

WASHTENAW COUNTY SOLID WASTE PROGRAM



**2012
ANNUAL REPORT**

The Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program continues to provide its residents, businesses, institutions and local units of governments a wide variety of useful solid waste management & recycling services and educational opportunities. The following report is intended to give a brief and general overview of the ongoing programs and accomplishments of the Solid Waste Program in 2012. The report is divided into three primary categories: **On-going Programs, 2012 Program Events** and **Education & Outreach.**

On-going Programs

1. Home Toxics Reduction Program (HTRP)

The Home Toxics Reduction Program permanently located at the Washtenaw County Western Service Center at 705 N. Zeeb Rd., has collected a cumulative total of **2,293,817 lbs** of Hazardous Household Waste over the last 17 years of its operation. In 2012, Saturday collections alone collected a total of **202,582 lbs.** of Home Toxics, servicing approximately **3,564** cars. The program has been effective in preventing hazardous materials from reaching the landfill and potentially causing adverse environmental affects. The HTRP has broadened its reach to include and assist schools, businesses, and other community organizations that now benefit by receiving informational assistance and the opportunity to receive reduced pricing for Hazardous Material disposal through the County's HHW contract.

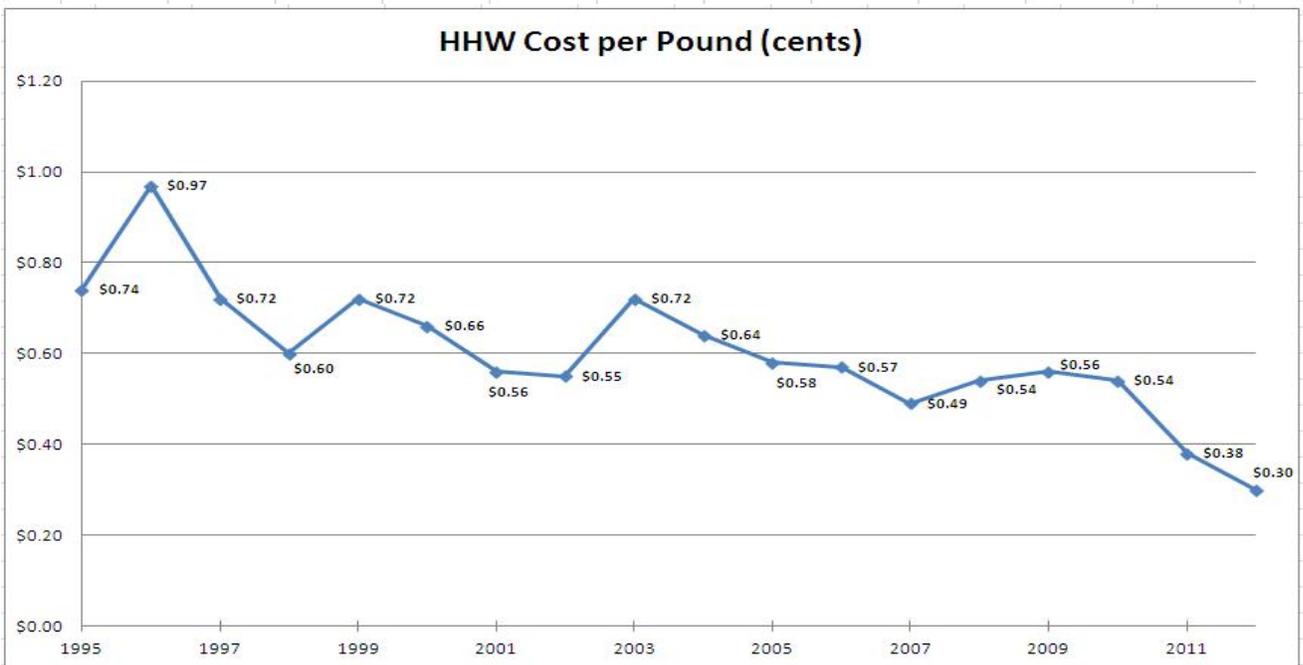
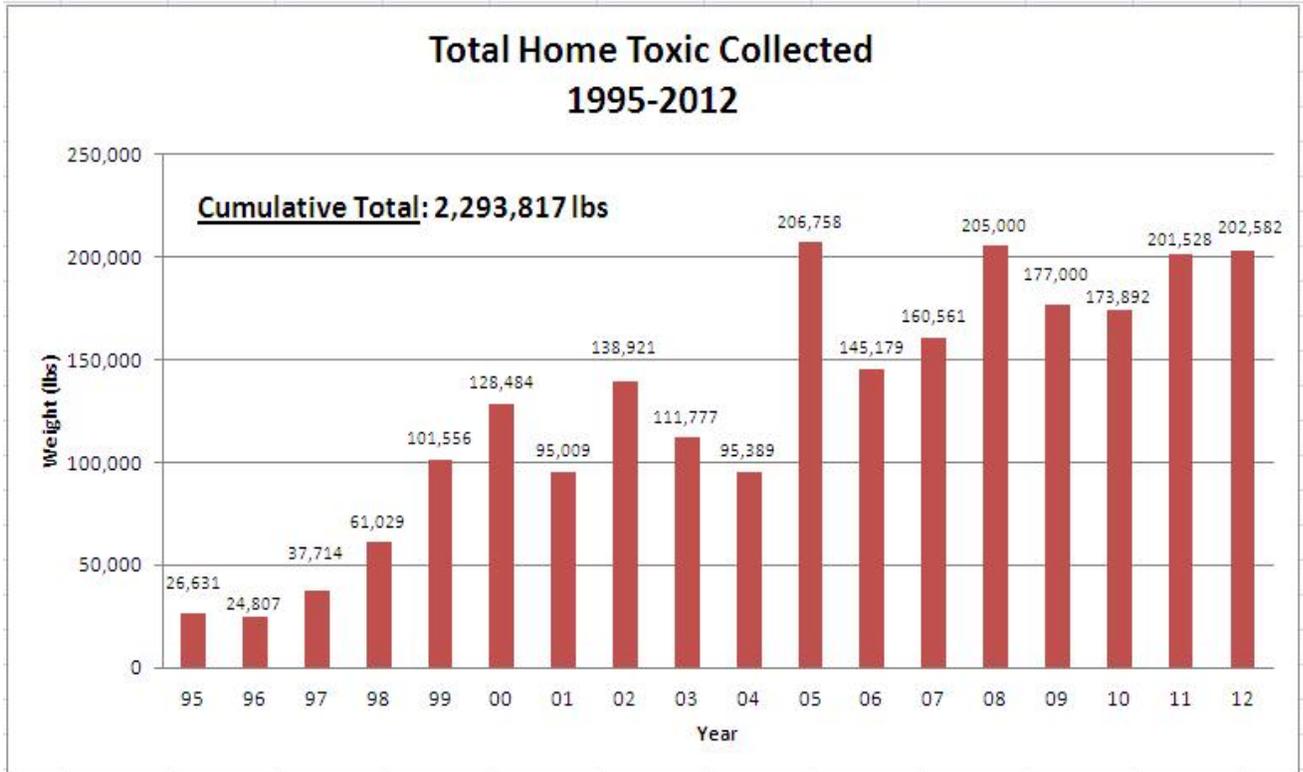


Permanent HHW drop-off facility at 705 N. Zeeb Rd.

The year of 2012 marks the first year of a 3-year HTRP contract renewal with "EQ – The Environmental Quality Company," a local hazardous waste vendor. Washtenaw County businesses, institutions, local units of government and residents that require disposal of hazardous materials are also able to utilize the county's contract and expertise to identify regulations and requirements necessary to properly handle any hazardous materials that require disposal. Businesses that are prohibited from participating in the county's home toxics program are also provided with names of service providers to meet their disposal needs.

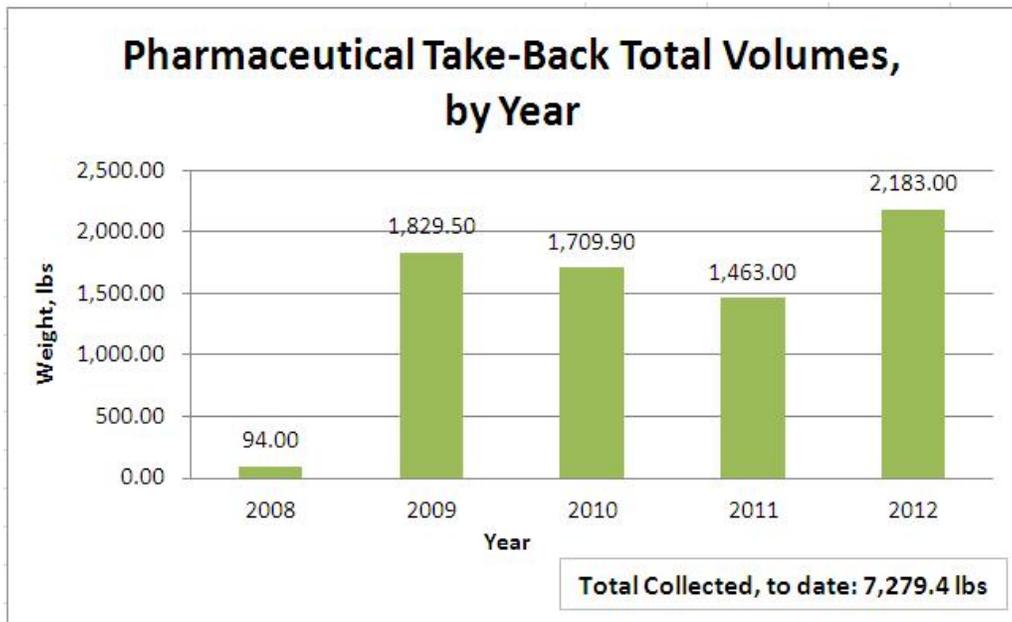
For the second consecutive year, during 2012, the HTRP program again reduced the collection days from every Saturday to the first three Saturdays of the month, April through November, excluding holidays. Items such as latex paint are easily dried out by residents at their homes, and educational efforts have been utilized to inform citizens of alternative disposal methods and thus reduce disposal costs for HTRP. Also, Washtenaw County staff have ongoing partnerships with vendors for free disposal of fire

extinguishers for recycling and used oil in efforts to reduce program costs. The attached diagrams show the historical HHW cost per lb. per year trends, illustrating the progress we have made in reducing disposal costs and also acting as an indicator for the future of HHW costs in Washtenaw County. At 0.30 cents per lb. in 2012, this cost per pound has been the lowest in the history of the Household Hazardous Waste Program.



2. Medicine Take Back Program

This program was originally launched in 2008 and has continued to successfully function and flourish throughout 2012. The Medicine Take Back Program currently consists of several pharmacies throughout Washtenaw County, which serve as collection points for the general public to take their old pharmaceuticals for proper disposal. This is a much safer alternative to the most common practice of “flushing” and thus contaminating the local waterways. The current waste disposal vendor is Drug and Lab Disposal who provides each participating pharmacy with collection containers and pick-up service. To date, over 7,279.00 lbs of pharmaceutical waste have been collected and safely disposed of through this program. The website www.dontflushdrugs.com has acted as a useful tool in educating the public about the program, and to encourage participation. We anticipate the number of participating pharmacies to grow as the program continues to succeed and gain recognition. The original contract with the participating pharmacies was such that the County funded disposal costs under at a discounted group rate, however, as of October 1, 2012, all disposal costs are funded via the Michigan Department of Agriculture “Clean Sweep Grant” which was awarded to Washtenaw County.



3. Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) “Clean Sweep Grant”

The Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program, in partnership with Lenawee and Jackson Counties, was awarded a \$45,000.00 reimbursement grant from the Michigan Department of Agriculture in 2011, which has continued through 2012. This grant is

aimed at improving awareness, recovery and collection of discarded pesticides in the community from farmers, commercial sources such as golf courses, agricultural nurseries and the general public. In addition, the grant focuses on the recovery of mercury-containing devices and pharmaceutical waste. The grant also consisted of a \$15,000 capital improvement amount which enabled the expansion of the existing HHW drop-off facility to include grant-specific services located at Zeeb Rd. Being a reimbursement grant, all disposal costs for all mercury containing devices and pharmaceutical waste collected at the Washtenaw County Medicine Take Back Program though participating pharmacies will now be collected and disposed of at no cost to the County. In 2012, Washtenaw County was reimbursed for \$9,015.13 worth of pesticide disposal, and has submitted and expects to receive an additional \$7,287.27.

4. Waste Knot Program

This business recognition program has continued to grow, having accepted 15-20 new partners in 2012. To become a member of Waste Knot, an organization must practice waste reduction and reuse, purchase recycled content products as part of their business plan and have policies in place to include waste reduction and reuse, including employee education. Though the above-stated are the minimum requirements to be admitted to the program, most partners go above and beyond in their endeavors to be “green.” In addition to the standard recyclables, local organizations are becoming increasingly aware the importance of proper disposal of hazardous materials and e-waste, in addition to food waste through composting. Many businesses are using innovation and creativity to help reduce their waste stream as much as possible. Since business waste composes roughly 60% of the total waste generated in Washtenaw County, it is extremely important to continue to educate and encourage waste reduction and recycling in the business sector through the Waste Knot Program.

5. Shrink-Wrap Recycling Program

Shrink-wrap and greenhouse film is a lesser known form of plastic that is abundantly generated because it is used to protect very large items such as boats, RVs and greenhouses during the winter months. In the Spring, the shrink-wrap is removed and is most commonly disposed of in the landfill. Washtenaw County Solid Waste Division coordinated a Shrink Wrap Recycling Program so local marinas and greenhouses have a recycling outlet for their shrink wrap instead of sending it to landfill. In 2012, we established a partnership with ReCommunity, which recycled **approximately 4,000 lbs** of shrink-wrap generated from Mac’s Marinas located on Whitmore Lake in Whitmore Lake, MI and Klave’s Marina located on Portage Lake in Pinckney, MI.

2012 Events

In 2012, the Washtenaw County Solid Waste Division participated in several main events, which include recycling opportunities for businesses and residents.

1. Environmental Clean-Up Day

Washtenaw County sponsored (1) major clean-up event in 2012. The event was held on Saturday, October, 27 at the Eastern Michigan University Rynearson Football Stadium and serviced 658 recyclers. Items collected at these events ranged from the traditional recyclables, traditional HHW materials (cleaning supplies, pesticides, gas, oil, etc), Freon-containing appliances, tires and electronic waste.

2. Waste Knot Ceremony

The 2012 Waste Knot Ceremony was held in April to reward and recognize all Waste Knot business partners. The ceremony consists of rewarding new Waste Knot members with an award plaque, provides a networking opportunity for new and old partners and also features several keynote speakers, usually highlighting particular firms' outstanding practices. The event features several booths available to partners to advertise their organization to



attendees. The year 2012 also marks the second year that the Waste Knot Ceremony was a “Zero Waste” event. The event was sponsored in part by WCCSWM, and more than a dozen partner sponsors, including: NSF International, Zingerman’s Delicatessen, Mikan Corporation, Rudolf Steiner Health Center, Metro Delivery, Ypsilanti Food Co-op, Greenhills School, Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority, Weber’s Inn, City of Ann Arbor and Sunventrix Solar.

3. Environmental Excellence Awards

The winners for the 14th annual Environmental Excellence Awards are chosen by members of the Washtenaw County Department of Planning & Environment and the Water Resource Commissioner’s Office and has been developed to recognize local businesses with their waste prevention and recycling programs, storm-water management efforts and Pollution Prevention innovations and compliance. The “Village of Dexter” municipality was the overall winner of the 2012 Environmental Excellence Award. Trenton Corporation and Radrick Farms Golf Course were also recognized.

Education & Outreach

1. Ypsilanti Heritage Festival

This event features a “Green Tent” exhibition area located on the banks of the majestic Huron River where the Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program is one of many environmental agencies/organizations to host a booth, educate the public about the various programs they offer, including the Home Toxics Reduction Program, provide literature and other recycling/waste resources.

2. Ann Arbor Green Fair

The Green Fair is a celebration of the Washtenaw community’s environmental leadership and Washtenaw County Solid Waste hosts a table where information about our several programs is available to the public. Furthermore, all Waste Knot partners who participate in the Green Fair are able to do so at no cost.

3. Huron River Day

This event provides the Solid Waste Program an opportunity to educate the community about our several programs, including the Home Toxics Reduction Program, Pharmaceutical Take-Back Program and other recycling/waste resources. We also provide an array of environmental crafts and resources for younger children and their parents.

4. Washtenaw County Consortium for Solid Waste Management (WCCSWM)

WCCSWM is a consortium of representatives from local governments and public institutions who join together in a voluntary organization for the purpose of meeting at regular intervals to discuss and study solid waste, recycling and utilization of recycled products. The consortium also meets to develop policy and programs for ratification and implementation by member representatives of the County, local governments and public institutions. WCCSWM helped fund the 2012 Waste Knot Awards Ceremony, and helped to purchase of the domain name www.dontflushdrugs.com for the Pharmaceutical Take-Back Program. In 2012, the WCCSWM provided a \$1000 sponsorship to purchase 300 approved sharps containers to hand out to those individuals that bring sharps into the Zeeb Rd. HHW drop off facility in unapproved containers. In addition, the WCCSWM membership has developed and supports the now annual “Master Composter” program offered annually to train and educate leaders in our communities on the “Best Management Practices” of composting and how to properly and responsibly manage food waste.

5. Multi-Media Education

Washtenaw County solid waste staff provides support to air the “Issues of the

Environment” radio show on WEMU 89.1 FM every Wednesday morning. Staff provides issues and local experts on the issue to help inform listeners through the interview conducted by the show’s host David Fair. Solid Waste staff contacted the Community Television Network, CTN, to create a 30 minute talk show called the “Green Room.” Staff member Barbara Lucas conducts the interviews with experts and provides a video to accompany the interview. The Green Room has recorded over 20 interviews that include topics on how to clean up a small mercury spill, invasive non-native plants, the County’s weatherization program, energy reduction effort for businesses and homes, and green roofs.

6. YMCA Youth Summer Camp Presentations

The Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program gave weekly presentations June-August 2012 at the YMCA Youth Summer Camp speaking to kids about responsible solid waste choices, the history and importance of recycling, and to educate about recycling opportunities available to them in our community. The presentations were interactive including a questions/answer session, a hands-on recycling game and distribution of local recycling resources to the campers.

7. Washtenaw Community College Career Day

The WCC Career Day event is held outside on WCC’s campus at the beginning of the semester, and features opportunities for students to explore areas of interest. Several students and faculty who visited the booth expressed interest in the environmental career field and ways to become more environmentally responsible in the community. The County’s booth provides ample resources.

8. Washtenaw County Food Policy Council

In 2012 the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council was created. The goal of the group is to develop food waste recovery systems and infrastructure for the recycling and reuse of compostable materials from businesses, residents and agencies. Washtenaw County Solid Waste staff attends these monthly meetings.

9. RecycleMyPlastic.com

Plastic recycling continues to confuse and intimidate recyclers. There are 8 different types of plastics, all with different variations in shapes, sizes and densities. Some recycling programs accept certain plastics for recycling, while others have different requirements. This confusion acts as a deterrent for plastic recycling in general. The website www.RecycleMyPlastic.com is a guide to simplify and assist County residents about plastic recycling opportunities in their specific municipality, and in the County as a whole.

10. 3-R Business Directory

The 3-R Business Directory is an online directory of Waste Knot partners that utilize responsible waste management practices and recycling. Each company listed in the directory features a general “business overview,” “sustainable practices” description and a picture of their logo or storefront. The directory provides free advertising and publicity for Waste Knot Partners, and acts as a guide to the Washtenaw County residents and those visiting Washtenaw County for responsible consumerism.

11. “Turning Trash Into Treasure” Guide

The “Turning Trash Into Treasure” Guide continues to assist residents in recycling and reusing less common items not accepted in curbside programs. While the guide was created years ago, it was updated in 2012 and continues to be a helpful tool for Washtenaw County residents. Items include ammunition, batteries, bicycles, building materials, dry cleaning supplies, food, furniture, HHW, incandescent light bulbs, mattresses, medical supplies, office supplies, pet supplies, Styrofoam and much more.