

*Zero Waste—You Make It Happen!*

# Integrated Waste Management Board's Waste Reduction Programs

The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) is responsible for managing California's solid waste stream. This is accomplished through developing waste reduction programs, fostering market development, and regulating solid waste facilities. Headquartered in the 25-story Joe Serna, Jr. Cal/EPA Headquarters Building in downtown Sacramento, the CIWMB shares the facility with the other boards, departments, and offices comprising the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA).

During the design and construction of the building, designers took steps to allow for a multitude of programs and practices that would reflect Cal/EPA's mission to protect the environment.

For example, the building includes data cabling to allow for networked printers. Windows and offices allow the efficient use of natural light, and designers used many recycled-content construction products. They allowed appropriate space for the collection and storage of solid waste and recyclable materials.

The building has sufficient dock space available for two compactors, several 3-cubic yard bins, and a dozen 96-gallon carts. Ample space accommodates used pallets, reusable packaging supplies, spent printer cartridges, and other sundry waste reduction efforts.

This fact sheet provides an overview of the waste reduction programs implemented in the Cal/EPA facility. More detailed information about the specific programs is available on the CIWMB Web site at [www.ciwmb.ca.gov](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov).

## Source Reduction Programs

The CIWMB has been committed to the waste management hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle) since its inception. To that end, the Board has fostered many source reduction programs in its offices.

## *Waste Prevention Efforts*

The CIWMB primarily purchases printers and copy machines that have duplex capabilities. Current policy requires staff to print and copy double-sided whenever feasible. Additionally, all computers are defaulted to use the duplex feature. Signs posted above copy machines encourage staff to "Be Wise. Use Both Sides."

CIWMB has also taken steps to reduce the number of documents printed and copied. The CIWMB Web site allows electronic distribution of fact sheets, brochures, and other publications. The Board's agenda items are posted on the Internet or distributed on CD, allowing interested parties to view and/or print only the items of interest.

These actions have reduced paper use as well as printing and postage costs. Additional savings are achieved by using postcards to announce the availability of grants and contracts; interested parties can request the full documentation or retrieve it via the Internet.

Computers and the Internet provide many other opportunities to reduce paper consumption. Instead of printing, stocking, and eventually reprinting and restocking letterhead, an electronic version is available as a template that is easily updated when needed. Meeting arrangements and correspondence are also conducted electronically through e-mail and electronic calendars.

Some employees have received personal digital assistants (PDA) to eliminate the need to carry an organizer or printed calendars. PDAs are also being considered for the collection and retrieval of data while in the field. Finally, the Board has developed Web-based applications for the collection of information and data from local jurisdictions, State agencies, and the public.

## *Material Reuse Efforts*

Reuse of equipment, office supplies, cups, dishes, and utensils is encouraged throughout the CIWMB. Cup reuse is encouraged with a discount

at the building café when purchasing a coffee or soda refill. When attending potlucks or staff celebrations that include food, attendees use their reusable plates and utensils. Inevitably, someone brings a handful of forks and spoons that were collected and washed from the last event.

The CIWMB Information Management Branch has implemented a system to reuse computer diskettes. Staff members send unneeded diskettes to this office, where they are reformatted and affixed with a new clean label denoting it as a reused product. These disks are available to distribute electronic versions of presentations and publications.

The CIWMB also has a collection program for paper that has only been printed on one side. This single-sided paper is bound into note pads and provided to staff instead of purchasing new note pads.

Foam packing peanuts are collected for reuse in shipments or delivered to the Department of General Services warehouse for reuse. A peanut vacuum located in the shipping and receiving office can quickly empty the peanuts from a box while leaving the product in place.

CIWMB employees have the opportunity to recycle their greeting cards for continued use. The cards go to St. Jude's Ranch for Children, a nonprofit organization for abused children. The children use the cards as a fundraiser; by affixing the card faces to new card stock, they are able to sell them to the public.

All ink and toner cartridges are collected and returned to a remanufacturer that refurbishes or recycles the products. CIWMB in turn purchases remanufactured products whenever feasible.

The CIWMB also takes advantage of reuse opportunities for its surplus property. An Intranet bulletin board lists materials available for reuse. For example, cabinets, chairs, desks, and other office furniture is offered to staff for replacement of older items. Surplus office supplies like binders and file folders are also available.

Unneeded items go to the Department of General Services Surplus Property Program for distribution to other government entities or to the public. Most of the surplus electronic items are handled in a similar manner. However, CIWMB has transferred

unneeded equipment directly to other State agencies and to local jurisdictions. In some instances, staff returned used equipment to the computer vendor as a trade-in for new equipment.

### **Buildingwide Recycling Programs**

Before the Cal/EPA agencies moved into the facility, building planners took measures to maximize the diversion of solid waste. As required by statute, each agency has designated a recycling/waste reduction coordinator who is responsible for developing and implementing programs and preparing an annual integrated waste management report. The property management company, Thomas Properties Group, purchased 210 three-slot recycling containers, more than 200 large garbage cans, and several thousand 3-quart desktop garbage cans.

The 3-slot recycling containers, designed to collect white paper, mixed paper, and beverage



containers, are centrally located throughout the building. A large garbage can is placed alongside each of these bins. This one-to-one ratio was repeated throughout the building, providing staff with the option to recycle at every opportunity.

All occupants of the building received a 3-quart desktop garbage container to replace their standard 28-quart garbage can. The old wastebasket became a desktside recycling bin for mixed paper collection. Instead of janitors emptying garbage from offices and cubicles, staff members transport their garbage to a centrally located garbage can.

The janitorial staff, on its daily rounds, services the 28-quart mixed paper recycling containers. Employees set the bins out for collection only when they are full, thereby maximizing the collection efficiency. Mixed paper is very broadly

defined and encompasses almost any type of paper generated in the office environment.

Staff members have the option of separating white paper into deskside recycling containers. They are responsible for transporting this paper to a centrally located three-slot recycling container.

When the central containers are full, the janitorial staff transfers the paper to the 3-cubic yard bins at the dock.

Beverage containers generated in the building are also recycled in one of the three-slot containers and transferred to the dock by the janitorial staff.

In early 2002, Thomas Properties Group purchased deskside vermicomposting bins for food scrap management. More than 100 staff members throughout the building received a bin and training on how to tend it. These volunteers, referred to as "Worm Wranglers," bury their coffee grounds, tea bags, and food scraps in a bedding of shredded newspaper.



A wiggle (the recognized name for a group of worms) of more than a thousand worms in each bin consume the waste and generate a rich, valuable soil amendment. Property management also purchased a larger-scale worm bin that contains nearly 20,000 worms. This bin is located on the exterior of the building and is used to process food preparation scraps from the on-site café.

**The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, Flex Your Power and visit [www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html](http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html).**

In compliance with regulations regarding the disposal of hazardous wastes, the Cal/EPA building has a collection program for used batteries. Single-use and rechargeable batteries are collected in separate containers located in specific locations for each board, department, or office.

Dock personnel and the shipping and receiving department oversee another buildingwide diversion effort. Workers store pallets received with shipments at the dock, and truck drivers who are willing to transport the material will back-haul the pallets for reuse.

In the same vein, employees save incoming sturdy boxes to reuse for outbound shipments, storage, and relocations.

### **Recycling Efforts Specific to CIWMB**

CIWMB has taken advantage of several industry-sponsored programs for the collection and recycling of materials. For example, staff members collect overhead transparency film and Tyvek envelopes and return them to the manufacturers for recycling.

CIWMB staff also collects unneeded compact disks (CD) for recycling. These CDs go to a vendor who grinds them and recycles the polycarbonate resin.

### **CIWMB Accomplishments**

Through the combination of active source reduction efforts, aggressive collection programs, and committed staff, the CIWMB diverted 65 percent of its waste stream in 2002. Staff eliminated more than 18 tons of waste through reuse and source reduction activities. Additionally, 1.6 tons of beverage containers, 28.1 tons of paper fiber, and 3.6 tons of pallets were recycled. Another 1.2 tons of food scraps were diverted through the vermicomposting programs.