

Recycling Committee's Annual Report 2007-2008

The current members of this committee are Toglea Baird, Kathi Sauve, John Howard, Albini LaPierre and Ilze Raudzins. Two members will be leaving, including Toglea, who will be greatly missed for her very active involvement in the Depot. We sincerely hope that she, and her family, will continue their volunteer work at the depot.

In March 2007, Stani Veselinovic was hired as the manager of the Recycling Depot. Since then he has implemented several new procedures, such as

- recycling of cardboard milk and soy containers
- removing the broken down compost barrel and creating an open compost pile, allowing the backhoe to aerate it at intervals.
- updating the plastics station. This is still a growing process as some changes may still be necessary.
- installing the Aerosolv can recycling unit to remove aerosol cans from the hazardous waste stream and use them for scrap metal.
- adding an additional bin, paid by the RD, for construction waste only.
- sending computers and TV's to Encorp Bottle Return Centre in Courtenay.
- keeping statistics of waste being dumped and shipped.
- following up on the Safety and Risk Assessment Reports recommendations of September and November 2006 with respect to site safety hazards and on-line staff training for WHMIS, dangerous goods handling and courses in heavy equipment operation.

The past year has been an extremely busy one at the Centre and our staff has met the challenges very well. We experienced some of the highest peak load periods ever with construction and commercial volumes leading the way with a tenfold increase over the previous year. We had power failures and equipment limitations, and new communications lines to be developed with new Regional District management. Although it is difficult to quantify, we believe there were more visitors to the Centre than ever before. Through it all, both the materials handling staff and the great group of Free Store volunteers worked with energy and enthusiasm to ensure the Recycling Centre's reputation as both a service and a social centre was maintained.

The Committee appreciates very much their dedication to the Centre.

Last July the fee for a large pick-up load was increased from \$50 to \$65, and for a small load from \$30 to \$40, in order to cover costs of transport and dumping on Vancouver Island. This year the tipping fees for household garbage will be increased from \$2.50 to \$3.00 for the months of July and August only. The increased revenue will go toward the wages for the extra staff that is required during those months.

The electrical upgrade to three-phase electrical power was finally completed, and the new baler is now used for cardboard, which, however, creates more work, as the cardboard has to be pre-cut. The Regional District took back the generator, and has left us without a backup generator, which was badly needed at the time the power went out.

The free store is in need of more volunteers for sorting, gardening work and clean-up. The depot face-lift event was postponed due to busy schedules, and then when it finally took place, it was on a cold winter's day and no public showed up. Only a little could be done. Hopefully we have more success this year.

Several break-ins and acts of vandalism took place last summer. Two web cameras were installed to monitor the off hours activities at the Depot. One camera was stolen and in November the depot's computer was stolen.

In May 2007, the Committee began working with Regional District operations management, with the objective of developing a master facility plan. Regrettably, the meetings were ended in September, and suddenly, the RD presented a consultant's report, which related in part to the recycling facility. The first draft report was apparently withdrawn after a critical response from the community and we are now not aware of the Report's status.

As a result, we have decided to produce a report with rough plans of how we want the depot to look like and where we want to see the money for capital improvements go. These would include:

- a glass pulverizer to deal with the stockpiled glass; and eventually to produce coloured glass separately.
- storage for hazardous material
- a shredder attachment for the backhoe to turn the compost, shred wood furniture, etc
- paving of the upper portion for the construction waste and scrap metal bins
- fencing the waste area and the back fifty, leaving the Free Store accessible.
- more lighting for the recycling area
- insulation and some heat source for the free store
- restructuring of the existing buildings

Any input from the public is welcome, and we thank you for your support.