

Landfill Update

A Publication of the Larimer County Solid Waste Department



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www.larimer.org/solidwaste

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Business Office Hours:
Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Landfill/Recycling Drop-off:
Mon.-Sat. 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Household Hazardous Waste
Facility: Tue., Thu., Fri.,
Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Education Center: Tue.,
Thu., Fri. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
other times by appointment.

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STATE OF THE LARIMER COUNTY LANDFILL

....from the Director's Desk



As 2011 winds down and we are entering a new year, we continue to look for ways to improve our operations, serve our customers, and plan for the future.

The Landfill entrance scales have been in place for nearly a year now and for the most part traffic is flowing smoothly.

The Board of County Commissioners approved a Landfill rate increase for rubble materials (such as dirt, rock, concrete, asphalt shingles, tree stumps, and sludge) which are items that do not allow for landfill compaction. While surrounding landfills charge as much as \$42 per yard for the same type of materials,

our 10% rate increase to \$6.65 per cubic yard (plus the State surcharge) remains reasonable for the increase in volume of these materials. Much of the increase in landfill volumes was due to these materials and the large number of roofs being replaced because of hail.

There continues to be quite a bit of activity at the lay-down yard at the south end of our property off Trilby Road. Area electric providers have been using this space to park equipment and safely take loads of materials by helicopter to inaccessible areas. This work should be completed by April, 2012.

The closure projects for Phase 6A on the west side of the landfill has been delayed because of

weather conditions. The contractor was about five days from completing the project and will continue when the ground frost is gone.

An increase of about 6% was seen in recycling. Efforts to educate the public about the importance of "recycling right" and purchasing items made from recycled materials continues through the Solid Waste education program.

You are always welcome to write (sgillette@larimer.org) or call (970-498-5762) if you have any questions about the operation of any of our facilities or anything else concerning solid waste or recycling. We also offer tours of the site through the Education Center program.

LANDFILL OPERATIONS...by Mark Clutter

I've just ended my first year as Landfill Manager and it's been a very busy year. The new scales had just been installed at the beginning of the year and there were many kinks to work out such as new signs, gate arm issues, traffic lines (especially on Saturdays) and snow removal issues. Things are running more smoothly now!

We had to replace our compactor and the new one has been performing great for us.

Wind is always a consideration here at the foothills. Not only did we have to close down several times, we then had to deal with all the trash that had blown around the site and on surrounding areas. The highest gust measured

93mph! Along with the wind, rain and mud also caused us to restrict access to 4-wheel drive vehicles several times as well as having to wash mud off of Taft Hill Road. Later in the year, dusty roads were the norm.

Late summer we received about 45,000 yards of dirt from a City of Fort Collins project which will be used for cover for the Phase6A closure. In addition we received many loads of demolition material from the Kodak plant tear down.

There's been a steady stream of roofing materials coming in because of all the hail damaged roofs in the area being replaced.

The landfill operators, traffic directors, and other staff appreciate customers' patience as we work to serve you through the coming year.

EDUCATION PROGRAM...By Rose Watson, Environmental Educator

The Garbage Garage Education Center was a busy place during 2010! Over 4,000 visitors came as part of tour groups; dropped in; or participated in classes, programs, and events.

Outreach programs and presentations to service clubs, school classrooms, church groups, and at community events gave us the opportunity to inform and educate over 1,500 other individuals about reducing, reusing, and recycling and solid waste.

The highlight of summer programming was our "Waste Ranger Camp," a new program for youth 8-12. One camp per month (June, July, August) each had 12 participants who spent the day making an edible landfill,



learning about zero waste lunches, making trash treasures, visiting the recycling transfer station, learning about methane and leachate, and getting a "behind the scenes" look at trash disposal from the "mountain of trash."



We continue to host Scout troops and provide tours and programs to help them work toward their badge requirements. We also hosted a few birthday parties this year!

While many think the Garbage Garage is "just for kids," senior adults, college students, Chamber of Commerce employees, and other business and non-profit members and volunteers have visited and share that not only did they learn much that they did not know, they were glad they came for a tour.

Education staff-written weekly columns in the Loveland Reporter-Herald and monthly articles in the Fort Collins Coloradoan continue to answer recycling questions, provide information on how to reduce waste, and other topics.

For information about programs or volunteering, call 498-5772 or e-mail rwatson@larimer.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We're excited about our classes, programs, and special events planned for 2012! We'll be offering the **Waste Ranger Camps** again on June 13, July 11, and August 1 (8:30am-2:30pm) and have begun taking reservations.

A new program "**Energy Camp**" will be held on President's Day (a school out day) for youth 8-12 on Monday, February 20. We'll be doing hands-on experiments featuring solar energy, methane collection, water quality, wind energy and more! Registration is now open for the camp.

Our annual **Open House** and Earth Day celebration will be Saturday, April 21, drop in from 10am to 2pm. Cody Landstrom, everyone's favorite magician, will be returning and activities, displays, door prizes, refreshments and more will again be offered to visitors. No registration needed.

And, the best part is that all of our programs are **FREE!**

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the heart of many programs in Larimer County. With just one full-time staff person and one part-time employee, the Education program depends upon volunteers to help lead tours, assist at outreach events and classes, and more.

We currently are in great need of more volunteers as we enter our busy spring and summer season. Training is provided and schedules vary. Volunteers of all ages are welcome...from teens to seniors!



Recycling Ambassadors are also needed to assist customers at the Recycling Center drop-off area by providing information about current recycling guidelines and to help keep trash and other non-recyclables from being put in the bins.

COMINGS & GOINGS

MOVED ON:

Linda Oatney,
Accounting Technician
Drake Dayton,
HHW Technician
Richard Helderman,
Landfill Traffic Director

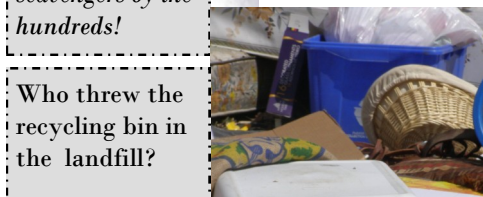
NEW EMPLOYEES:

Nick Cole
Accounting Technician
Ray Nunez,
Gate House Attendant
Meghan Hellard,
Gate House Attendant

LANDFILL HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011



Landfill scavengers by the hundreds!



Who threw the recycling bin in the landfill?



ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE...By Steve Harem, Environmental Specialist

After many months of dry weather, adequate precipitation finally returned, but drought left its imprint on the landfill's environment.

Vegetation was very stressed; grasses planted in August 2010 failed to sprout until the spring rains. Native grasses turned green and wildflowers were colorful. Healthy grasses are critical for controlling erosion on slopes and in drainage ditches.



Dry weather significantly lessened the production of methane and carbon dioxide gases in the landfill. Bacteria responsible for decomposition needs water to grow so biodegradation and gas production tend to decrease or increase along with amounts of precipitation received.

Methane concentration and flow both dropped off at the flare as a result of low precipitation and returned to normal with the rains.



Dry weather also has the effect of making soil more permeable to gas, allowing methane to migrate more easily away from the landfill. In June, explosive levels of methane were detected at the north edge of the landfill. We are working with the state health department to address this issue.

Late spring and summer rains helped make 2011 precipitation above average and helped recharge the region's groundwater. After dropping for years the water table has now risen to levels not seen since 2006.

As usual, we continue to monitor the water table and groundwater around the

landfill, particularly in the northeast area where the water is contaminated. Chemistry data is evaluated periodically to determine whether conditions are getting better or worse over time. The most recent statistical trend analysis shows that conditions continue to slowly improve.

We are in the process of closing another operations phase in an effort to protect groundwater and surface water quality at the west edge of the landfill. A 14-acre portion of Phase 6 in the southwest corner will be covered with a clay cap and revegetated. The clay cover will keep precipitation from percolating through the trash and polluting the underlying groundwater.



Vegetation will help prevent erosion on the

the landfill slopes and sedimentation of the nearby streambed.

This project is very similar to previous final cover construction projects completed along the north side of the landfill. A lot of earth from the south borrow area will be hauled to the Phase 6 area where clay and dirt layers will be compacted in place, then covered with a final layer of topsoil.

The Larimer County Engineering Dept. is providing engineering and construction management services for the project. Gerrard Excavating, Inc. has been hired to construct the final cover. They started moving dirt in October and completed about two-thirds of the work until frozen ground interrupted the project for a couple of months. We hope to have the earthwork completed by early spring so the topsoil can be reseeded in time to take advantage of spring moisture.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE...By Linda Hammett, Solid Waste Manager

The Household Hazardous Waste Facility (HHW) has seen an amazing increase in customers choosing to bring in their "sharps" containers for proper disposal. This is a free service offered to Larimer County residents. The Sharps program is available on the same days as the residential program: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9am to 4pm. All sharps must come into the facility in a red plastic bio-hazard container similar to the one pictured here. No other type of container will be accepted.

Containers of various sizes can be picked up at your local pharmacy or online (search: biohazard sharps container). Because we only accept residential sharps there is a limit of two containers per participant per visit. If you have questions or if you are with a clinic and need assistance with disposal, give us a call at 970-498-5771 or 970-498-5773 for more information.

Compact fluorescent bulbs and tubes are accepted during residential hours if they are coming from your home. Older incandescent bulbs may be placed in your trash as they are not recyclable here. Businesses are charged.

We accept small household batteries but please be sure to tape both ends. Larger batteries from cars or scooters should be taken to the battery wagon at the landfill. Gatehouse personnel or the traffic director can tell you where it is located.

The staff of the HHW appreciates your support and consideration of the environment by choosing to properly dispose of your waste.

NO! Sharps not accepted in other containers!



YES! Sharps in approved containers go to HHW!



YES! CFLs go to HHW!



NO incandescent bulbs in recycling bins drop off or HHW!



NO oil containers, pesticide, insecticide, or other hazardous waste containers in recycling bins.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

KEEP UP TO DATE....with the Solid Waste Department

The latest Landfill and Recycling News can be delivered right to your e-mail inbox.

All you have to do to sign up for free online subscriptions to The Landfill Update and other Solid Waste news is go to: www.larimer.org and enter your e-mail address in the box at the bottom left of the page.



Why does the Landfill close on windy days?

State regulations mandate closing when “high winds are verified at the facility.” High winds are defined as sustained winds of 40 mph or greater or gusts of 55 mph or greater. The decision to close the Landfill due to wind is made per those regulations and for the safety of our customers, and to keep blowing trash at a minimum.

To stay informed: call 498-5770 and respond to the prompts. You can also sign up for cell phone or e-mail notices. Go to: www.larimer.org/solidwaste and click on “subscribe to closure notices.”

WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE WEATHER IS LIKE AT THE LARIMER COUNTY LANDFILL?

What about road conditions within the Landfill? What’s the current wind speed?

All this and more can be found on our website:

www.larimer.org/solidwaste

Click on the Landfill Web Cam link.



Landfill conditions on 12/28/11, at 1:43 p.m.