



# The Scrap Paper

Newsletter of the Maine Resource Recovery Association

March 2010

For more up-to-date information check our web site at <http://mrra.net>

## Upcoming Events

### **MRRA Board of Directors Meetings**

(All members are welcome to attend!)

Thursday, March 25, Noon, SPO, Augusta

Thursday, May 27, Noon, Bangor Public Works

Thursday, June 24, Noon, SPO office in Augusta

Wednesday, July 21, 10:00 AM, via conference call

### **MRRA Compost Bin Sale Don't miss out - be part of the program!!**

For more details call Victor at 942-6772 or visit our web site <http://mrra.net>

### **17th Annual Maine Recycling & Solid Waste Conference**

April 26-27, 2010 at the Samoset Resort in Rockport.

### **Maine DEP Training Schedule**

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/trainingcenter/index.htm>

### **Maine DOL - SafetyWorks! Training Schedule**

<http://www.safetyworksmaine.com/pdf/classschedule.pdf>

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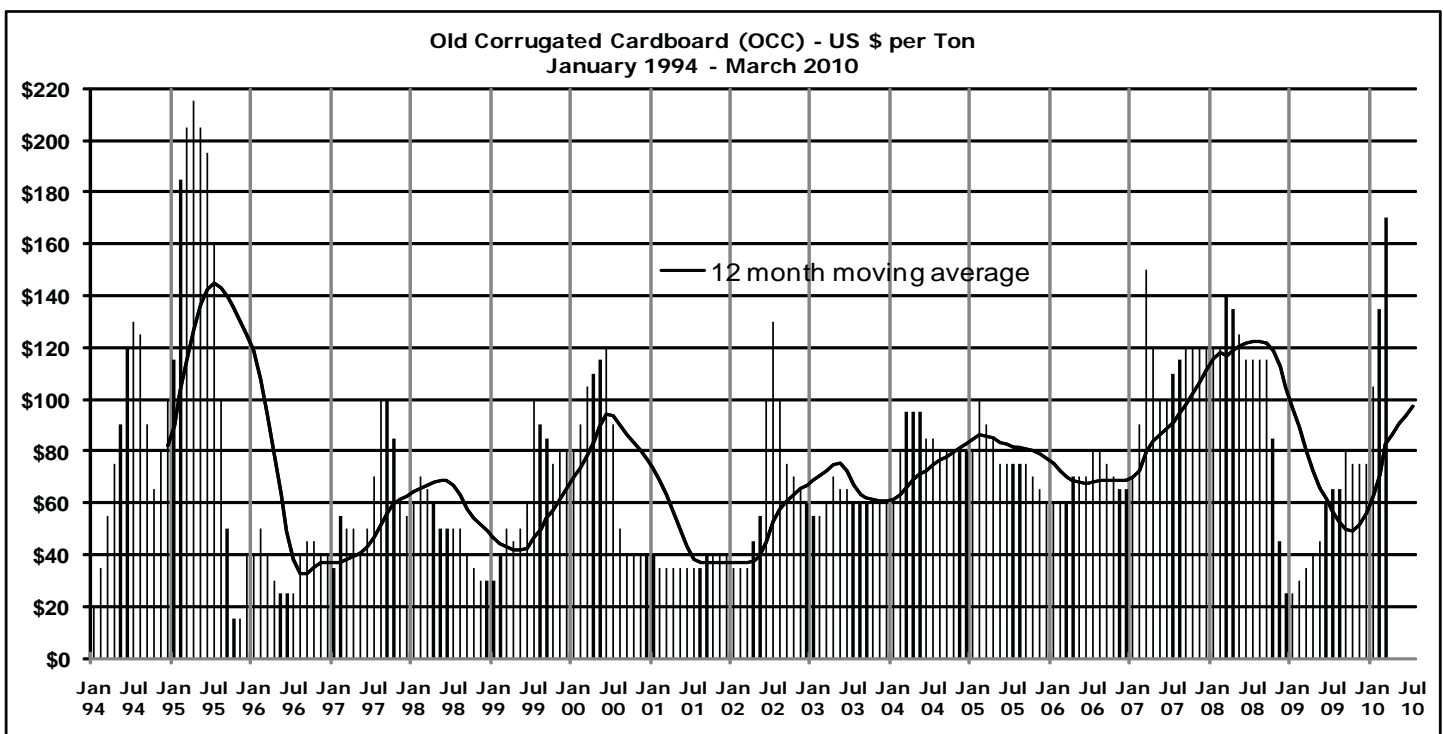
## RECYCLING MARKETS REPORT

We leverage our members' tonnage, seeking new markets to get YOU the best prices. How do our prices compare to what you are being offered?

As can be seen from the price chart and OCC graph below, we are very likely in bubble territory. Most materials are near record highs. However, we are clearly not yet out of the worst economic times since the Great Depression. The explanation being given is that since consumer buying is very low there is a severe lack of generation of recyclables to feed the mills. What no one seems to be able to explain is why the mills are in need of so much material if the consumer is not buying! Either the consumer is buying more than we are aware so the mills will continue to hum along or the mills will cut back because they haven't sold what the consumer isn't buying! Enjoy this while it lasts but don't expect it to continue for long!

**All prices are net to you and subject to changing market conditions.**

	Mar '10	Dec '09	Mar '09
OCC	\$166	\$71	31
#8 NEWS	\$86	\$86	\$41
Mixed Paper	\$76-\$86	\$50-60	\$0 to -\$12
SOW	\$221	\$191	\$96
HDPE-Natural	\$521	\$486	\$346
HDPE-Mixed	\$466	\$316	\$296
HDPE-Colored	\$426	\$306	\$246
PET (full load)	\$266	\$306	\$176
Tin Cans (p/u varies w/ freight)	\$205-225	\$136	\$16
Scrap Metal (p/u varies w/ freight)	\$76-\$121	\$81	\$16 - \$38
Tires (negative)	-\$110	-\$110	-\$110
MRRA net avg. paid prior month	\$140	\$94	na
ecomaine single stream (delivered)	\$7.50	\$0	-\$55 (negative)



***The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Maine  
Recycling & Solid Waste Conference***

Monday & Tuesday, April 26-27, 2010, Samoset Resort, Rockport, Maine

Presented by the

**Maine Resource Recovery Association**

***Understanding Economic Impacts***

***Why you and  
your staff should at-  
tend:***

- **DEP Training** - do it right to avoid fines and the cost of after-the-fact cleanup
- **SafetyWorks! Training** - avoid lost work hours, lost wages, pain and suffering from injuries, lawsuits, and increased workers comp premiums
- **Increased efficiency and productivity** - let the experience of others help you and your staff get more done in less time

**Not attending might save you  
a few hundred dollars,  
coming just might save you  
***THOUSANDS!*****

***Conference Highlights***

**Nationally recognized speakers  
including the Keynote Address by**  
**Susan Collins**, Container Recycling Institute  
and  
**Ron Perkins**, Ag Container Recycling Council  
**Sierra Fletcher**, Product Stewardship Institute  
**Elizabeth Bedard**, Assn. of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers  
**Todd Ellis**, Call2Recycle (RBRC)

Training & informational sessions led by:

**Maine State Planning Office  
Maine Department of Labor SafetyWorks!  
Maine Department of Environmental Protection**  
&  
other experienced and knowledgeable presenters

**A diverse group of vendors in the exhibit hall**

**Recyclathon Safety Rodeo Competition & Prizes**

**North Shore Comedy Night  
Door Prizes**

Deadline for Registrations: Friday, April 16th! Registration flyer available on our website at:  
[mrra.net/admin/assets/2010\\_Conference\\_Registration\\_Flyer.pdf](http://mrra.net/admin/assets/2010_Conference_Registration_Flyer.pdf)  
or call our office at 207-942-6772.

## Is Single Stream the Answer? Let's find out, but first what are Your Questions?

In recent years there have been many articles in the local and national media regarding single stream, or no sort, recycling. Under the proper circumstances the benefits can be many but in other situations it may be the wrong decision. Let's look at what single sort can mean for your community from both an economic and an environmental angle.

MRRA has not taken a position either for or against single stream recycling. Our purpose is to make sure that all factors are considered.

Many factors affect your solid waste and recycling costs: collection, warehouse & storage requirements, processing equipment & staff, freight expenses, material revenues, tipping fees, and avoided costs. Each of these factors will come into play when you conduct a thorough analysis of your options.

### Collection

Do you offer your residents curbside service? This really is NOT a recycling expense, but rather an expense of providing a convenience service. Many communities, especially in more rural areas, do not provide this service. In those cases, residents either contract with a private hauler for this service or take their recyclables to a drop-off location on their own. The same rationale can apply to their garbage (MSW) equally. The choice to provide municipally paid pick up is just that – a choice – and quite an expensive one. Whether the municipality or the resident does the hiring, the service will probably run in the range of \$2-4 per stop. Should this expense fall entirely on the property taxpayer or should those who generate the material pay for this service?

### Storage & Hauling

Another expense of collection is how to consolidate the material for processing and/or hauling. If you do not offer curbside collection, then a transfer station and/or recycling center is needed to provide a drop off location. Even with curbside a transfer station or recycling center could be of benefit. Some towns have formed cooperative entities, similar to hospital or school districts, for this purpose. Others have the hauler take material directly to disposal sites. Transfer stations require land, equipment & staff but can greatly reduce the cost and environmental impact of hauling by reducing the number of trips needed for final disposal and offering you some degree of control over what is tipped on your dime. Whether your hauler takes it directly or you have it hauled from the transfer station you are paying for the freight one way or another. Conversely, a recycling center that bales & stores truckload quantities of recyclables may be able to retain more of the value of the materials, since most mills cover the freight cost from the center to their facility.

### Tipping Fees & Avoided Costs

Once trash is picked up and delivered to the final disposal site, such as a landfill or incinerator, what does it cost to dispose or "tip" the material? When your garbage arrives at the landfill/incinerator you incur a fee which can range from \$50 to over \$100 per ton. This is the single largest expense of solid waste management, approaching 50%, or more, of your solid waste budget. The cost of hauling that material to disposal can also be significant. One of the major benefits of recycling is that every ton recycled avoids these tipping fees and freight costs. This is known as avoided cost and is the primary benefit of single stream.

By reducing the sorting burden, residents generally will recycle more material. How much more? Studies vary and many factors can have an impact. A 15% increase in the number of tons recycled is a good estimate for planning. Higher percentages can be realized by further changes in programs; such as starting pay-per-bag or pay-as-you-throw (PAYT), adding significantly to the list of items accepted, or changing from drop-off to curbside collection. These changes all have their own effects. The challenge is to gauge the results from any one or more of the various program modifications. A 15% increase could result in significant avoided cost savings and should be considered valuable.

### Buildings, Equipment & Staff

The larger a community or group of towns working together, the more it can make sense to operate a transfer station & full service recycling center. This is why large cities have material recovery facilities or MRFs (pronounced murfs). When you have tens, or hundreds of thousands, or millions of residents, creating tens or hundreds of thousands of tons of recyclables you can justify spending many millions on plant, equipment and payroll.

Recently, a group of Maine Communities invested 3.7 million to convert a two sort MRF to single sort. They process about 30,000 tons of material a year. Larger MRFs can cost several multiples of this. But for the vast majority of smaller, rural communities far from large population centers even a population of 10,000 people generating 1,000 tons a year of recyclables can justify a local or regional recycling center. One scenario: Borrowing \$500,000 on a USDA low interest loan over 30 years would cost \$25-30,000 per year and would pay for an adequate building with quality equipment. Add staff and miscellaneous other expenses and you could be looking at maybe \$100,000 per year for a per ton cost of \$100. The larger the center and the more tons processed, the better the efficiency and cost per ton should be. Capital, operation & marketing expenses for a large central Maine facility which has large efficiencies of scale is in the \$60 per ton range.

### **Material Revenue**

Long-term historical data covering 16+ years shows recyclables to be worth about \$70 per ton on average. This will vary wildly at times and move over a wide range. We've seen corrugated cardboard & newspaper anywhere from \$10 to \$200 per ton! It has swung that far and back again in a matter of a few months time. HDPE #2 Natural (plastic milk bottles) have been anywhere from \$100 to \$900 per ton. Planning on any single price point is difficult if not impossible. It is best to be extremely conservative when budgeting as a means of avoiding major problems if prices stay low for any extended period. Using the \$70 historical average; we would recommend using \$50 for budgeting, giving you a \$20 cushion.

### **The Bottom Line**

In the end, it should cost between \$60 and \$120 per ton, maybe more when efficiencies are lacking, to process and market your recyclables to the mills. This results in operating margins of +\$10 to -\$50 per ton. Add in the avoided costs saved of \$50 to \$100 per ton and the real return on recycling comes to \$0 to \$110 per ton. From data supplied from one facility, the cost to operate is closer to \$80 per ton. Many out of state MRFs post higher operation costs.

MRFs typically offer more than one pricing structure. A cost sharing approach whereby the operation costs are taken out and then revenue paid on the balance or a locked in price which varies from a few years to more long term periods. Averages of revenue sharing shows prices may be between \$35 in a great market and negative \$75 in a very poor market. These are extremes and generally do not move this drastically up or down. Some of the current offerings are in the \$0 to negative \$30 range.

There are several deals being offered to towns for their recycling. Some are definitely better than others. If a proposal seems too good to be true it may need a second look. Remember the original contracts with an incinerator in Maine to tip at less than \$20 per ton? That deal was short lived and could not be sustained.

### **The Environment: Resources & Greenhouse Gases**

The cost of hauling uncompressed or minimally compressed light loads over long distances can be higher. Where populations are dense so hauling distance is short this is minimized. Unbaled material might be hauled to a processing center at 6-12 tons a load. Here it gets sorted & baled before going on to the mill. On this trip the weight might be 20-23 tons. Minimizing that first light haul reduces costs and environmental impacts associated with additional truck miles traveled. Increased tons collected for recycling do reduce pollution and resource waste so there is a balance to be considered.

### **Conclusion**

Every situation is different. Cookie cutter solutions won't apply. It is incumbent upon every municipal leader considering changes to analyze their unique conditions. Your results WILL vary. Do a thorough study based on full cost accounting to determine what results are reasonable to expect in YOUR community.

The challenge Municipal offices face with managing MSW and Recycling is that these systems are more than just a service; decisions involve long term infrastructure and public education. For instance, once you eliminate sorting of recyclables, it will be very difficult to go back. A "Let's try it for awhile" approach is not realistic. Any changes to your system should be carefully considered, as they will be long term.

MRRA is willing and able to provide technical assistance with this process. Recycling does pay. Doing it the best way will take careful study.

## MRRRA Annual Compost Bin Sale

It is estimated that 25% of an average household's waste is kitchen scraps and yard trimmings. The Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRRA) in cooperation with Norseman Plastics, an Orbis company, is pleased to offer **The Earth Machine™** backyard compost bins at reduced costs to Maine communities and their residents.

Through local sales opportunities by municipalities, community groups, or service organizations (one lead group per community). Earth Machine™ backyard compost bins, kitchen pails, compost turners and rain barrels can be provided to homeowners at "Co-op buying power" low prices: bins will sell for **\$38.50**...a retail value of \$120, kitchen pails for **\$8.00**, a wingdigger compost turner for **\$16.50** and a rain barrel for **\$55.00**. This item alone retails for over \$130.

Once you register with MRRRA to participate, a sample of everything can be sent to you, to assist with sales!



Residents will also receive a "how to" guide for FREE with each compost bin!

### How the Program Works

**1 CONTACT** the Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRRA) at (207-942-6772) or e-mail victor.horton@mrra.net for a Participation Packet.

**2 REGISTER** with the MRRRA to participate in the sale.

**3 PROMOTE** the sale of bins and/or pails (a poster with an attached order form will be provided for easy copying) and accept orders until **April 30, 2010**, keeping track of who orders.

**4 RETURN** the Final Order Form and checks made payable to MRRRA by **MAY 4, 2010**. Bins and wingdigger orders must be made in exact multiples of 20 ONLY, Rain barrels are in lots of 15 and kitchen pails are in lots of 26.

Team up with a neighbor if you need to meet the minimum quantities.

**5 ACCEPT** delivery of compost bins/pails sometime during the week of **May 10, 2010**.

**6 DISTRIBUTE** the compost bins/pails to your residents and they start composting!

\* **This program is also available as a fund-raiser for your group.**

Prepayments for orders will be accepted until **April 9, 2010** for delivery during the weeks of April 12-23, 2010, for those early birds.

**Sign up your town or organization for the Spring 2010 campaign.  
Contact MRRRA at 207-942-6772 or e-mail victor.horton@mrra.net**

## MRRA has recycling bins & curbside carts for sale.

We offer large and small quantity purchasing of recycling curbside bins and wheeled carts.

**Custom artwork available.**

**Give us a call today for pricing  
and color availability @ 942-6772.**



18 gallon bins starting at \$8.00  
(minimum quantity: 100)

Wheeled carts in several popular sizes  
(minimum quantity: 54)

### MRRA also offers these services:

- Maine's Recycling & Annual Solid Waste Conference
- Recycling & Solid Waste Technical Assistance
- Consulting – MRRA will send a rep for a free no obligation site visit
- Marketing of recyclable materials
- The Scrap Paper Newsletter
- Workshops & Tours

## The Story of Stuff

How Our Obsession with Stuff Is Trashing the Planet, Our Communities, and Our Health-and a Vision for Change  
Excerpt available here <http://www.alternet.org/module/printversion/145997>

We have a problem with Stuff. With just 5 percent of the world's population, we're consuming 30 percent of the world's resources and creating 30 percent of the world's waste. If everyone consumed at U.S. rates, we would need three to five planets! This alarming fact drove Annie Leonard to create the Internet film sensation *The Story of Stuff*, which has been viewed over 10 million times. Now, in a landmark book in the tradition of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Leonard tracks the life of the Stuff we use every day—how it is produced, distributed, and consumed, and where it goes when we throw it out.

Leonard's message is startlingly clear: we have too much Stuff, and too much of it is toxic. Outlining the five stages of our consumption-driven economy—from extraction through production, distribution, consumption, and disposal—she vividly illuminates its frightening repercussions. Leonard reveals the true story behind our possessions, and how we, as consumers, are compromising our health, safety, and quality of life. Meanwhile, all this Stuff isn't even making us happier!

The drive for a "growth at all costs" economy fuels a system in crisis, but Annie Leonard shows us that this is not the way things have to be. Expansive, galvanizing, and sobering yet optimistic, *The Story of Stuff* transforms how we think about our lives and our relationship to the planet.

### Get a FREE Static Window Cling for your car.

<http://www.conservingnow.com/content/get-free-static-window-cling-your-car>

This static cling is the perfect solution for remembering your bags. It's not a sticker and can be easily placed on the driver's side window so that it's always in your line of sight when you are getting out of the car!

# Make This Your Last Paper Issue of The Scrap Paper!!

We would like to make this your last hard copy of The Scrap Paper.

Beginning with the next issue, we are offering a new way to receive your newsletter: sent to your e-mail inbox as a .PDF file which is readable with the free Adobe Acrobat Reader.

This process will offer several advantages to you & MRRRA including faster delivery, better, full-color pictures & graphics, embedded hyperlinks, easily saveable to your hard drive for future reference and cost savings on printing & postage.

If you would like to stop getting the paper version and start getting the e-mail version, please clearly print your e-mail address below and either fax this page to MRRRA at 207-942-4017 or mail it to MRRRA PO Box 1838 Bangor ME 04402-1838.

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

## Please Don't Forget: MAINE RECYCLES WEEK

Each year Maine celebrates Maine Recycles Week from November 8th-15th. Plan your own unique festivities to encourage increased recycling in your community! For more information visit <http://maine.gov/spo/recycle/mainerecyclesweek/index.htm> or contact Bruce White at the State Planning Office (287-8053 or 800-662-4545 or <mailto://Bruce.White@maine.gov>).

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