



# Waste Reduction Education Teacher Newsletter

December 2010



## WASTE TRAC – THE EDUCATION TEAM FOR THE BLACK HAWK COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



### Free Outreach Programs for Schools

#### Hello teachers!

As you prepare your lesson plans for 2011 and Earth



Day, keep waste reduction education in mind and invite the Waste Trac

Education Team into your school for a **free program!**

During the '09/'10 school year the education team visited 29 schools and gave 253 programs for over 4,860 students. In addition to posting a list of classroom offerings on our website, a newsletter is sent out once a year to remind schools that our programs can help your students meet their academic goals by addressing various science and social studies standards and benchmarks.

**Waste Trac History:** The Black Hawk County Solid Waste Mgmt. Commission is a five person board that oversees the operation of the county landfill and funds an education team that serves all schools (public and private) in Black Hawk County. In 2005, the name *Waste Trac* was given to the education team. *Waste Trac* is a partnership between the commission and the Black Hawk County Conservation Board. The Commission provides the funds to support two recycling educators, while the county conservation board provides office space and vehicles for classroom visits.

Two educators provide solid waste programs at **no charge** to schools, youth groups and civic groups

within Black Hawk County. Staff are housed at Hartman Reserve Nature Center in Cedar Falls, so Waste Trac programs can be done at your school or during a visit to the nature center. Look through the list of classroom activities that we offer and give us a call to schedule your free program! Our calendar fills up quickly for dates in April and May, so call soon to reserve a time for your class!

Lyndsey Anderson  
& Tammy Turner



April 22, 2011



Picnic Activity



Waste Race Relay

### Contact Us!



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# Waste Reduction Education



Visiting a Recycling Roll-off!



Look at my garbage-eating redworm!



Did we sort our picnic leftovers into the right bucket?



Inquisitive students on a tour at the Black Hawk Co. Landfill.

## Education programs for ages Preschool – Adult

Activities are listed in a general order, from those suited to preschool up to high school students and adults. Most programs can be adjusted for a specific grade or to cover certain standards and benchmarks. Just let us know and we can customize the activity for you!

**All programs are offered at no cost.**

April and May dates go quickly, so teachers calling before February 15th will have a better chance of getting on the calendar. In order for our 2 person team to reach the many schools in Black Hawk County, classroom visits in April will be limited to **3 per teacher**.

### Vermicomposting (Composting with Redworms!) (All ages)

Learn how we put redworms to work eating our fruit and vegetable scraps! We will bring our worm bin into your class and show how our worms can recycle food scraps. A puppet show is available for students PreK – 1st, while older students will work in groups at different worm stations. 30- 45 minutes.

### Where Does Your Garbage Go? (PreK – K)

Mr. Gilly in the story, *Trashy Town*, likes to “dump in it, smash it down and drive around the trashy town”. The group will discuss the basics of trash collection and the students will see pictures of how their local garbage is smashed at the county landfill. After the story, the students will play a simple dice game based on the story. 30– 45 minutes.

### Garbage Monster (PreK – 1st)

We will read the story, *Garbage Monster* and then learn how to remove trash from the garbage monster by composting, recycling, and reusing. 30 minutes.

### The Before and After Recycling Magic Show (PreK - 1st)

Many of us are watching our waste and recycling, but are still curious as to what happens to our recyclables after we put them in the recycling bin. The students will do a short sorting activity and then watch the magic show. The kids will learn what milk jugs, steel cans and newspaper collected in city recycling programs are transformed into. 30- 45 minutes.

### Give a Cheer For Reuse! (1st – 3rd)

After reading the *Old Red Rocking Chair* students will be able to distinguish the difference between reusing an item and recycling it. Reused items will be repurposed into games for the students. 30- 45 minutes.

### What Are Things Made Of? (1st – 3rd)

Yes, we get items at the store, but which resources are used to make everyday items? After reading, *What Cried Granny, an Almost Bedtime Story*, the students will be able to match up the resource to the end product. 30 minutes.

### Picnic Activity (1st – 4th)

This active program will get kids hopping on a picnic blanket, sorting out items from the picnic that are disposable, durable or compostable. We will also talk about how to pack a low-waste lunch. 30- 45 minutes.

### Landfill Tours (1st and up)

Visit the Black Hawk County Landfill to learn about the environmental protections that are put in place during the construction of a waste cell. We will visit the small loads facility and hike to the cell to watch trucks unload. 45- 60 minutes.

### Lunch Recycling Program (1st and up)

During a trip to Hartman Reserve Nature Center, students plan and enjoy lunch using a minimum of disposable items, then sort and recycle/compost as much of the garbage as possible from their individual lunches. 30- 45 minutes, including eating time.



### Everything Comes From Something (2nd – 4th)

In this program, students will learn that everyday products started as earth ingredients. After reading the story *Agatha's Feather Bed; Not Just Another Wild Goose Story*, students will learn what glass, steel, and other products are made from. 30- 45 minutes.

### Adventures with Redworms (2nd – 4th)

After reading the story, *Compost, My Gosh* students will know the basics of setting up an indoor worm compost bin. Students will search through the worm bin to find redworms and make a list of worm food favorites that they find in the bin. 30- 45 minutes.

### Character Counts; Squash Litterbugs! (2nd – 5th)

Being a good citizen means doing your share. Kids of character know that part of being a good neighbor is to put litter in its place. We will read the story, *The Wartville Wizard* and then conduct a litter cleanup on school grounds or a nearby park. 45– 60 minutes.

### Waste Race (2nd – 6th)

Students learn to classify items common to local recycling programs and backyard composting. Students will then participate in a relay race to sort and place (clean) waste items in the appropriate recycling or composting bins. 30- 45 minutes.

### Mini Recycling Center (3rd and up)

Students will use their imagination and get to work sorting recyclables on our portable table-top recycling unit. It can be brought to your classroom to simulate how recyclable materials are sorted in a recycling facility prior to being baled for market. 30- 45 minutes.

### Go Green! Scavenger Hunt (3rd and up)

The *Gene and Betty Buckles Program Center* at Hartman Reserve Nature Center is dedicated to promoting a better understanding of our environment through environmentally friendly practices. This example of "Green Building" minimizes the use of natural resources and the amount of energy needed for its creation and use. Students will explore the building to learn about many of the recycled, re-used, and energy efficient products found throughout. 45- 60 minutes.

### Landfill Model (4th and up)

The *Enviroscape* 3-D model demonstrates how the landfill is designed to protect our groundwater. The model compares more modern sanitary landfills to dumps and shows how the two differ in operation. 30-45 minutes.

### Throw-away Society Skit (4th - 8th)

Through a group reading activity, students will learn how humans have dealt with garbage throughout history. We'll make a few props and costumes, get into character, put on our skit and theorize about trash disposal in the future. 60 minutes.

### Green Shopping (5th and up)

There are many choices to make at the store, but we'll look for environmentally friendly products at our pretend retail store. Students will also learn about renewable vs. nonrenewable resources while rotating through stations set up in the classroom. 45– 60 minutes.

### Green School (5th and up)

Working in groups of three or four, the students will search a *Where's Waldo* type poster to find positive changes that a fictitious school has made to "go green". Students will search the various rooms and grounds of the campus for examples such as recycling, rain gardens, composting, reusable trays, recycled-content paper, and carpet made from pop bottles. 45- 60 minutes.

### Cedar Valley Waste Tour (6th and up)

Middle and high school students will learn where both their solid and sewer waste ends up. On this fieldtrip, students will visit the Black Hawk County Landfill, waste water facilities of Waterloo or Cedar Falls and a local recycling processor to see how various types of wastes are managed in the Cedar Valley. The Waste Trac Education Team will make all of the arrangements for the tours; teachers will need to arrange busing. The fieldtrip can include 2 or 3 tours, depending on the amount of time your group has available. 2– 3 hours.



Can your students keep up with the cans, bottles and paper on the conveyor belt of the mini recycling center?



Students come up with the most creative props and costumes during the Throw-away Society Skit!



Does this fictitious school recycle, compost, have hybrid vehicles or have a rain garden?



Thousand-pound bales of recycled materials at Cedar Valley Recycling & Transfer



## The Education Team for the Black Hawk County Solid Waste Management Commission

### Waste Trac— Serving All Black Hawk County Schools

#### Waste Trac

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#### Recycling Options for Waterloo Schools



Curbside Recycling Cart

Does your school want to decrease the amount of waste created on campus and start recycling?



Waterloo schools need only contact Waterloo Waste Management Services and sign up to receive curbside recycling carts. Schools can collect the same recyclables as residents and the city trucks will pick up the materials once a month. The program is open to both public and private schools in Waterloo. St. Edward's School has been collecting school paper and cardboard for several years and Dr. Walter Cunningham School for Excellence started collecting white paper and magazines last school year. Start a Green Team at your school! Invite the lunchroom & custodial staff, student government, PTO, TAG students, and interested teachers and see how you can get a recycling program started at your school. Call Keith Kearns at Waterloo Waste Management Services for more details on curbside recycling, 291-4553.

#### Reclaim Your Holidays



Whether you are planning a party or wrapping gifts this holiday season, a new website has been created to help you implement more environmental practices into your celebration. UNI (with funding from the REAP Conservation Education Program and the IDNR Solid Waste Alternatives Program) has developed [www.ReclaimYourHolidays.org](http://www.ReclaimYourHolidays.org). The website has valuable information on greening any aspect of the holiday season. Whether it's decorating, invitations, food, gifts, or green entertaining, the website has tips for both work and home.

Here are some of our favorite tips:

1. Give gifts of experience (reserve winter cabins at a county park, pottery class, guitar lessons, knitting class, dance lessons, sledding trip, cookie kit, tickets to a community theatre performance, canning lessons)
2. Give a green gift (toys and teddy bears made from recycled plastic, LED lights, rain barrel, push reel mower)
3. Plan a green meal. Challenge yourself to see if your family can acquire most of the holiday menu items within a distance of 100 miles from your home.

There are also several free downloads on the site such as:

- Greener, Healthier, Friendlier Gifts for the Whole Year
- Celebrate Green
- Simplify the Holidays

Check out their Free Printable Homemade Gift Certificates too!



#### 9th Grade Field Day

Over the past several months, Waste Trac has worked with the Recycling & Reuse Technology Transfer Center (RRTC) at UNI on an exciting new project. As the idea of a field day emerged, it became apparent that many partners would be required to offer a field day to hundreds of local students. The Cedar Valley Sustainable & Environmental Educators Committee was created and is diligently working to provide a field day in May entitled "Green: What Does It Mean? Exploring Our Sustainable Community". Educators and community members from across the state will be giving informational presentations that relate to the following themes:

- Careers in Science
- Technology & Tools of the Trade
- Recreation
- Clean Energies
- Waste Reduction
- Conservation

The keynote speaker of the event will be Chad Pragracke of *Living Lands & Water*. Since starting his non-profit at age 23, Pragracke, his crew, and volunteers have collected over 4 million pounds of debris from the Mississippi and other rivers during community clean-ups. His group has collected over 55,000 tires and 775 refrigerators. He wrote the book *From the Bottom Up* and offers teacher workshops every year on their river barge. No wonder he was voted "Hardest Working Person in America" this year. During the field day, Pragracke will share gripping stories of his adventures on the river and show how hard work and persistence pays off. Visit [www.livinglandsandwaters.org](http://www.livinglandsandwaters.org) to learn more.

