

Spring SWEO Updates: Feb. – May 2022

Operations

- Presentations on the new Waste Connections Recycling Collections contract have been made to city/town councils of Battle Ground, La Center, and Yacolt
 - Contract would be effective July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2032
 - Once reviewed cities will submit a signed Interlocal Agreement to the County for approval
- Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection events for Ridgefield and Yacolt
 - Residents of these cities have farther to travel to reach HHW drop-off facilities (located in Vancouver and Washougal), so it's beneficial to give them an extra option.
 - The goal is to collect HHW at both Ridgefield and Yacolt events each year.
 - This year both locations held recycling events on 04/23/22
 - We were unable to provide HHW services to both locations
 - ▶ Ridgefield scheduled first, so they received HHW services
- Continuing to work on updates to the hazardous waste management plan. Nothing to report out so far.
- Connected with Clean Earth (the company that runs our 3 HHW facilities) and they agreed to begin taking nicotine vaping and e-cigarette waste from residents as HHW.
- Local Solid Waste Financial Assistance Grant has finally been approved
 - Have submitted progress reports for the first three quarters of the biennium
- In the absence of a Program Manager for SWEO Brian Schlottmann, Director of Environmental Health, is stepping in until a new Program Manager can be hired.
 - Recruitment is already underway, and some first-round interviews have taken place.

Green Business

Virtual Events

- Morning Blend: Engaging Employees, February 17
 - Discuss tips and resources for engaging employees in sustainability initiatives – both within green teams and across an organization
 - 19 attendees
- Workshop Part 1 - WA Sustainability Initiatives
 - Department of Ecology presentation on recent and upcoming waste reduction laws and initiatives, including Single-use Serviceware Law, Expanded Polystyrene Ban, Single-Use Plastic Bag Ban, and Use Food Well Washington Plan
 - Speakers: Heather Church, Jade Monroe, Mary Harrington, Dept of Ecology
 - 28 attendees
- Workshop Part 2 – Nothing Goes “Away”: Sustainable Waste Management
 - Waste Connections presentation on recycling correctly in Clark County, the harm of contaminated waste streams, and importance of waste reduction.
 - Speakers: Danielle Womble, Jerin Dinkins, Megan Johnson, Waste Connections
 - 21 attendees
- Workshop Part 3 - Managing Hazardous Materials
 - Discuss what hazardous waste is, and what it is not; how to manage and dispose of it; and how to reduce or recycle hazardous waste
 - Speaker: Dee Williams, Dept of Ecology
 - Upcoming event 5/11/2022

Green Awards

- Six 2022 Green Award winners were selected. They are:
 - **Alexandra Yost – Green Apple Award for school employee**
Alex Yost is an advanced culinary teacher at Washougal High School. She recently helped transition the school from single-use serviceware to durable serviceware. With Yost's support,

Washougal High School has become a leader among schools in Clark County, demonstrating a successful model of cafeteria sustainability that other schools can replicate.

- **Hockinson Heights Elementary – Green Team Award for student green team**
The Hockinson Heights Elementary Green Team didn't let challenges of the last year keep them from accomplishing their sustainability goals. The school's green team is facilitated by staff, but the students take the lead on educating their peers. This year, the team has focused on the cafeteria and helped students learn how to properly sort their lunch waste into bins for garbage, recycling, and composting.
 - **Wallis Engineering – Green Business of the Year, small business category**
Wallis Engineering's attention to environmental details led to a long list of strategies for reducing their impact. Not satisfied with only having a recycling program, the Vancouver civil engineering consulting firm committed to reuse to cut down on waste. Scrap paper is turned into note pads, filtered water is provided so employees can use refillable water bottles, and appliances are repaired instead of being scrapped to buy new.
 - **PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center – Green Business of the Year, large business category**
Despite the challenges that COVID-19 presents to hospitals, PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center has had numerous environmental successes in the past year. Clean wrap containing surgery instruments is now collected for recycling, which keeps tons of material from going to the landfill. The hospital signed a pledge with the World Resources Institute to increase plant-based offerings and reduce climate impacts of the food served. And the hospital joined Clark Public Utilities Strategic Energy Management cohort to reduce energy consumption through no-cost improvements and behavior change.
 - **Columbia Springs – Green Business of the Year, nonprofit or government agency category**
As an environmental education organization, Columbia Springs realizes the importance of demonstrating green practices and allows visitors to see sustainability projects in action. Green cleaning products are used throughout their buildings, and they manage stormwater onsite with a rain garden and green roof to improve water quality. Stormwater medallions were installed at catch basins to increase awareness that storm drains lead directly to streams or groundwater.
 - **Kris Potter – Master Composter Recycler Superstar**
Kris Potter embodies the longevity and success of the Master Composter Recycler program, which dates to the early 1990s. Potter is the resident lasagna garden compost expert among the Master Composter Recycler volunteer community and has helped Clark County to reduce food and urban organic wastes going to the landfill through her efforts. Potter trains new volunteers, teaches public workshops and leads hands-on demonstration opportunities to teach the community about this innovative composting method.
- CVTV Award Video which features all award winners and has been published on the county's main YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTJhFmknkDOY>
 - Feature in April issue of The Columbian's Living in the 'Couve publication (pages 10-11): <https://pcdn.columbian.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/April-Couv-22-web.pdf>

Green Neighbors

- Single-family Recycling Outreach
 - Cart tagging will expand out to other parts of Clark County including Camas, Ridgefield and Yacolt starting May 11 (see attached "WC Cart Tagging NR County wide_04.2022" Word doc)
 - Cart tagging 2021 End of Year Report and Q1 2022 Quarterly Report (see attached "Quarter 1 Report 2022" and "CT EOY Report 2021 Revised" PDFs)
- Multifamily Recycling Outreach

- The recycling dumpster lid pilot project to help decrease contamination is midway through at Village at Cascade Park apartments and week of 4/25 the second apartment complex will be outfitted with the modified lids.
- Multifamily outreach Q1 report (see attached “Multifamily Q1 Report” PDF)
- Recycled Arts Festival
 - June 25-26 event has been canceled due to the existing challenges faced over the last two years during the pandemic, coupled with supply chain shortages and staffing limitations.
- WasteBusters Challenge: Food Waste Prevention
 - Three pledges centered around preventing wasted food: plan one meat-free meal a week; organize and rotate food in the refrigerator to consume before expiration; and, plan meals before grocery shopping.
 - 99 participants
- Natural Garden Tour
 - Planning is underway with hosts selected week of 4/25/22.
- Master Gardeners – Natural gardening
 - Pacific Park Learn and Serve workshops back in-person. Next event: How to build a Crevice Garden and on Saturday, April 30. 10 am – 12 pm workshop followed by 45 minutes of service.
 - Q1 report (see attached “PH-WSUMG-Q1-22” PDF)
- Backyard Habitat Certification Program
 - Quarterly reports from Q4 2021 and Q1 2022 (see attached “Q4 Clark County Public Health Oct-Dec 2021” and “Q1 Clark County Public Health Jan-Mar 2022” PDFs)

Green Schools

- Clark County Green Schools Virtual Student Summits coming up in May
 - Friday, May 20th: Middle and High School Summit
 - Wednesday, May 25th: Elementary School Summit
- School food waste reduction and prevention
 - Trudi, Green Schools AmeriCorps Member, is checking on cafeteria composting programs
 - Has already contacted Evergreen, Battle Ground, and Ridgefield schools
 - Can now check on programs in person
 - Working with Vancouver Public Schools, SNAP-Ed, and school Family-Community Resource Center staff to launch share tables at VPS
 - Launched first share tables at Lincoln Elementary School on April 12th
 - Assisting Hayes Freedom High School (Camas) with food waste collection and on-site composting in their garden space
 - Teaming up with MCR to do lessons on worm bins and give worm bins to classrooms
 - Lessons at Frontier Middle School and Illahee Elementary School
- Video Projects
 - Will be working on a share table video with VPS
 - Need to create a new sort table training video
- Green Awards winners
 - Green Apple: Alexandra Yost, Washougal High School
 - Green Team: Hockinson Heights Elementary School
- SWEO Equity Project
 - Working with Jessica and Mollie to develop an environmental justice action plan for SWEO
 - Will hire a consultant to help us develop the plan and implement changes
 - In early stages but will be creating charter by the end of May
- Workplans with Robin Read
 - Developing workplans and priority projects for 2022-2023

Master Composter Recycler

MCR 2022 Training - <https://clarkcountycomposts.org/mcr-training-itineraries>

- 41 new volunteers trained
- West Van tour scheduled 4/30/22
- Community impact includes:
 - 2022 Earth Day Celebration
<https://clarkgreenneighbors.org/en/62-community-events/1025-2022-earth-day-celebration-invest-in-our-planet-reduce-reuse-recycle>

MCR Spring 2021 Webinars - <https://clarkcountycomposts.org/current-offerings>

- 4/20 Backyard Composting – 53 registered
- 4/27 Worm Bin Composting - 53 registered
- 5/4 Lasagna Garden Composting – 19 registered
- 5/11 Green Cleaning – 23 Registered
- 5/18 Recycling Done Right – 11 registered
- 5/25 Prevent Food Waste in the First Place – 4 registered

Congregation to Compost - <https://clarkcountycomposts.org/programs/congregation-to-compost>

- St. Thomas of Aquinas program launched 11/8/21; . **In 24 weeks, we ended at 2,798 pounds**, averaging 116.6 pounds per pick up. Average volume was 70% per pickup
- Vancouver First United Methodist program launched 3/1/22; . **In 8 weeks, we ended at 651 pounds, averaging 81.4 pounds per pick up. Average volume was 50% per pickup**
- Discussions underway with Unitarian Universalist Church of Vancouver

Community Worm Bin - <https://clarkcountycomposts.org/worm-bin-request-form>

- 23 community worm bins distributed (each bin diverts 180 pounds of food waste per year). **4,140 pounds** of food waste diverted annually

Composting Demonstration Sites - <https://clarkcountycomposts.org/mcr/compost-demo-sites>

- 100 students trained from Hayes Freedom High School (HF)
- MCR 2022 team #2 trained (CASEE)