

NEWS RELEASE
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Declining Residential Trash and Recycling Trend Continues

Waukesha (WI) – March 4, 2010 – The county Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) processed 21,096 tons of recyclables from 25 communities in 2009 – down about 7% from 2008. However, the amount of trash disposed by residents in those communities decreased by 4%.

The 13,187 tons of paper plus 7,711 tons of plastic, steel, glass and aluminum containers shipped to markets from the MRF last year saved enough energy to serve 3,794 homes for a year. This is over 1,000 semi trailer loads or 12 miles of trucks filled with baled recyclables lined up bumper to bumper. Total greenhouse gas emissions reduced from recycling all materials was equivalent to taking 5,691 cars off the road for one year. Total landfill space saved was 51,595 cubic yards, the equivalent of a football field filled over 30 feet high.

County Executive Dan Vrakas said, "I would like to thank all the residents that diligently recycle their paper, bottles and cans and encourage them to recycle all the materials included in the program, such as cardboard and paper packaging. By recycling, our citizens do what's right for the environment while generating tax dollar savings through reduced disposal costs and the sale of recyclable materials."

The county as a whole has experienced a 12% decline in per capita solid waste generated in the past five years from 654 pounds per capita in 2005 to 577 pounds per capita in 2009. Recycling has declined 11% from 187 pounds per capita to 166 pounds per capita during the same time period. Several factors contribute to the recycling decline including lighter weight containers, changes in packaging (i.e. glass to plastic), smaller newspapers and magazines, declining circulation numbers, and the economy.

Residents can find out which items are acceptable for recycling in their community and the economic and environmental benefits of recycling by visiting www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling or call 262-896-8300. To replace a damaged blue recycling bin or to get a second bin for more recyclables, residents should contact their town, city or village hall or visit the website for distribution events and locations.

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