

"GOOD NEWZ #16" is an online newsletter produced by San Juan County Washington's Solid Waste Division, in line with its "Trash to Treasures" project goals. The hope and purpose of "Good Newz" and the virtual "Sustainable San Juans" effort is to spark enthusiasm in the concept of sustainability; its aim is to encourage community-building by providing a format for the collection and dissemination of new ideas, practices, and products to promote sustainability in the San Juan Islands. We also hope to acknowledge existing efforts by local individuals, organizations, agencies, and businesses that support sustainability; let us know of your efforts!

***Sustainability** requires widening the scope of our awareness so that we can understand fully the "true cost" of every choice we make.

***Sustainability** is when the functions and processes of an ecosystem can be maintained; it requires a return to conservation ethics and economics so that human use of resources takes into account the health and wellbeing of future generations.

"Good Newz" reports on global, national, and local efforts. We welcome your input and suggestions for improving the newsletter. Contact helenv@sjcpublicworks.org to share your news. To unsubscribe from this mailing list, reply to this email. Please forward "Good Newz" to anyone who might be interested in sustainability.

Waste World: Did you know?...that it takes about 88 trees to build a new single family home (U.S. Forest Service estimate); 1.5 million new houses are built in America each year. Builders can help save trees by using "good old wood." Quality modern and vintage lumber salvaged from old buildings, boats, and fallen trees is now available. In our area, the Seattle-based Environmental Home Center (.com) carries or can locate select used lumber that has finer grain, is of higher quality, and lasts longer than virgin timber. The Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood Program certifies salvaged, reclaimed, recycled lumber that has been collected responsibly. **Did you know?**...Apple Computers has announced a much more customer-friendly iPod recycling program; iPod owners can now bring their iPods to any Apple store for free, safe disposal and get a same-day discount toward a new iPod.

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### **THE WORLD COMMUNITY:**

Germany, Finland, Russia, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Greece, and Macedonia: The World Conservation Union, a coalition of conservation and community development groups, has ambitious plans to transform the contiguous environment of their countries into linked parks, nature preserves, and organic farms. Public and private lands in the voluntary effort will become part of a continent-spanning greenbelt.

Beijing, China: 23 countries from Asia and the Pacific region are gathering to develop an agreement on future actions to fully phase out ozone-depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol. Recent data shows that they have already reduced CFC consumption by 50%!

Lisbon Portugal: Construction of the world's 1st commercial *wave-farm* to generate renewable energy from ocean waves is underway. Ocean Power Delivery of Edinburgh Scotland will work with a Portuguese consortium to build the 1st phase, 3 wave-energy converters located 5 km (3.1 mi) off Portugal's northern coast. See [www.wavegen.com](http://www.wavegen.com) for the latest on marine-derived renewable energy projects around the world.

60+ mayors celebrating World Environment Day in June in San Francisco and Nairobi developed the "Green Cities Declaration" that incorporates groundbreaking environmental actions for urban centers. Long-term sustainability is the goal in categories such as clean energy use, waste reduction, urban tree planting, public transportation, environmental health, clean water, green building design. See [www.urbanaccords.org](http://www.urbanaccords.org) for specific strategies. The deputy mayor of Vancouver, British Columbia said that since cities now cover 2% of the Earth's surface with 50% of its population (consuming 75% of the world's resources and creating 75% of its waste), the impact of the so-called "municipal Kyoto Protocol" can be significant.

### **AMERICAN EFFORTS:**

Seattle WA: In a separate effort organized by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, 158 U.S. mayors have agreed to help fight global warming in their cities. [Seattle was recently named the #1 livable large urban center in the country for its efforts to implement sustainability (green building, rainwater management, etc.).]

W. Lafayette, IN: Purdue University's microbiologists have created a natural water filtration system at the campus golf course; 11,000 plants (many very small) fill 3 ponds that are designed to filter pesticide and other harmful chemicals out of rainwater runoff and farm irrigation overflow. The 5-year study reports in the journal "Ecological Engineering" that aluminum, ammonia, atrazine, nitrogen and phosphorus were filtered out of the water by the system...promising news for planned wetlands near residential or commercial developments!

Emeryville CA: The Unified School District has passed the 1st comprehensive resolution in CA to make Emeryville schools healthy and environmentally-sound places to work and learn. Based on the **Green Schools Initiative**, the District's new proactive policy calls for sustainable use of energy, water, and fuel, least toxic cleaning and gardening products, full recycling and composting programs, green building materials, and school lunches using as much local farm and school garden produce as possible. The District resolved to apply the PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE, simply defined as "better safe than sorry."

Bainbridge Island, WA: Fourteen MBA students have graduated from the Bainbridge Graduate Institute with master degrees in earth-friendly, socially-responsible business administration. Sustainability is built into every course at BGI, most of which is offered online. Enrollment has doubled after the Institute's 2nd year, with very few students having business undergrad degrees; 6 Hewlett-Packard employees are enrolled with their tuition paid by HP. The University of Washington is working with BGI to develop its own sustainable business curriculum.

### **SUSTAINABLE SAN JUANS eco-bytes:**

The San Juan Island School District and the county Solid Waste Division are partnering in a pilot compost education program that will not only teach the art and science of composting but will reduce the schools' waste disposal bill. This fall's 5th graders at the Friday Harbor Elementary School will learn how to operate "hot" composting of the school's cafeteria and yard wastes. Carefully weighed and recorded results will provide an accurate measure of success that will be compared to results from a concurrent pilot at Friday Harbor High School using a restaurant-sized worm composter to convert food wastes into "black gold" for the soil. (Look for video and other information on the project at this summer's County Fair!)

The MARS project (Meaningful Approach to Rehabilitation and Sustainability) has taken its first step at the courthouse in Friday Harbor. A donated worm bin has been installed to divert courthouse generated food wastes from landfill disposal, resulting in high-grade compost for courthouse gardens. The pilot effort also aims to provide a model for employee and visitor education on the benefits of "vermicomposting." ...more on MARS at the Fair! *What do worms have to do with sustainability????* Any effort that conserves resources, including waste materials re-used where they are generated, contributes to a community's sustainability; composting waste reduces gasoline needed for transport to the mainland for landfill disposal and produces compost to build healthier soils.

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"There is nothing you cannot accomplish when you are willing to share the credit."
Motto of the Columbia-Pacific Resource
Conservation & Economic Development District

"Superfluous wealth can only buy superfluity." Henry David Thoreau

"Life is heavy...Earth is light." Polish proverb

"The idea is to interlink the needs of people and nature; they're not incompatible."
Andrew Terry,
World Conservation Union