

February 2008



Newsletter

Welcome to the OKRA online newsletter. Please share the newsletter with anyone who might enjoy reading it. To receive electronic notification of newsletter availability and general recycling announcements, sign up for the OKRA list server on our website: www.recycleok.org

What Makes a Hero? Recycling Heroes of 2007

An Oklahoma State University student has been named Oklahoma's Collegiate Recycler of the Year for making recycling part of the tailgating experience at the university.

Cortney Timmons, a biosystems and agricultural engineering junior from Ada, was among Oklahoma's 2007 America Recycles Day "Recycling Heroes" honored at the seventh annual America Recycles Day banquet in Tulsa on Nov 15. Chosen from statewide nominees, Recycling Heroes are recognized for dedication to preserving the earth's natural resources and protecting the environment.



Cortney Timmons

Timmons was honored for initiating OSU's football game day recycling program, "Real Cowboys Recycle." Borrowing its name from OSU's campus-wide recycling effort, the initiative is led by the Student Gov-

ernment Association and ECO-OSU, the Stillwater campus's grassroots environmental organization.

"The trust was particularly interested in the OSU tailgate recycling program because it shows great innovation and it is the perfect setting to get the entire OSU community involved," said Julie Alexander of The Metropolitan Environmental Trust that administers the Recycling Hero awards. "We want to encourage success and recognize the hard work that goes into developing a new program like the tailgate recycling program Cortney and OSU started."

In addition to Timmons, Oklahoma's 2007 "Recycling Heroes" included **Brian Figgins**, who was named **Individual Recycler of the Year** for his efforts to develop a recycling program in Mustang, Oklahoma. **The Green Team from Bank of Oklahoma's Technology center** was named **Business Recycler of the year** instituting a lunchroom recycling program.

The **City of Norman** received the **Recycling Effort of the Year** award for voting in a city-wide mandatory recycling program and **State Senator Susan Paddack** was named **Legislator of the Year** for her legislative efforts to establish a state-wide recycling goal and for being a long-time supporter of recycling issues.

The recycling **Lifetime Achievement Award** was given to **City of Tulsa solid waste manager, Frank Erwin**, for his commitment to creating a viable curbside recycling program.

—Abby Wambaugh,
OSU Communications



Garmon Smith presents Sen. Susan Paddack with the 2007 Legislator of The Year Award

2007 Weyerhaeuser "Excellence in Recycling" Grant Award Winners

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Asher School | 6. Rockwood Elementary - OKC |
| 2. Bethel Public Schools | 7. Owasso Ram Academy |
| 3. Brassfield Grade Center – Bixby | 8. Sapulpa Jr. High |
| 4. Blanchard Intermediate School | 9. Grove School - Shawnee |
| 5. Edmond Memorial High School | 10. Cherokee Elementary—Tahlequah |

Steps to Conquering Bottled Water Addiction



PART I—WATER FILTERS

In the last issue of this newsletter, I wrote about the problems with Americans' addiction to bottled water and encouraged you to purchase a filter if you feel your tap water is unsafe or if it tastes bad to you. The truth is that city water is highly regulated and monitored for quality and bottled water is not. It can legally contain many things we would not tolerate in municipal drinking water. But if you still feel you cannot trust your local water supply and are having trouble selecting the water filter that is right for you, here's what you can do.

To start, check your water utility's "Consumer Confidence Report," which must be mailed to you each year before July 1 by law. The report details where your drinking water comes from, what contaminants have been found in it, and how contaminant levels compare to national standards. You can also call your utility and ask for a copy, or visit <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ogwdw/ccr.nsf/Oklahoma?OpenView>.

For help reading the report, visit National Sanitation Foundation's (NSF) website: http://www.nsf.org/consumer/drinking_water/index.asp. Some experts also recommend looking for a filter certified by NSF, a nonprofit organization that conducts safety testing for the food and water industries. NSF tests and certifies water filters to ensure that they both meet NSF safety standards and are effective at removing contaminants as claimed by the manufacturer. Underwriters Laboratories and the Water Quality Association also offer similar certification, based on NSF standards.

While your report can tell you what's going on with the water in your area, only a test of the water coming out of your tap will tell you what you and your family are drinking for sure. To find a state-certified lab to test your water (which will charge a fee) visit the EPA's Safe Water website or call the EPA's Safe Water Hotline at 800-426-4791. If your water comes from a private well, it's not regulated at all by the EPA, so you should have your water tested annually in late spring (when pesticide runoff will be at its worst), and anytime you notice a change in your water.

Water filters come in a dizzying variety, from plastic pitcher filters and built-in refrigerator filters, to faucet and under-the-sink filters, to whole-house models that combine a variety of media types and treat all of the water in your house. What type you want depends on your needs.

If, after examining your Consumer Confidence Report (or, preferably, your current and several past reports), you find that your water regularly tests better than EPA levels, you may just want a filter that can remove the chemicals your local utility uses to treat the water.

These chemicals may or may not show up on your report. Call and ask your utility if it uses chlorine, a suspected respiratory and neurological toxin, or chloramines, a suspected blood and respiratory toxin. Chlorine combines with organic elements during the water treatment process to produce carcinogenic by-products.

If you only have **one or two contaminants**, a smaller unit, such as a countertop or under-the-sink filter, may meet your needs. To find a filter certified to remove the contaminants you're most concerned about, visit the NSF's online database. Finally, if you find your water has **serious safety issues**, consider a multi-stage filter that can tackle a variety of contaminants. Many combine a variety of filter types. These types include (problems they work best for is in parentheses): adsorption (organic contaminants & chlorine—may improve taste), distillers (inorganic contaminants like heavy metals, nitrates & hardness—some bacteria-no chloramines), filter membranes (particulates, most bacteria, cryptosporidium & viruses), reverse osmosis (bacteria-only returns one-third of the water volume), ultraviolet treatment (bacteria & viruses—not chemical pollutants).

Many specific water filter reviews are summarized online at www.consumersearch.com, including the tests done by Consumer Reports. Do the research to see which filter will suit your needs.

(The primary source for this article was Coop America's July/August 2007 Issue of Real Money: "The Facts about Water Filters." www.coopamerica.org)

PART II—REUSABLE WATER BOTTLES

After much research into reusable water bottles, the overwhelming consensus seems to be the SIGG aluminum bottle shown here. SIGG bottles are the most eco-friendly choice, being 100% recyclable at the end of their life. They have been proven to ensure 0% leaching of any substance. The lids are made from food-safe #5 Polypropylene plastic.



Since washing your SIGG in the dishwasher may dull the finish, it is recommended you use white vinegar, baking soda or a drop of detergent. It is better to remove the seals before cleaning, as they may leak when becoming worn. For those who leave drinks other than water in the bottle to dry out, SIGG cleaning brushes and bottle clean tablets are available. It is recommended you leave 2-3 cm below the lip unfilled, as residual air improves water tightness and helps the flow. Do NOT freeze water in your SIGG, as it may crack when water expands. You can order them online at: <http://www.mysigg.com/>.

For those who insist on using plastic bottles, Dr. Evelina Morales, DEQ epidemiologist, told me any plastic safe to use for food or water containers should be labeled on the bottom (inside a triangle) with the numbers 1, 4 or 5 to show that it is certified as safe for food and water.

The jury is still out as to whether the Nalgene bottle hazards we have all heard rumors about (made of Polycarbonate #7, also known as Lexan) could be harmful to human health by leaching toxins into the bottle's contents, especially when heated. The amount of leaching increases as the plastic ages and degrades, so don't use it too long just in case.

- Susie Shields, DEQ

Oklahoma Celebrates America Recycles Day 2007 Winners

As part of last year's Oklahoma Celebrates America Recycles Day (ARD) Celebration, OKRA encouraged Oklahomans to sign a pledge to do more recycling at home, at school and at work. Prize winners were drawn from the nearly 4,000 pledges submitted. Traci Phillips, OKRA President, said "We are thrilled at the number of pledge cards received this year. It is double the number submitted last year." All donated prizes, except the iPod docking station and CD players for youth winners, had an environmental focus.

Donna Patterson, Collinsville, was the adult grand prize winner of a new Xerox Phaser solid ink printer. Jim Warram (Xerox) stated that Xerox's solid ink imaging process utilizes compact, "cartridge-free" solid ink sticks with no plastic housings or casing, which reduces office waste by 90%. Donna donated the printer to Rogers County Extension Office in Claremore where she is employed.



Jasmine Davis, Youth Grand Prize

Jasmine Davis was the youth grand prize winner of an Apple Second Generation iPod donated by the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and a DLO iPod docking station donated by Waste Connections, Inc. Susie Shields, Oklahoma ARD State Coordinator, said, "We suggested the Second Generation iPods as they are pre-owned and refurbished for resale. DEQ's "Use Less Stuff" Campaign recommends purchase of reused/recycled products whenever possible."

Second place winner, Jessica Koontz of Yukon, won a Second Generation iPod also donated by SWANA. Other youth winners were Cheyenne Ellington and Kimani William of Tulsa, along with Devery Nolan of Oklahoma City. All three received portable DVD/CD/MP3 players donated by SWANA and Weyer-

haeuser.

Sustainable Tulsa, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting sustainability, donated a home Eco Kit containing compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs, a low-flow showerhead, a kitchen compost bin, and a roll of Seventh Generation recycled brown paper towels. Winner, Dale Hildebrand of Choctaw, will save money and resources while reducing home carbon emissions with help from his prizes.



Cheyenne Ellington

Two (2) Garden Gourmet Compost bins, made from 100% recycled plastic, were donated by The M.e.t. Chelsea Platt, Edmond, and Brandy Otis, Muskogee, will soon be starting compost projects in their backyards with their new bins. Tom Cooper of Ada won the Black & Decker cordless electric lawnmower donated by OG&E. Electric mowers are inexpensive to operate and easy to maintain. They are also quiet, clean, and produce no exhaust fumes.

Wayne Carlisle of Shidler will soon be relaxing on his new recycled plastic hammock donated by the Oklahoma Sierra Club. A handcrafted, countertop water crock filter, also donated by Sierra Club, was won by Jack Fallon of Edmond.

Winning one case of 100% recycled copy paper donated by Staples were Colby Mullins (Norman), Donald Roy (Newkirk) and Debbie Lucas (Oklahoma City). Staples generously increased their donation to five cases for winner Jim Dominick, Superintendent of Clayton Public Schools, as he wanted to donate it to the schools. This paper is processed without using chlorine or chlorine compounds and is acid-free. Using 100% post-consumer content paper saves trees, reduces solid waste, conserves water, saves energy and reduces emissions of greenhouse gases.

—Susie Shields, 2007 ARD Chair

Rep. Derby Takes Recycling Philosophy to the Capitol

According to the Oklahoma Recycling Association, Americans use 200 million tons of paper a year for everything from daily newspapers to books and cardboard boxes, throwing away at least 100 million tons of paper, almost all of which could be recycled. State Rep. David Derby said taking one little step could reduce those numbers and help the environment.

That's why Derby added a recycle trashcan to his Capitol office this week in hopes of starting a trend and leading other representatives to have an environmentally friendly office.

"We need to be leaders in all our actions, especially those that make our state a healthy and beautiful environment

to live in," said Derby, R-Owasso. "Legislators get so much mail everyday, not to mention all the paper used to print bills and work material, and all that material usually gets thrown away in a non-recycle trashcan. Something needs to be done."

According to statistics, a ream of paper (500 sheets) weighs about three pounds and each ream would require 3.6 kg of wood - at 3,000 reams per year using 10,752 kg of wood, about 16 trees per year, or about one tree every three weeks will be used.

Derby said based on these statistics and knowing how much paper is used and thrown away by the House of Representatives, legislators need to find ways

to save more trees.

"I hope my simple trash can makes a difference. Whether it has small or big results it is a step in the right direction. I hope I can keep taking more steps in the direction of an environmentally sound work environment," said Derby.

Derby noted that there are large recycle trashcans placed throughout the Capitol but just none in every individual office.

Contact: State Rep. David Derby
Capitol: (405) 557-7377

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Recycling News from Ada

ARC Hosts 10th Annual Telephone Book Collection Contest

The Ada Recycling Coalition recently hosted its 10th annual telephone book collection contest for area schools. The phone book delivery day was January 26, 2008. 15 schools participated in this year's contest, collecting a total of 14,244 phonebooks! Winning classrooms at each participating school were awarded a pizza party. The winning school again this year was Roff Elementary School. Roff students collected 3,928 phone books winning their school the \$150 grand prize.

The collected phone books were baled by Ada city forces and will be recycled



Left: Larry West of Washington Grade Center and Marie Wilson of Hayes Grade Center discuss their friendly rivalry at the Ada Recycling Center.



ARC Commends Chickasaw Nation for Recycling Efforts

The Ada Recycling Coalition commended Ambrie Walker and Dana Nickell, Chickasaw Nation, for their exemplary community recycling ef-

forts and accomplishments.

In 2007 the Chickasaw Nation acquired an EPA recycling grant, began a recycling program in Ada, began a white-goods collection program, added a community recycling drop-off site, supported the city's household hazardous waste collection event with volunteers, recycled an abundance of e-waste and began an ink-cartridge collection program (donating proceeds to recycling).



Barbara Young, Garmon Smith, Dana Nickell and Ambrie Walker (Photo by Richard Barron)

Lucky ARD Winner!!

Congratulations to Shellie Horton, (right) ARC's lucky America Recycles Day winner! Shellie was presented with a mulching mower in November! ARC pledge cards were entered in a local drawing before being sent in to the Oklahoma State ARD contest. Three names were drawn for T-shirts; they were Lain Underwood, Mack Peterson and Sammie Montgomery.



Ada Holds Successful Household HW Collection



Ada's HHW Collection was held Oct 20, 2007. It was well managed with many volunteers and a record number of participants (253 vehicles)!. Approximately 60 gallons antifreeze, 470 gals motor oil, 90 lead batteries, 314 tires and 2.5 semi-loads of e-waste were collected. In addition, the Chickasaw Nation collected appliances for the first time. ARC collected and mixed almost 130 gals of latex paint saving the city \$1,200 in disposal costs. Much of the paint was donated to the Byng Drama Department.

(Left photo) Chickasaw Nation member, Mack Peterson, volunteered at ADA's HHHW event and won an ARD T-Shirt from the ARC

Wal-Mart Kick Starts 2008 Recycling



At left: Dale Lindsay, assistant manager at Wal-Mart, presented Garmon Smith, ARC chair, with a \$1000 donation in January. This was a great way to start the year for the ARC!

Arkansas Company to Open Recycling Plant Near Watts, OK

A Springdale, Ark., company plans to open a state-of-the-art plastic recycling facility by October near Watts.

A spokesman for Advanced Environmental Recycling Technologies said the company expects to employ 60 to 65 workers once the first phase of construction is completed. Planned expansion could raise the total to 265 employees. The average of all wages and salaries at the plant is expected to be about \$14 per hour.

AERT manufactures composite building products — made from recycled polyethylene and scrap wood fibers — used for decking, door and window components, and exterior trim.

Company officials say the Watts recycling plant “is expected to significantly reduce the company’s raw material costs and assure a stable supply of raw materials.”

Al Drinkwater, AERT senior vice president for administration, said the company plans to expand its Watts facility with two additional phases. The timing of the second and third phases, Drinkwater said, will depend upon the company’s ability to capture a sufficient portion of the composite building materials market. That market is forecast to grow 14 percent during the next two to three years.

“We’re looking forward to getting our share of that growth,” Drinkwater said, noting some concern about the housing markets. “I think we’ll know over the next two years if we’re going to be able to move forward.”

If the second- and third-phase plans are realized, Drinkwater said the company’s plastic-waste mining and reclamation plant in Watts could employ up to 265 workers. The first phase of construction is being financed by a \$13.5 million bond underwritten by Gates Capital Corp. and purchased by Allstate Investors LLC, the investment management subsidiary of Allstate Insurance Co.

“The support of various State of Oklahoma agencies and the Cherokee Nation not only greatly assisted us in funding the project, but also provided validation of our strategy,” said AERT Chief Executive Officer Joe Brooks.

While the prospect of new jobs for the area is exciting for some, others have expressed concern about a new industry locating on the banks of the Illinois River. In addition to location, some are concerned the Watts wastewater lagoon system cannot handle the additional effluent from the AERT facility.

“We are not necessarily opposed to the plant at this juncture,” Save the Illinois River President Kurt Robinson said of AERT plans. “We are concerned about this site because

there have been some problems in the past with the onsite lagoon, and we want to make sure these things are corrected and want to know what is being released from the plant.”

The AERT plant will be located on property where a large hog feedout and finishing facility once operated. Drinkwater said the company plans to retrofit the wastewater and manure pits to pretreat the effluent from the recycling process before it is discharged into the municipal system.

Drinkwater said the water used during the mining and reclamation process will be used several times before it flows from the recycling plant to Watts’ wastewater lagoon system. The ultimate goal, Drinkwater said, is zero discharge from AERT’s plant.

According to the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, an engineering report submitted by Watts officials regarding its wastewater system was approved Sept. 26.

Skylar McElhane, ODEQ public information officer, said the engineering report proposes improvements to the town’s collection and treatment system in order accommodate the plastics recycling plant. The proposed improvements, McElhane said, include the construction of a lift station, 6,900 feet of force main that would carry the effluent from the recycling plant to the Watts lagoons, and repairs and an expansion of the Watts wastewater land application system.

“The proposed improvements will not result in a wastewater discharge,” McElhane said. “The system is designed to maintain total retention through land application.”

In addition to improvements to the municipal wastewater system, McElhane said AERT will be required to obtain permits for both its wastewater pretreatment system and an industrial storm water permit.

The storm water permit, according to McElhane, would require steps be taken to ensure that that no storm water come into contact with “raw materials, process, product or process waste being discharged to the environment.”

Robinson said his organization plans to hire a consultant to help STIR analyze the potential impact the recycling plant could have on the Illinois River watershed and Lake Tenkiller.

Drinkwater said the environment is a top concern at AERT, which he said was built on green concept of recycling when it began operating in 1988.

*By D. E. Smoot— Muskogee Phoenix Staff Writer
Originally published December 31, 2007*



Chickasha Opens Drop-Off Recycling Centers

The City of Chickasha announces the opening of two conveniently located drop-off recycling centers. The drop-off centers are located at the Police Department, 101 North 6th (NW corner of back parking lot) and at Fire Station No. 2, 1526 Country Club Rd (SE corner of parking lot). A grand opening event was held Saturday, Feb 9th, from 10am to 1pm. Residents who dropped off recyclables during this time were greeted by Recycloman and Recyclowoman from Tinker AFB, and were automatically entered in a drawing for one of two \$50 Savings Bonds that were given away by Waste Connections. Chickasha invites residents to take advantage of these new centers and RECYCLE!!

Coca-Cola's Recycling Support Includes Funding for Recycling Bins

Coca-Cola and the National Recycling Coalition (NRC) announced a new recycling bin grant program designed to promote and support community recycling in the U.S. Through this innovative grant, recipients will have the benefit of both the donated recycle bins and the expertise on how to set up recycling programs from the National Recycling Coalition. Grants will be provided for recycle bins at sporting events, music venues, schools and commercial locations. The grant program is part of Coca-Cola's \$60 million investment in recycling programs and initiatives in the U.S.

The grant program is open to city, government and school organizations as well as non-profit groups and for-profit companies. Interested parties may apply for the grant at NRC's website: <http://bingrant.org/>. Eligible grant activities include establishing a recycling program at schools, universities, sporting or recreation venues, parks, cultural events or business and commercial locations. Grant recipients will be selected and awarded recycling bins throughout 2008.

Coca-Cola also recently announced a series of initiatives designed to enable the Company to achieve its long term goal to recycle or reuse all of its plastic bottles in the U.S. marketplace. In partnership with the United Resource Recovery Corporation (URRC), Coca-Cola will build the world's largest bottle-to-bottle

plastic recycling plant in Spartanburg, S.C. When fully operational in 2009, the plant will have the capacity to produce approximately 100 million pounds of food-grade recycled PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic for reuse each year – the equivalent of producing nearly two billion 20-ounce Coca-Cola bottles.

Coca-Cola also has expanded its partnership and investment in RecycleBank, a successful community curbside recycling program. RecycleBank currently operates in southern New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania and will be launching service in upstate New York, Vermont and Massachusetts in the fall of 2007. The additional investment from Coca-Cola will support a national rollout of the RecycleBank program by 2009.

Coca-Cola and its largest bottler, Coca-Cola Enterprises also announced the creation of Coca-Cola Recycling, a new subsidiary dedicated to recovering and recycling Coca-Cola packaging materials used within the Coca-Cola system in the U.S.

For more information about Coca-Cola recycling programs and initiatives, Please visit <http://www.cokecce.com>.



EPA Answers Call for Cell Phone Recycling



EPA is pleased to answer America's call for easy cell phone recycling. The nation's leading cell phone makers, service providers, and retailers have teamed up with the EPA to launch a national campaign encouraging Americans to recycle their unwanted cell phones. Partners supporting the Recycle Your Cell Phone. It's An Easy Call Campaign include AT&T Wireless, Best Buy, LG Electronics, Motorola, Nokia, Office Depot, Samsung, Sony Ericsson, Sprint, Staples, and T-Mobile.

To kick-off the campaign, EPA has released a series of print public service announcements, which highlight the convenience and environmental and social benefits of recycling a cell phone. EPA also released a podcast that addresses many common questions on cell phone recycling.

Many consumers still do not know where or how they can recycle their unwanted cell phones. Consequently, less than 20 percent of unwanted cell phones are recycled each year. Recycling a cell phone offers an opportunity for everyone to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save energy, and conserve natural resources. If Americans recycled 100 million phones, we could save enough energy to power more than 194,000 U.S. households for a year.

The Recycle Your Cell Phone. It's An Easy Call Campaign is a part of EPA's Plug-In To eCycling. Plug-In To eCycling is a voluntary partnership between EA and electronics manufacturers, retailers, and service providers to offer consumers more opportunities to donate or recycle their used electronics. In 2007, as part of their commitment to the program, retailers and electronics manufacturers voluntarily recycled more than 47 million pounds of electronics, mostly computers and televisions.

For more information about the Recycle Your Cell Phone. It's An Easy Call Campaign, please check out the attached fact sheet or visit our website at: <http://www.epa.gov/cellphones>. For more information about the Plug-In To eCycling program, please visit: www.epa.gov/plugin.

Don't forget the SWANA Spring Symposium coming up Feb 27-28, 2008 at the Cherokee Casino Resort, Catoosa, OK. For info, contact Sherry Greathouse, 1945 Moffett Lane, Ft. Gibson, OK 74434; phone at 918-478-6025; or email at sherry.greathouse@ici-ok.com. Registration and exhibitor brochures are now available at <http://ok.swanachapters.org>



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OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

We need your help to grow OKRA . . . Join us online!

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2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Feb. 27-28** SWANA Solid Waste Symposium (See Page 5 for details)
- March 1-May 31** KOB's 2008 Great American Cleanup (www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com)
kob@coxinet.net or (405)286-9141
- March 5** "Going Greener with Low Impact Development"—24th Annual Resource Management Conference—Tulsa. Contact: tulsaccd@conservation.ok.gov or 918.280.1595
- March 28-29** "Red Dirt, Green Culture," Oklahoma Sustainability Network (OSN) Conference—Downtown Norman. www.oksustainability.org
- April 9-11** Growing Green—Sustainable Watershed Management," Oklahoma Clean Lakes & Watersheds Conference —Tulsa Crowne Plaza Hotel (<http://www.oclwa.org/>)
- April 10** Emerging Energy Technology Conference <http://www.okcommerce.gov/index.php>
- April 19** Grand Lake Earth Day (www.grandlakefun.com/cleargrand/EarthDay2007.htm)
- April 22** Official Earth Day (<http://ww2.earthday.net/~earthday/node/80>)
- April 23** Campus Earth Day events at UCO (9:00am-2:00pm) and OSU (10:00am-3:00pm)
- April 26** C.A.S.T. Central Oklahoma Earth Day/Recyclathon at OKC Zoo (www.una-okc.org)