



WSU Extension – King County Solid Waste Division Partnership

WSU King County Extension (WSU KCE) and King County Solid Waste Division (KC SWD) has built a mutually beneficial partnership based on years of collaboration and creative methods for supporting shared goals and objectives.

To advance these objectives, WSU KCE organizes and leads educational programs, activities, and events around waste reduction, compost, household hazardous waste and recycling topics. A few specific examples of programs include the King County Master Recycler Composter (MRC) program, Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) classroom outreach, and the Edible Food Recovery Project.

Community education and county volunteer programs make a big impact on protecting our local environment. Currently 30% of the materials going to Cedar Hills Landfill could be composted either in backyards or through King County’s curbside food scrap composting program. Many other items found in the landfill such as glass, plastics, and electronics can also be recovered and recycled as reusable materials. Consumer choices about purchasing and disposing of household hazardous waste affect the health of our families, homes, and natural world.

The MRC Program trains and supports a cadre of volunteers who provide King County residents with information and personalized assistance to promote the efficient use of natural resources.

The goal of the Classroom Outreach task is to educate students in HHW principles. This program is based on Hazards on the Homefront, a curriculum developed by KC SWD that provides real-life examples and helps students become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and prudent consumers.

Program Goals:

Engage King County residents in volunteer programs and opportunities

Give citizens the knowledge and tools to help them protect the environment

Create programs that promote vibrant local economies

Design educational outreach that support healthy ecosystems

2009 Selected Accomplishments



Mixing Compost
Photo: D. Batura



Cedar River Watershed Tour
Photo: D. Batura

- Provided seventeen Household Hazardous Waste classroom presentations, teaching over 400 King County youth about safer alternatives to household hazardous products and how to improve their health, safety, and environment.
- Promoted the MRC program to generate interest and participation in the 2009 standard training. WSU King County Extension recruited an enthusiastic group of participants and provided classroom space and resources for the training. These new volunteers are now engaged in educating the south King County community about waste reduction and recycling.
- Organized an MRC continuing education event that provided opportunities for MRC alumni to brush up on their public presentation and teaching skills, learn more about the “Recycle Food. It’s Easy to Do” Campaign, and participate in a tour of Cedar Grove Composting for an up-close look at their process for handling food scraps in addition to yard waste composting.
- Publicized MRC continuing education opportunities to all active MRCs through the MRC website, newsletter, and special postcard mailings.
- Participated on the “Earth Heroes at School” awards committee to plan program, select winners, and conduct event to recognize outstanding work on behalf of the environment by students, teachers or others associated with King County schools.
- Worked on developing a strategic partnership with King County Housing Authority to support their new recycling program and help educate the residents about best recycling practices.

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Through continued efforts and shared enthusiasm, our partnership and areas of work with KC SWD continues to grow. The following are partnership related informational resources:

- **Master Recycler Composter Program** - <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/mrc/>
 - **Household Hazardous Waste** - <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/education/presentations.asp>
 - **Earth Heroes at School** - <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/education/earth-heroes.asp>
- Contact: