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BROWN COUNTY PORT & RESOURCE RECOVERY DEPARTMENT

The Waste Not

OUR VISION

To provide Brown County municipal commercial and industrial customers cost-effective and sustainable solid waste management systems with the focus on resource recovery primarily through recycling, repurposing and energy recovery

Editor:

Claire Westlund

Contributors:

Chris Blau

Mark Walter

Samantha Cooper

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Carryout Conundrum	2
Record Breaking Tonnage Year!	3
National Battery Day	3
Tri-County's New Waste Wizard	4

2021 Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW) Award Recipients

This past year has been a busy one for all of us in the recycling field as we have had to do our best to make sure that people continue to recycling right. We also had to deal with a lot of extra material from everybody working at home. The Associated recyclers of Wisconsin, the statewide recycling organization, recognized the hard work of the Tri-County Recycling team by presenting Brown and Outagamie County staff award for their work.



Mark Walter, Brown County Resource Recovery, has been given the **Christy Dixon Recycler of the Year award**. This award is given to an individual whose career demonstrates the highest professional standards in the recycling field.

In his time with Brown County, Mark Walter has been a leader in the recycling industry. In his role as the Business Development Manager, Mark's career has spanned resource recovery and conservation in a variety of ways including curbside recycling, household hazardous waste, and even Port of Green Bay operations. Mark works extensively with municipalities and private companies to

ensure there are sustainable recycling options, even developing the Department's first strategic Solid Waste Plan. As a member of AROW, Mark has been very involved in the Product Stewardship Committee. Mark was key in leading the group to research and move forward initiatives on a variety of materials, but even more importantly Mark worked to build a network of passionate individuals to advocate for change and built state-wide capacity around understanding what product stewardship is and is not. Mark's impacts on resource recovery reaches far beyond present day Brown County, but to all of Wisconsin and well into the future.

Alex Nett is the Recycling and Resource Recovery Administrator and Marissa Michalkiewicz is the Recycling & Solid Waste Program Coordinator at Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste. Together the form Outagamie County's recycling outreach team and are the recipients of the **Outstanding Achievement in Education award**. This award is given to an individual or group that has excelled in environmental education, specifically related to solid waste and recycling.

Alex and Marissa are responsible for the education and outreach efforts for Outagamie County as well as acting as the point people for the Tri-County Recycling Program and Material Recovery Facility. Their efforts have also helped to boost the outreach efforts of the BOW counties by building brand awareness for the Tri-County Recycling System. Their energy has combined to extend the educational and outreach efforts of Brown and Winnebago Counties as well.

While these awards were presented to the three individuals, their work as part of the Tri-County Recycling team shows that our impact is much more extensive.

The Carryout Conundrum

Many households have been supporting local restaurants by ordering carryout during the pandemic. In turn, restaurants have developed new ways to get food to their customers. In addition to offering inside pickup of food, many local eateries offer curbside pickup as well as delivery options to keep their businesses open and keep their customers happy. At Brown County Resource Recovery, we are thrilled to see all the support our community has shown to our local restaurants. It has also led to a lot of questions that really spotlight what we call the “carryout conundrum.” The question many are asking, *“what do we do with the containers the food came in?”*



Source: thomassource.com

Plastic Products

It's not unusual for your to-go food order to come with disposable utensils. It's meant to be an added convenience for you so you can avoid using your own dishes. However, plastic silverware is not recyclable in our community and will need to be thrown away. If you know that you don't need or want the disposable utensils, request that the restaurant leave them out. If you do receive them, wash them and reuse them later at a picnic or BBQ. Along with the plastic silverware, plastic cups are also not recyclable. You can wash them out and save for later or throw them out after you use the cups.

Plastic Deli Containers

When you buy food from a deli, generally your food comes in a clear plastic container. These containers, along with their lids, can be recycled in your curbside recycling. Just make sure you rinse them out of any food residue before it goes into your recycling bin.

Hard Plastic

What about hard plastic containers? Most of these containers look great and they can be easily washed and reused, so don't throw them out! Most of these containers will have a label that states whether they are microwavable or dishwasher safe, making them great for leftovers. You can even reuse them to send food care packages to friends and family. When you are finally done with them, most of these containers can go into your recycling. The exception is black plastics which can't be readily recycled no matter what it was used for.

Styrofoam

If there is one thing the recycling center does not like to see, it's polystyrene, more commonly known as Styrofoam. Your Styrofoam containers and cups are not recyclable and need to go into your garbage for proper disposal. To help eliminate Styrofoam waste, ask the restaurant if they use it for to-go containers, if they do, it can be an opportunity to suggest alternatives that are recyclable.

Paper Containers

Paper takeout containers are not recyclable and should go into your garbage. Alternatively, paper takeout containers can be composted if there is limited grease residue and no plastic coating on them. Paperboard, such as your cereal boxes, can be recycled so break them down flat and put them in your recycling bin. And, don't forget, pizza boxes are recyclable in our community as well.

The bottom line to all of this is, we can continue to give strong support to local restaurants and, at the same time, do what's right for our environment. Hopefully, it won't be long before we can be dining inside again.

Record Breaking Tonnage Year!

Waste Transfer Station

The total amount of solid waste tonnage has increased within the past 3 years. In 2018, 160,857 tons were processed through the Brown County Solid Waste Transfer Station increasing to 163,724 tons in 2019. A record 174,095 tons of refuse was processed through the Waste Transfer Station in 2020 with another 42,885 tons of refuse delivered directly to the BOW landfill for a total of 216,980 tons. Another 20,089 tons of alternative daily cover were delivered to the BOW landfill for a total Brown County tonnage of 237,100 tons.

Material Recovery Facility (MRF)

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic resulted in a record amount of material being recycled in Brown County led by a surge in residential curbside collections. In 2020, 31,867 tons of single stream recyclables were hauled from the Brown County Recycling Transfer Station to the Tri-County Material Recovery Facility (MRF) which processed more than 103,000 tons of recyclables. Single Stream Recycling includes recycling of all plastic bottles and caps, tubs and containers, aluminum and tin cans, glass and all paper products. The MRF serves more than 10 counties in northeast Wisconsin.



Source: depositphotos.com

National Battery Day

February 18th was National Battery Day! Take this month to rummage through your drawers and check all of your devices. Once you collect all of your used batteries and broken rechargeable devices, prepare them for safe disposal.



Remember the three 'Rs' of safe battery disposal:

Remove – remove batteries from electronics if it can be done safely without damaging the battery

Ready – prepare the battery for recycling: terminals covered if necessary and proper packaging and labeling if shipping from your site in bulk containers

Recycle – find a reputable battery recycler. Know how the recycler manages them.

Remember the Brown County Hazardous Material Recovery Facility can accept household, rechargeable and car/vehicle batteries for a small charge.

For more information on battery disposal, visit browncountyrecycling.org/batteries-household.

Tri-County's New Waste Wizard



Tri-County Recycling has created a new search engine to find out which items are recyclable. **Scan the QR code to the left with a smart phone to get started! Otherwise, visit the Tri-County Recycling website: www.recyclemoretricity.org/ and click on "What Do I Do With" to launch the Waste Wizard.**

Once you type in an item that you wish to recycle, the Waste Wizard will tell you if that item is recyclable or list the various recycle drop-off locations. Pick the location nearest you.

Is that really recyclable? Waste Wizard has your answer!

Waste Wizard

Need help?

Share

Type the name of a waste item and we'll tell you how to recycle or dispose of it.

Search

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Follow Us

For facts, general information and ideas on how to reduce waste, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest! We post information you want to know several times a week.

If you are interested in reading more about a resource recovery topic online or in our newsletter let us know! We would love to hear from you.



Brown County

Port & Resource Recovery Department

Recycling & Hazardous Material Recovery Facilities
2561 S. Broadway | Green Bay, WI 54304

Waste Transfer Station
3734 W. Mason | Green Bay, WI 54155

Phone: 920-492-4950
Fax: 920-492-4957
E-mail: bc_resource_recovery@browncountywi.gov
www.browncountyrecycling.org

Department Contacts

Dean Haen, Director
Chad Doverspike, Assistant Director
Mark Walter, Business Development Manager
Chris Blan, Resource Recovery Technician
Ben Hintz, Resource Recovery Technician
Sheri McAllister, Account Clerk
Claire Westlund, Clerk/Typist

