonco

Carlton County Recycle Center Hours

Year-Round Hours for all Staffed Recycling Centers

Wednesdays	2:00 p.m.—6:00 p.m.
Thursdays	2:00 p.m.—6:00 p.m.
Fridays	2:00 p.m.—6:00 p.m.
Saturdays	9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

STAFFED SHEDS (BARNUM, CARLTON, ESKO, MOOSE LAKE, PERCH LAKE)

Glass Jars and Bottles (separated by color), Plastics #1 - #7, Tin Cans, Aluminum Cans, Newspapers, Magazines, Box Board, Cardboard, and Office Paper.

UNSTAFFED SHEDS (BLACKHOOF, CROMWELL, HOLYOKE, KETTLE RIVER, MAHTOWA, WRIGHT)

Glass Jars and Bottles (separated by color), Plastics #1 - #7, Tin Cans, Aluminum Cans and Newspapers.

TRANSFER STATION

Glass Jars and Bottles (separated by color), Plastics #1 - #7, Tin Cans, Aluminum Cans, Newspapers, Magazines, Office Paper, Box Board, Cardboard, Car Batteries, Medical Sharps, Used Motor Oil and Filters, Antifreeze, and Food Waste.

Carlton County Transfer Station April 1st—October 31st

Monday - Friday

8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Recyclables MUST be cleaned, removed from bags, and sorted into the proper bin!

