



# RECYCLING CONNECTIONS

C O R P O R A T I O N

## ***2014 Annual Report***

### ***Mission Statement***

***RCC specializes in connecting people, resources and communities to promote waste reduction, reuse, recycling and resource conservation.***



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## BACKGROUND



**Recycling Connections Corporation (RCC), is nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization** with the mission to connect people, resources and communities to promote waste reduction, reuse, recycling and resource conservation. Our corporate office is located at 1100 Main Street, Suite 120 in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. In addition we have a satellite office in Viroqua, Wisconsin.

## PROGRAMMING

During 2014 RCC provided programming through a combination of contracted\* and in-kind services to further our mission. Below is a brief summary of key activities for each program area.

\* *Services provided via contracted agreement(s).*

### ***Municipal Support Services***

#### **Marathon County Solid Waste Department\*** *(since 2010)*

RCC provided waste reduction / recycling education and program assistance to Marathon County residents, businesses and municipalities, on behalf of the Marathon County Solid Waste Department (MCSWD). During 2014 our services continued within a 2-year contract that ended in March. As requested by the Department we continued providing our services on a month-to-month basis through December, giving the Department and RCC time to discuss and evaluate more extensive services to begin in 2015.



Key services and/or activities in 2014 included:

- Staffed telephone information line to address questions related to solid waste, waste reduction, recycling and household hazardous materials
- Household Hazardous Materials collection program education & publicity

- MCSWD website maintenance ([www.marathoncountysolidwaste.org](http://www.marathoncountysolidwaste.org))
- Brochure development and/or updating
- Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) program assistance
- Municipal survey to gather waste & recycling collection program details, and to provide outreach regarding the MCSWD and its services
- Two (2) hands-on Home Composting workshops in April for Marathon County residents. Both were held at the Village of Weston's municipal building, and included setting up an onsite hot pile.



### **Group Purchase of Home Compost Bins\*** *(since 2011 with formal signed agreements)*

Wisconsin's municipalities and/or organizations are encouraged to join RCC's annual group purchase of the Home Composter® bins through Gracious Living (Ontario, Canada). The service offers entities to offer a quality and affordable compost bin to the public as a method to encourage more composting at home, or they may use the bin sales as a fundraiser.

RCC coordinated the communications between the participants and then placed the group order with Gracious Living (GL). RCC also provided GL with details for each delivery location. Each participant received their own invoice and was responsible for the onsite logistics at their drop site. Below are the participants with our 2014 group purchase:



- Adams County
- Brown County
- Eau Claire County
- Waupaca County
- Waukesha County

## **Solid Waste / Recycling Conference and Event Planning Services**

### **Wisconsin Integrated Resource Management Conference (WIRMC)\*** *(since 2010)*

WIRMC is Wisconsin's premier solid waste and recycling conference, hosted by the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW), Wisconsin Counties Solid Waste Management Association (WCSWMA), and the Solid Waste Association of North America-Wisconsin Badger Chapter (SWANA). The three organizations form a Planning Committee to host this annual conference, and then contracted with RCC for conference planning, coordination promotion, financial and reporting services.



- The 2014 conference was held on February 26-28 at the Hyatt on Main/KI Convention Center in Green Bay.
  - Total Attendance: 328. Keynote Speaker: Dr. Susan Hedman, EPA Region 5
- RCC also began preparations for the 2015 WIRMC, scheduled for February 25-27, 2015 to be held at the Olympia Resort and Conference Center, Oconomowoc.
- RCC continually updated and maintained information about the annual conferences at [www.wirmc.org](http://www.wirmc.org).
- RCC's staff are working onsite throughout the conference, however we select one UW-SP solid waste student to be our onsite assistant. For 2014 this was Palermo Galindo. RCC paid for his Student registration plus (1) hotel night, in return for his time commitment to help at the registration area during specific times.

### **SWANA and WCSWMA\***

- RCC provided event coordination for a Young Professionals social event sponsored by these two organizations, and held at 2014 WIRMC.

## Organizational Leadership and/or Support

### **Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW)\*** (since 2003)

Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership-based organization, contracted with RCC to serve as AROW's executive director, programming, administrative and fiscal management staff. A few key activities RCC assisted with and/or coordinated on behalf of AROW included:

- Programming:
  - Primary focus for 2014: redesigning and updating AROW's website and transferring to a new membership management system ([www.arow-online.org](http://www.arow-online.org)). RCC's services were more cost-effective compared to hiring a professional web developer.
  - Member Services
    - Quarterly electronic newsletter
    - Committee support (Committees included: Organics, Product Stewardship and Education)
  - Recycle More Wisconsin (RMW) program
    - RMW website refocus: from community-specific recycling information to general state-wide resource for recycling and waste reduction information. ([www.recyclemorewisconsin.org](http://www.recyclemorewisconsin.org))
    - RMW sponsor solicitation and support (in cooperation with AROW board)
- Executive Director and Administration:
  - Facilitate and attend Board of Directors meetings (quarterly) and board communications
  - Monthly executive committee meetings
  - Accounts Payable/Receivable



### **Solid Waste Association of North America – WI Badger Chapter (SWANA)\***

- SWANA contracted with RCC for maintenance of their chapter's website ([www.swana-wi.org](http://www.swana-wi.org)).



## Education / Promotion of Zero Waste & Sustainability

### **Waste Reduction and Recycling Education / Promotion**

- Presented a session on *School Cafeteria Waste Reduction* at the Midwest Renewable Energy Association's (MREA) Energy, in collaboration with Jonathan Rivin from UW-Extension's Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC).
- Provided a presentation on *School Cafeteria Waste Reduction* with Jonathan Rivin at the Wisconsin Association of Environmental Educators (WAE) annual conference.
- Presented on *Recycling: Issues, Opportunities and Markets* for UW-Stevens Point's WSTE 380 class.
- Staff attended stakeholder's meeting organized by SHWEC related to recycling agricultural plastics, and provided meeting summary notes for SHWEC's use and distribution to meeting attendees.
- Continual posted resource links and information on RCC's website and on RCC's FaceBook page.

### **UW-Extension's Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC)\***

- SHWEC began contracting with RCC to provide assistance to SHWEC staff, Jonathan Rivin, for the development and organization of a food waste reduction website.





## Large Scale and/or Agricultural Composting

- Staff member Karin Sieg became Chair of AROW's Organics and Food Residual Committee.
- Summer Intern provided compost testing assistance and communication coordination between Whitefeather Organics and UW-SP solid waste faculty and testing services.
- RCC facilitated a meeting for the informal local group '*Food is a Resource, Not a Waste!*' to discuss potential class projects for UW-SP WSTE 485 to work on during their spring 2014 semester.
  - RCC co-mentored a project with Meleesa Johnson, Director for Marathon County Solid Waste Department and President of AROW. Students researched local food composting issues and opportunities and provided a brief summary of other similar-sized community food composting efforts around the country.



## Home Composting Education / Promotion

- RCC and UW-Stevens Point entered into a Cooperative Internship Agreement with funding from a Great Lakes Higher Education Career Ready Internship Initiative Grant. Michelle Scarpace was selected as RCC's Summer Intern. She concentrated on outreach related to home composting and waste reduction including;
  - Writing and recording radio PSAs
  - Live interview on 90FM's Tuning Fork radio program
  - Facilitated sales of compost bins and pails from RCC's office
    - Placed demo bins at YMCA, Amherst's Jenson Center and Portage County's Annex building
  - Staffed compost information & bin sales tables at three (3) farmers markets (Stevens Point and Wisconsin Rapids). Reached 35-50 people.
  - Set up activities and staffed booth: Discover Downtown, Stevens Point
  - Presented Home Composting Workshops
    - Ho-Chunk Tribe in Wittenberg (12 attended)
    - Center for Conservation Leadership group (10 attended)
  - Researched and created a Shelf Life flier to avoid food waste
  - Developed a new Resource Page on RCC's website with numerous links about reducing food waste.
  - Participated in numerous community discussions regarding food waste and gleaning programs
  - Worked with Intern from Central Rivers Farmshed to develop and produce a home compost video
  - Created the *Save the Food!* Campaign, including its message, theme and logo
    - Outreach included coordinating the creation and distribution of "local celebrity" posters featuring 'Stevie Pointer' from UWSP, Horseshoes and Hand Grenades bluegrass band, Bill Schierl from The Store, and Patty Dreier, Portage County Executive. In-kind services were provided by John Hartman of Contemporary Photography (photography and printing), Karin Sieg (artwork), and Jessey Micek (graphic design services).
    - Posters distributed throughout Stevens Point and UWSP campus.
- RCC staff conducted additional Home Composting sessions and/or full workshops at;
  - Central Rivers Farmshed's *Local Food Fair* event.
  - Midwest Renewable Energy Association's Energy Fair (2 full workshops).
- Home composting information was available on RCC's Resources page of our website.
- RCC's sold home compost bins and kitchen-katcher pails from our office.
  - RCC purchased: 18 bins and 30 pails for resale
  - Items sold: Home Composter bins: 18 Presto bins: 2 Pails: 12



Michelle Scarpace at Discover Downtown



## COMMUNICATIONS / COLLABORATION

- The Center for Land Use Education (CLUE) located at UW-Stevens Point began conducting a Community Food Assessment Study for central Wisconsin. RCC staff reviewed materials, attended a stakeholders meeting and completed a survey related to food waste (now referred to as 'residuals') for the assessment.

## FUNDRAISING / RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

- Attended the Midwest Extension Compost School, a 3-day program held in Madison for 2014.
- Placed advertisement for RCC's services in WIRMC program. President Jen McNelly attended WIRMC, on behalf of RCC and the board.
- Attended Wisconsin Nonprofit Association's Summit (1-day) in Wisconsin Dells.
- Sent promotional email regarding RCC's services for group purchasing of Home Composter bins to 275 municipalities and nonprofit organizations.
- Continued to monitor the solid waste / recycling industry through reading professional journals (online and in print). Staff also attended the 2014 Wisconsin Integrated Resources Management Conference.
- Negotiations and/or Proposals submitted:
  - Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (*For 2015 services.*)
  - Marathon County Solid Waste Department (*For 2015 services.*)
  - Wisconsin Integrated Resources Management Conference (*For 2015-16 WIRMC planning services.*)
- AROW secured partial funding to send a representative to the Resource Recycling Conference and the Recycling Organizations Council meeting in New Orleans, but still needed additional funds. RCC board approved providing additional funds in order to send staff member, Sieg. With RCC's portion, Sieg could also represent WIRMC and RCC at the conference.
- AROW was invited by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5 to submit a grant proposal for projects related to Food Waste Prevention in Public Schools.
  - The AROW board supported submitting a proposal for a project idea based on AROW members' experiences and input. The proposed project would be a partnership between AROW and RCC.
  - RCC board approved funding for RCC staff to serve as the primary grant writers for the proposal.



## ADMINISTRATION

- Continued monitoring RCC's activities and planning through a written Annual Work Plan.
- Needed to purchase two new computers for office.
- Continued to update / develop internal written Standard Operating Procedures for organization's activities
- Recycling Connections Corporation was a 2014 member of:
  - Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin
  - National Recycling Coalition
  - Wisconsin Nonprofit Association

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board met twice during 2014 and voted electronically on various issues as needed (as allowable per our bylaws).

**Jennifer McNelly** (President)  
Center for Watershed Science & Education  
Univ. of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

**Dennis Kaster** (Secretary / Treasurer)  
Saint Michael's Hospital Rehabilitation Services

**Tom Baldischwiler**  
Goodwill Store-Stevens Point

**Randy Slagg** (Vice-President)  
Portage County Planning & Zoning –  
Land Conservation

**Jan Roberts**  
Attorney at Law

## STAFF

**Karin Sieg**, Executive Director  
**Juanita Keller**, Program Administrative Manager

**Angie Lemar**, Program Director  
**Michelle Scarpace**, Summer Intern

[www.recyclingconnections.org](http://www.recyclingconnections.org)

**RECYCLING CONNECTIONS CORPORATION**

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### Let us help you!

**RCC connects people, resources and communities. Together we promote...**

- Waste Reduction
- Reuse
- Recycling and Resource Conservation

*Serving & partnering with municipalities, organizations and businesses for 30+ years!*

Check Out Our Latest Campaign:

**SAVE THE FOOD!**  
Feed yourself - Feed your Compost!

Click here for Compost Bin & Pail Sale Information.

Click here for Workshop/Presentation dates.

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