

## Autumn SWEO Updates: Nov. 2022 – Feb. 2023

### Operations

- Mollie is providing recycling collection information and updates to Chapter 3 of SWMP including Needs and Opportunities
  - Writing Restated Recyclables Collection Contract w/submission date of Feb. 1 to Brian and Joelle for review.
- SWEO Equity Plan Updates
  - NW Public 3 out of 4 members of our equity team attended the NW Public Employees Conference on Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>
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    - Attended sessions on how to create and lead valuable DEI trainings, how to go from an ally to an accomplice, deconstructing whiteness in the workplace, etc.
  - Received 2 RFPs that were due on Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>
    - Selected Portillo Consulting, International, based out of Portland, OR, as our consultant
  - Have held 2 meetings with the consultants
    - Kick-off on Dec. 22
    - Check-in on Jan. 11
  - Scheduled transfer station tours with Portillo Consulting
    - West Van tour on Jan. 30
    - Central and Washougal tours on Jan. 31
  - Currently in the research phase of the project and will move onto conducting focus groups in March and April
  - On track to have a final draft of the plan done by June 30<sup>th</sup>

### Green Neighbors

- Single-family Recycling
  - Cart tagging is on a winter hiatus to focus on multifamily recycling tagging. Program details are being worked out with Waste Connections staff.
  - Plastic packaging recycling contamination advertising campaign went live Dec. 16-30 for a total of 739 link clicks and a reach of 29,152 accounts.
  - Columbian article: <https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/jan/15/reducing-recycling-easy-in-clark-county-but-also-tricky/>
- Holiday Waste Reduction
  - Video aired on CVTV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhAuacS7laU>
  - Reflector article: <https://www.thereflector.com/stories/clark-county-green-neighbors-promote-ways-to-reduce-holiday-waste,304296>
  - Columbian article: <https://www.columbian.com/news/2022/dec/22/reuse-reduce-recycle-for-greener-holiday-season-in-clark-county/>
- Multifamily Recycling
  - Recycling bags were delivered and have been distributed by Waste Connections staff.
  - Working on a fridge magnet to distribute to tenants.
- Natural gardening
  - Pacific Park Natural Demonstration Garden maintenance included 32 three-hour work parties and 837 hours of service by Master Gardener and community volunteers.
- Food Waste Prevention
  - Working on a food waste prevention display at Cascade Park Community Library during the month of April
- WasteBusters Challenge – [www.clarkgreenneighbors.org/wastebusters](http://www.clarkgreenneighbors.org/wastebusters)

- Will be held March 1-21 and using a new phone app platform
- Kick-off event TBD in late February
- Pledges
  - I pledge to reduce food waste by eating all apples, bananas, and leafy greens that I buy during the challenge.
  - I pledge to thoroughly read the label on each household cleaning product I use during the challenge to reinforce my understanding of health and safety risks and proper usage.
  - I pledge to reduce single-use plastic waste by not using cling wrap and sandwich bags during the challenge and replacing them with reusable options.

## Green Schools

- Upcoming events
  - Winter Educator Training – Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Elementary School Summit – March. 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Fort Vancouver Regional Library Conscious Consumption Series - ongoing
- Sort table launches
  - La Center School District
    - Launched district-wide composting program to all schools the week of Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>
    - Green Schools staff monitored sort tables at each school to train students the whole week
    - La Center schools saw their trash cut in half by diverting food waste – previously completed waste audits at each school
  - Laurin Middle School
    - Received 1 sort table for their cafeteria
  - Hockinson Middle School
    - Launching a new sort table the week of Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>
    - HMS's Student Advisory Group is leading the efforts
- Waste audits
  - Completed cafeteria waste audits at:
    - La Center Elementary Middle School – Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>
    - La Center Middle School – Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>
    - Hockinson Heights Elementary School – Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - Completed recycling audit at Felida Elementary School – Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Continued support of school food waste composting programs
  - AmeriCorps member, Saré, is checking on composting programs at schools
    - Has visited 10 schools and is delivering grabbers and other materials they need to assist them in composting
  - Working on providing green buckets for Family and Community Resource Centers (FCRC) to compost leftover food – will be delivering buckets Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>
    - FCRCs receive produce from the food bank to give out to families and it is sometimes rotten or goes bad quickly, so they'd like a way to compost this food
    - May eventually need larger carts – perhaps could explore a community compost model where the school community could drop off their food scraps at these food pantries
- Provided lessons on food waste reduction
  - Led worm bin lessons and taught students about the nutrient cycle and the importance of composting
    - WA State School for the Blind – keeping bin to compost food scraps
    - Jason Lee Middle School
    - Discovery High School
- In progress: adding share tables to all 36 schools in Vancouver Public Schools (VPS)

- Nutrition Services Director reported that 90% of VPS schools are using share tables!
- In progress: participating in Zero Waste Washington's Sustainable School Cafeteria Workgroup
  - Attending monthly meetings
  - Supporting each other by offering best practices and insight on various school cafeteria food waste prevention and reduction topics

### Composter Recycler

- Continuing Technical Assistance provided to Firestone Pacific Packing
- Congregation to Compost
  - Supported three churches in collection of food scraps from houses of worship's congregations/neighborhoods for composting, instead of sending them to a landfill.
  - There are currently 4 (64) gallon food waste carts in service at 3 Congregation to Compost sites. The average cart diverts 118 pounds of food waste per week from the landfill.
    - Annually this equates to 24,544 pounds (12 tons) diverted.
- Distributed 55 Community Worm Bins, diverting an average of 182 pounds of food waste, annually
  - The worm bins the CR program provides can house up to 1 pound of redworms under optimal conditions. Redworms consume ½ pound per day of food waste or 3.5 pounds per week. Based on this calculation these 55 worm bins will **divert an estimated 10,010 pounds (5 tons) of food waste annually from the landfill.**
- Community Backyard Compost Bin distributed 16 Enviro World FreeGarden™ EARTH compost bins
  - Seattle Public Utilities estimated that households that were backyard composting food scraps diverted an estimated 290 pounds of food per year. <https://www.biocycle.net/backyard-composting-developments/>
  - Based on this source these 16 compost bins will **divert an estimated 4,640 pounds of food waste annually from the landfill.**