



PRESS RELEASE
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Second Annual “Waste Sort” Shows Less Trash, More Compost, & Greener City Hall

Data Indicates Waste Reduction Efforts Working in City Hall; Fire Station #1 Recognized for Composting Efforts

Burlington, VT – October 28, 2010. When it comes to trash, less means more. City employees have taken this message to heart, literally reducing government waste on a daily basis. The City of Burlington and the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) are pleased to announce that City Hall employees have reduced the amount of recyclables and compostables thrown out in the trash from 81% (by weight) in September 2009 to 30% (by weight) in October 2010. The City Hall waste sort on October 14 also revealed that, on average, 15 pounds of food scraps and compostable paper is now being composted daily, significantly reducing the amount of waste going the landfill.

Work on a City Hall waste reduction started last September, when members of the Mayor’s Green Team (Burlington Sustainability Action Team) sorted through one day’s worth of City Hall trash and recyclable materials – revealing that when analyzed by volume, 1/3 of the materials found in the trash bags were recyclables (33 gallons), another 1/3 could have been composted (32 gallons) and only 1/3 was true trash (32 gallons). This led to the creation of a waste reduction strategy which included CSWD-sponsored trainings for downtown City staff on recycling and composting. Following the training, a compost program was launched in downtown City offices. The results of City Hall’s 2nd Annual “Waste Sort” verify that these measures make a significant difference in waste reduction.

Mayor Bob Kiss praised the efforts. “Thanks to the hard work of the BSAT, Legacy Project, and other City staff, in partnership with CSWD, we’ve been able to implement this program at City

Hall and other downtown City offices. Whether small or large, private or public, efforts like this are necessary to address the serious environmental challenges the world currently faces.”

Burlington Fire Station #1 Recognized with National Award for Composting Program

Fire Station #1 at 136 South Winooksi Ave, deserves special mention for their efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Since composting started--under the leadership of Captain David Gale--firefighters and staff have removed approximately 450 pounds of food and paper towels per week from landfill-bound trash and instead sent it to the Intervale to become organic compost.

Because their success serves as a model to all local governments working to engage employees around sustainability goals, Fire Station #1 was recently awarded a Sustainability Leadership Award at the National ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability Summit in Washington, DC. “Burlington firefighters have always been in the forefront in protecting the citizens of Burlington and it should be of no surprise that they are now in the forefront of protecting the environment,” said Burlington Fire Chief Michael O’ Neil.

To learn more about the award, and the work of Fire Station #1, visit:

<http://www.icleiusa.org/blog/archive/2010/09/28/nine-local-governments-win-sustainability-leadership-awards>. For information on results of the City Hall waste sort, contact Michele Morris, CSWD at mmorris@cswd.net or Jennifer Green, Burlington Legacy Project and Sustainability Coordinator at jgreen@ci.burlington.vt.us.