

Waste Not

The Weekly Reporter
for rational
resource management

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May 31, 1988

IN AUSTRIA A COUNTY OF 100,000 RECYCLES 67% OF ITS WASTE. Pollution Probe organized a 2 day recycling conference, May 30-31, in Toronto, Canada. At the conference Reinhard Goeschl described a very successful recycling program being conducted in NEUNKIRCHEN, AUSTRIA, a county of 100,000. In 1986, using a combination of source-separation, recycling and composting (using curbside collection) they reduced the wastestream by 65%, and in 1987 they reduced the wastestream by 67%. What was particularly interesting with this report was the breakdown between recycling and composting: 27% was recycled and a massive 40% was composted. Of the 40% that was composted a 22% reduction came from the composting process itself in the release of carbon dioxide and water to the environment, and the remaining 18% was the compost itself which was sold. In other words, one-fifth of the waste stream was reduced by composting before one ounce of compost was sold. So while communities in the U.S. argue about how much can be recycled they are frequently ignoring one method which can make a huge dent in the wastestream: COMPOSTING. Adding more significance to that fact is that composting removes the very fraction from the wastestream which gives rise to many undesirable features of current landfill practices, i.e., smell, vermin, acid leachate, and methane generation. The 1987 figures from NEUNKIRCHEN, AUSTRIA were:

TOTAL WASTE.....	25,680	tons	per	year
AIR EMISSIONS DURING COMPOSTING.....	5,667	"	"	"
COMPOST SOLD.....	4,637	"	"	"
MATERIAL TO LANDFILL.....	8,352	"	"	"
RECYCLING.....	7,024	"	"	"

Reinhard Goeschl can be contacted at Technisches Buro, Schiltern 100, 2824 Seebenstein, Austria. Pollution Probe of Toronto is trying to raise funds to publish the proceedings of this conference.

WESTINGHOUSE 510 TPD MASS-BURN INCINERATOR IN PANAMA CITY, BAY COUNTY, FLORIDA. This mass-burn incinerator became operational in May 1987. In a May 16, 1988, memo from Owen Howard, vice-chairman of the Sierra Club-Gainesville Chapter, he described the following from his recent visit to Panama City:

" They have a \$60 million dollar system that is a real disaster for the people. They are having to buy 200 to 260 tons of wood chips per day at \$10 to \$13 per ton to burn to make up their guaranteed tons per day shortfall. They had an engineers study that said they had a flow of 520 tons per day. Their actual flow is much less, about 300 to 350 tpd. Five of their neighboring counties decided to build five individual county landfills. It was cheaper than hauling and paying the tipping fee to Bay County. I was told that Bay County was led to believe that they would not be allowed to build a landfill. Then after they decided on the burn unit, they found out that they had to build a lined landfill anyway for the ash. However they do not treat the leachate runoff. They just dump it in a pond. They did not know that they would be required to keep the landfill open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, all year to receive the ash. This extra cost was not foreseen. The reduction in waste is very low. The amount of ash generated has been from 140 tpd to 196 tpd. This is approximately a 60% reduction in tons, not even close to the 95% reduction quoted from time to time. This does not include the 130 tons per month unburnable material that has to be manually unloaded and reloaded to be sent to the landfill or the other many tons of unburnables (refrigerators, washers, dryers, etc.). Private companies are opening their own landfills to avoid dump fees (construction, demolition, and so forth). Bay County has a 25 year contract

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with WESTINGHOUSE to operate the plant, but still has to guarantee the loans. They still have all of the liability for damages. They had to pass a one-half cent sales tax to help pay for the cost overruns. Three of the original five commissioners are no longer commissioners...The burn station does not have scrubbers for pollution control and does not meet DER standards according to the News Herald. The plant is covering cars with ash nightly. Covered a whole pond with ash one night. Spewed heavy ash in one neighborhood 1½ miles away...Bay County signed a contract with Gulf County to take the waste for \$7 per ton cheaper than they charge their own people in Panama City. They have many more problems such as having to buy a million dollar substation, pay \$21,000 per month rent on the power lines, pay \$2 million interest per year, and pay \$384,000 per year maintenance. They have more than a \$10 million per year budget for this little community. The \$10 million budget was \$2 million too little. They have a \$2 million shortfall this year. They had hydraulic conveyor malfunctions. Problems with the boiler tubes. The ash drag system which moves the ash into a hopper and down to a waiting truck had not been working for several months. The pollution measuring monitor which is designed to measure the density of the smoke had not been working for months. One of the combustors had broken down." Another issue is the loud sound that comes from the plant when the steam is vented. "The neighbors are complaining about the noise all day and all night long. A market has not been found for the steam produced so it is vented under high pressure and is very loud." Memo from Owen Howard, Route 4, Box 332-H, Gainesville, FL 32608.

CAMP, DRESSER & MCKEE (CD/M) ADVOCATE RECYCLING & LANDFILLING IS SIX TIMES CHEAPER THAN MASS BURN FOR 13 FLORIDA COUNTIES. CD/M did a 15 month study, cost \$350,000, for 13 Florida Counties (ALACHUA, BAKER, BRADFORD, COLUMBIA, DIXIE, GILCREST, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, LAFAYETTE, MADISON, SWANEE, TAYLOR & UNION). CD/M recommended to the 13 counties that mass-burn or RDF incineration would be 6 times more expensive than if the counties aggressively recycled and landfilled. The combined waste from the 13 counties is 1,000tpd. ALACHUA COUNTY took the lead role among the 13 counties, as it has 600tpd of trash. Results of this report: ALACHUA & GILCREST have entered into an inter-local agreement for cooperatively sharing the first double-lined landfill in Florida, in the S.W. portion of ALACHUA COUNTY, near Archer and plans an aggressive recycling program. BAKER, UNION & BRADFORD formed a regional association to cooperatively build a landfill and support aggressive recycling. The other 8 counties also entered into an inter-governmental agreement to share one landfill with aggressive material recovery. According to Steve Shannon, ALACHUA COUNTY Solid Waste Coordinator, who had the pivotal role in the agreements among the 13 counties, this has been a major breakthrough of regional cooperation in solid waste. There was intensive monitoring of the CD/M study during the 15 months it took by environmentalists concerned about the waste/resource issues. For more information contact: Steve Shannon, S.W. Landfill, Public Works Department, PO Box 582, Gainesville, FL 32602, tel 904-495-9215. WASTE NOT will soon receive a copy of the CD/M Report and at that time we will be better able to assess the 'at cost' price of making it available.

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