



Local Communities Participate in Texas Recycles Day Activities

Communities across the Valley celebrated Texas Recycles Day by sponsoring educational events to promote recycling and raise public awareness on the benefits of recycling. The City of Edinburg held educational activities at the City's Recycling Center, a total of 200 people attended their activities. The City of McAllen provided tours of their Recycling Center and held a "Recycling Survivor Challenge" for students across the Valley. Over 2,000 students from various Valley school districts attended these activities. The "Recycling Survivor Challenge" was a fun event that got everyone involved. The students and spectators really enjoyed the event and had lots of fun. The City of San Juan also had a recycling event at the San Juan HEB and handed out approximately 600 bags of educational material.



City of McAllen Recycling Event



City of Edinburg Recycling Event



City of San Juan and Local HEB join forces to promote Recycling

The LRGVDC Regional Solid Waste Management Plan states Education & Training as one of the major goals. Local communities raise public awareness on the importance of recycling at every event through their Recycling Mascots.

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Illegal Dumping Workshop: Stop Trashing Texas! Local Control of Illegal Dumping

A Valley wide training was held at UT Brownsville, Tuesday, December 14, 2004. The training was sponsored by the City of Brownsville Beautification Committee, Keep Texas Beautiful, University of Texas at Brownsville and funded through a grant from the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Attendance to the workshop included law enforcement officials from cities and counties, code enforcement officers, city administrators, district attorneys office staff and various other entities. The workshop focused on anti-dumping laws, enforcement techniques and policy considerations.



Pictured from left to right: Officer Mike Sweet, Denton Police Department, Debbie Cox, Brownsville PUB and John Ockels, Ph.D., Texoma Council of Governments.

Grant Funding Opportunities

The US Environmental Protection Agency is soliciting grants for projects that address the objectives of the US Mexico Border 2012 Program. The US-Mexico Border 2012 Program is a bi-national collaborative effort whose mission is to protect the environment and public health in the US-Mexico border region. Border 2012 Goals are: 1) Reduce Water Contamination; 2) Reduce Air Pollution; 3) Land Contamination; 4) Improve Environmental Health; 5) Reduce Exposure to Chemicals as a Result of Accidental Chemical Releases and/or Acts of Terrorism; 6) Improve Environmental Performance Through Compliance, Enforcement, Pollution Prevention, and Promotion of Environmental Stewardship. Eligible entities include: border state governments, multi-state tribal organizations, college and universities, local governments, and non-governmental organizations and international organizations. Deadline for hard copy initial proposals and electronic copies is February 28, 2005. For more information on the Border 2012 Program please visit their web site at: www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder.

LRGVDC Solid Waste Implementation Grants

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) Solid Waste Implementation Grants will become available early June, 2005. Check the LRGVDC website for more information.

EPA Launches New Spanish Web Site

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has launched a new consolidated Spanish Web site as part of its ongoing effort to provide environmental information both in Spanish and English. The new site compiles EPA's Spanish language materials on a wide variety of areas from lead poisoning prevention to controlling asthma triggers, recycling to proper management of pesticides. The site was developed through a series of focus groups to respond to the environmental needs and interests of Hispanics. In addition to environmental health information, the site also offers educational resources for students and teachers who often seek Spanish language learning tools on the environment. The site also provides information about EPA grants, small business opportunities and environmental jobs at EPA. To view EPA's Spanish site, visit <http://www.epa.gov/espanol>.

Counties Identify Solid Waste Collection Needs

Cameron and Hidalgo Counties have conducted separate Solid Waste Management Studies funded by the North American Development Bank (NADBank). The studies were structured to identify the extent of solid waste management needs and to provide solid waste management options that can be considered by the counties to solve the needs.

Texas has enacted laws that have assisted Counties in obtaining water and sewer services for their rural communities (colonias); however the State did not provide any structure for providing Solid Waste Management services. Senate Bill 352 enacted on January 1, 2002, stipulates that a County or public agency **may** offer solid waste disposal service to persons in its territory.

The quantity and the cost for illegal dumping continues to grow as the population in this region expands. Hidalgo County has set up collection stations throughout the rural communities, currently they have eight collection stations, three of which were partially funded by the LRGVDC. Cameron County is considering implementing solid waste collection services. The LRGVDC through TCEQ has funded several Local Enforcement projects and Citizen Collection Station projects to try to address the problem of illegal dumping. (see chart below:) List includes projects funded from 1999 to 2005.

Entity	Amount	Entity	Amount
Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000	Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000
Hidalgo County Pct.3 Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000	Willacy County Local Enforcement	\$ 40,219
City of San Juan Local Enforcement	\$ 35,800	Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000
Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000	Hidalgo County Pct. 1 Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000
City of Harlingen Local Enforcement	\$ 39,450	Hidalgo County Pct. 2 Citizen Collection Station	\$ 25,000
Hidalgo County Pct.3 Local Enforcement	\$ 28,000	Hidalgo County Pct. 1 Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000
City of Primera Local Enforcement	\$ 15,989	Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 40,219
City of San Juan Local Enforcement	\$ 31,100	Willacy County Local Enforcement	\$ 47,772
City of Pharr Local Enforcement	\$ 15,632	Hidalgo County Pct. 2 Citizen Collection Station	\$ 21,732
Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 63,802	Hidalgo County Pct. 1 Citizen Collection Station	\$ 24,913
City of Mission Local Enforcement	\$ 31,926	Willacy County Local Enforcement	\$ 46,677
Hidalgo County Pct. 3 Local Enforcement	\$ 49,900	Hidalgo County Pct. 1 Local Enforcement	\$ 47,370
Hidalgo County Pct. 3 Citizen Coll. Station	\$ 24,943	Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 50,000
Town of Combes Local Enforcement	\$ 41,808	Cameron County Local Enforcement	\$ 53,998

Resource & Information Center

The LRGVDC's Resource and Information Center is open to the public. It provides information on topics relating to Colonia Data, Environmental Resources, Solid Waste Information and Census Data. You are welcomed to any information the Center has by contacting the Planning Department at (956) 682-3481.

Topics

- Solid Waste Management Composting Methodology
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Re-buy
- Water Quality, US & Mexico and Water Conservation
- Environmental Resources
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and National Flood Insurance
- Educational Data
- Colonia and Rural Development Data



LRGVDC Resource and Information Center



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Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Members

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee consists of 25 voting members and over 20 non-voting members. The Committee reflects a broad range of interests in solid waste management. Members include representatives from public sector (county, city, etc.), private sector group, educational group, environmental group and private citizen group. The non-voting membership includes TCEQ representatives and any interested individuals from cities, private, county, citizens, etc. The main objective of the SWAC is to deal with regional issues concerning solid waste management. There are currently two vacancies: interested individuals should contact the LRGVDC Planning Department at (956) 682-3481.

Solid Waste Advisory Committee Voting Members

Arturo Guajardo, Chairman	Frank Bejarano, Cameron County	Roy Quintero, Hidalgo County	Simon Salinas, Willacy County Judge
David Ivory, Brownsville	Miranda Key, Harlingen	Jerry Ortega, McAllen	Ramiro Gomez, Vice-Chairman
John Avilez, San Juan	Don Medina, Pharr	Juan Flores, Weslaco	Alicia Baldovinos, Port Isabel
Darla Jones, La Feria	Luciano Ozuna, Jr., Alamo	Al Gonzalez, Private Sector	John Dick, Private Sector
Debbie Mason, Private Sector	David Cooper, Private Sector	Esteban Gonzalez, Education	Laura Maxwell, Environmental
Deborah Cox, Environmental	Darrell Mangham, Private Citizen	Vacant	Vacant