

Information and Outreach

The District's public information efforts include member town communications, event and program marketing, and informational pieces developed to increase the effectiveness of District programs. We'll take a look at some of the critical pieces developed and/or revised in fiscal year 2008.

CVSWMD Web Site

The CVSWMD Web site (www.cvswmd.org) serves as the primary source of information about District programs and resources, and also points the site user to a wide range of information resources available on other state and national Web sites on such topics as recycling, household toxics, waste reduction, zero waste, and more. The site is consistently updated and maintained, and in keeping with the District's zero waste policy, new publications (including this Annual Report) are now loaded directly to our Web site, rather than printed. The most popular sections of our site continue to be the A-Z Guide to Waste Reduction & Resource Handling and the Reuse Business Database; both of these resources were completely updated in FY 2008.

A large Web site project also got underway in fiscal year 2008, and should be complete around the time this report is published to our site in late December 2008. The goal of the project was to streamline the site, give it a fresh look, add additional capabilities, and make it easy for staff to revise without the assistance of a Web technical consultant, which will also reduce maintenance costs. We invite you to view the new site and we welcome your feedback.

Advertising

The District's advertising efforts are designed to encourage the public to utilize special events, such as household hazardous waste collections, e-waste collections, and depot special collections such as the Free Metal Collection month held during May 2008 and the coupon for e-waste recycling during November 2007. The expansion of plastics recycling at the depots was also advertised in all regional and local newspapers covering member towns.

Our advertising budget is small so, in addition to the print ads we run in area newspapers, we depend on fliers distributed at District recycling depots and hazardous waste collections, free community calendar listings, and press releases to get the word out. With a marked increase in hazardous waste collection participants and increasing quantities of e-waste and other recyclables brought to the depots, these advertising efforts have yielded good results.

CVSWMD News

The District publishes a regular newsletter for member towns that is also distributed to the District Board of Supervisors, staff, legislative representatives from member communities, other solid waste districts, and select environmental organizations. The goal of the publication is to keep member communities up to date about District programs and the work of its staff and board. In FY 2007 and the first half of FY 2008, the newsletter was published bimonthly.

Beginning in September 2008, we revised the format from a printed four-page bimonthly publication to a monthly e-newsletter. We took this step to eliminate the financial and environmental costs of printing and mailing a printed piece and to enable more frequent and timely communication with member communities. The response to this change has been positive. We expect to develop an e-newsletter archive on our Web site in February 2009.

Press Releases

Press releases about District programs, events, and staff presentations are written and distributed to newspapers, regional business magazines, and sometimes to local radio stations and to solid waste industry publications, as appropriate. In fiscal year 2008, press releases focused on promoting participants in the school and business organics program, encouraging food scrap diversion through composting and the use of Green Cone food scrap digesters, and promoting hazardous waste collections and Green Cone sales events.

The press releases ran in local papers and also garnered some editorial interest in the District's work. As a result, we were invited to write a column for the Vermont View section in *The Sunday Rutland Herald/Times Argus*. "Zero Waste: a path and a destination" was published in the May 4, 2008 edition.

Fiscal Year 2008 Facts & Figures

In June 2008, the District Web site had **1853 unique visitors** who viewed an average of **4.64 pages per visit**.

The *CVSWMD News* is now an e-newsletter, **eliminating printing and mailing costs, and the use of approximately 1,000 sheets of 11 x 17 paper** each year on this one project alone.