

SWEO Updates: Feb. 2023 – May 2023

Operations

- Coordinating three household hazardous waste (HHW) drop-off events in northern Clark County since those residents live farthest from the permanent drop-off facilities.
 - Ridgefield, April 15
 - Yacolt, April 29
 - La Center, June 3
- Began recruiting retail sites to host battery recycling kits (funded by Waste Connections), to make battery recycling drop-off more accessible to residents. Collections are expected to launch in mid-late May 2023.
- [SB 5144](#) battery stewardship passed WA legislature. Summary:
 - Battery manufacturers selling batteries in WA will fund a recycling program
 - Collections will be staggered by battery size. Small size battery collections to start July 2027. Medium size to start Jan 2029. And Ecology will study/assess options for large format batteries to report out by July 2027.
 - Will not cover: battery-containing devices, medical devices, E-Cycle WA products
 - Recycling open to residents, businesses, government and non-profits.
 - Collections will be at volunteer retail sites. Solid waste facilities / HHW collections will be refunded cost of recycling batteries.

Equity and Environmental Justice Plan Updates

- Had 9 planning meetings with our equity consultants, Portillo Consulting, International
- Portillo Consulting, International took tours of the three transfer stations in Clark County to assess the services and locations
- Created and launched survey on SurveyMonkey to gauge how the public uses our services and programs and collect demographic information
 - As of Friday, April 21st, we have 1,282 responses
 - Survey will close on Saturday, May 6th
- Planning for focus groups to have dialogue with members of various communities
 - Completed first focus group for rural residents at Battle Ground Community Library on Monday, April 10th
 - 7 folks attended
 - Received good feedback on what they like and don't like about garbage and recycling services in Clark County
 - Focus groups include: two multi-family, two rural communities (NW and NE Clark County), and two along Fourth Plain in Vancouver
 - Another focus group is scheduled for Monday, May 1st at Bridgeview Resource Center for multi-family residents to attend
- Created marketing materials for survey and promoted it via Facebook, NextDoor, newsletters, etc.

Green Business

- New Green Schools lead, Celina Montgomery started April 3rd.
 - Getting up to speed with Green Schools

- Familiarizing with other Solid Waste programs
- Working toward getting local businesses signed up for We Compost program

Green Neighbors

- WasteBusters Challenge – www.clarkgreenneighbors.org/wastebusters
 - Wrapped up the WasteBusters Challenge that was held March 1-21.
 - There were 91 total participants and 46 active participants submitting a total 613 mission challenges.
- Single-family Recycling
 - Cart tagging will be starting back up and County routes will switch from a single visit to a 3-cycle visit to observe decreases in recycling contamination.
 - Supported Ecology’s “Recycle Right” campaign on not bagging recyclables during April.
- Multifamily Recycling
 - Created a plan to monitor recycling contamination at apartment complexes for the cart taggers to implement this year.
- Natural gardening
 - The next Green Neighbors sponsored Master Gardener workshop is:
 - Creative Ornamental Garden Design
Join landscape design expert Christine Anderson for a glimpse into the garden design process. Stroll the Pacific Park Natural Demonstration Garden as she describes the techniques she uses to transform ho-hum spaces into exquisite vignettes with outside-the-box, creative ideas. Saturday, June 24 from 10am to noon at the Pacific Park Natural Demonstration Garden: 1515 NE 164th Ave, Vancouver. (Enter from NE 172nd.) Bring a lawn chair and your work clothes. Participants are asked to provide 45 minutes of service in the East Vancouver demonstration garden following the workshop. Bring gloves and water and dress for the weather. This event is put on in conjunction with Clark County Public Health – Solid Waste Outreach, Green Neighbors Program. Contact: Erika.d.johnson@wsu.edu or 564-397-5738.
 - Planning is underway for the 2023 Natural Garden Tour, which will be held July 16.
- Food Waste Prevention
 - The food waste prevention display is up through April at Cascade Park Community Library
 - Celebrated Food Waste Prevention Week on April 10-16, which is a nationwide event including participation from Oregon DEQ and Washington Dept. of Ecology. We highlighted events around the county including a food waste prevention workshop and Clark County Food System Council’s Eat Drink and Be Local.
 - Presented at the Eat Drink and Be Local event discussing Green Neighbor’s participation in Food Waste Prevention Week.

Green Schools

- Completed sort table launch
 - Hockinson Middle School
 - Launched a sort table the week of Jan. 30
 - Green Schools staff monitored the sort table the whole week
 - We saw their trash cut in half by diverting food waste

- Continued support of new and existing school food waste composting programs
 - Delivered 4 green buckets to Family and Community Resource Centers (FCRCs) to compost leftover food that was donated
 - AmeriCorps member, Saré, is checking on composting programs and delivering necessary materials
 - Met with La Center High School to work through issues with sort tables at HS and MS
 - Washington School for the Blind
 - Met with staff, students, and superintendent about composting on campus
 - Will be launching composting for their dormitories (cottages) in April
- Provided lessons on food waste reduction
 - Led worm bin lessons and taught students about the nutrient cycle, decomposers, and the importance of composting
 - Discovery High School worm bin lesson – Jan. 12
 - Marrion Elementary School worm bin lesson – Feb. 21
 - Kept the worm bin to continue composting
 - Battle Ground High School worm bin lesson – Mar. 7
 - Kept the worm bin to continue composting
 - Good Shepherd Montessori School worm bench lesson – Mar. 16
 - Assembled an outdoor bench to use for vermicomposting
 - Jason Lee Middle School worm bin lesson – Mar. 21
 - Kept the bin to continue composting
 - Green Schools Student Summit worm bin lessons – Mar. 30
 - Led worm bin lesson for 5 elementary school green teams and gathered interest from 2 schools to keep worm bins
 - Discovery Middle School worm bin composting – looking to launch worm bins to compost cafeteria/kitchen food scraps
- Awarded 4 Green Awards to 3 schools and 1 educator
 - Green Apple of the Year – Mark Watrin, Battle Ground School District
 - Green Teams of the Year
 - Illahee Elementary School
 - Washington State School for the Blind
 - La Center High School
 - Washougal High School students are making the trophies out of 75% reused materials
 - [Check out the KGW News story](#)
- Hosted successful Winter Educator Training with EarthGen on Thursday, February 2nd
 - About 20 educators from around the county attended
- Hosted successful Elementary Student Summit with EarthGen on Thursday, March 30th
 - 7 elementary school green teams attended (about 70 students and 10 teachers/educators)
- Participated in Fort Vancouver Regional Library Conscious Consumption Series
 - Hosted Consumption Consequences board game session for teens on Saturday, March 11
 - Hosted Worm Bin Exploration session for kids on Saturday, April 15th
- Upcoming presentations and events
 - Waste audits with Hockinson MS, La Center ES, La Center MS, and La Center HS in May

- Worm bin lessons with Columbia Valley ES, Discovery MS, Hollingsworth Academy in May
- Waste reduction lesson with Lupine Experiential School in May
- Worm bin and composting lessons at Heritage Farm with Sifton ES, Gaiser MS, and iTech Academy in May

Composter Recycler

- Largest CR Class trained – 45 Volunteers
- Planning and Promotion for Spring 2023 Community Training Series
- Congregation to Compost
 - Added a fourth church – St. John the Evangelist
 - 4 participating faith-based organizations (St. Thomas of Aquinas, First United Methodist, St. John the Baptist)
 - 8 (64 Gal.) food waste carts collected weekly - The average cart diverts 118 pounds of food waste per week from the landfill. Annually this equates to 49,088 pounds diverted or 25 tons.
- 15 Backyard compost bins distributed for organics material diversion.
 - Each compost bin on average diverts 290 pounds of food waste annually
- 5 Community worm bins have been distributed
 - Each worm bin on average diverts 180 pounds of food waste annually