



eNewsLink



LinkUp

A NEWSLETTER TO EXPAND MARKETS FOR RECYCLED MATERIALS

Summer 2006



Alchemy Goods owner Eli Reich with inner tubes to be used in Alchemy's bags.

Alchemy Goods turns useless into useful

It's called the "Center of the Universe," Seattle's Fremont neighborhood. The streets are lined with quaint shops, art and laid-back hangouts. But, what you may not see on the outside is the innovation that's happening behind Fremont's doors.

In a small workshop, [Alchemy Goods](#) creates one-of-a-kind bags that turn "useless into useful." The company uses recycled materials such as bicycle inner tubes, salvaged seat belts and used advertising banners to make a line of fashionable and environmentally friendly bags.

"Each bag is made with at least 70 percent recycled materials," said Alchemy Goods owner Eli Reich. "We're always thinking about what materials we can use to increase that number." For now, materials for the line of bags – which includes the Messenger, Haversack and Ad Bag – are collected from local bike shops and junkyards.

But this summer used advertising banners will be the hot fashion accessory; Alchemy's Ad Bag is the perfect tote for a trip to the beach or a day at the park. Who would have thought those banners we've all seen on the sides of buildings would end up slung over someone's arm?

That's innovation at work; but there's something more. Alchemy Goods knows that as we head into the future we need to keep in mind how what we do affects the world around us.

Reich has always been environmentally conscious. But, when he made his first Alchemy Goods bag from recyclable materials that were lying around his house, he had no idea what he was embarking on. Today, it's something

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Partner Highlights

LinkUp has been busy

We now have 22 LinkUp partners and are working with active partners on various projects to increase the use of recycled materials generated in King County and sales of their recycled-content products. While this is good news, it also means that we have allocated all of our partner resources for 2006 so we are not currently accepting new LinkUp partners. We will begin to accept new partners in 2007. Stay tuned to eNewsLink for more information. You can also contact LinkUp program manager Kris Beatty at 206-296-3740.



Paint recycler partners with LinkUp

Leftover paint collected through household hazardous waste programs is now finding its way back into people's homes and onto their walls. [MetroPaint](#), a recycling and retail program of the Portland region's Metro

he thinks about every day.

“We are exploring ways to increase the recycling factor,” Reich said. “One of the problems with consumer products is that they are often thrown away down the road, and we want to find a way to make sure that the materials in our recycled products are themselves recycled. It’s about sustainability.”

Alchemy Goods is already doing what it can – each bag comes with a lifetime guarantee. It’s just one way of making sure its bags, and the materials they are made from, don’t end up in the landfill.

King County Focus



An employee of Jamba Juice in Redmond collects compostable food waste, which will be sent for composting as part of the commercial food waste composting pilot program.

Putting food waste to good use

Each year commercial businesses throw away 54 billion pounds of food. In King County food waste makes up 26 percent of the waste stream. The county knows that much of that food can be put to good use, and that’s why it’s wrapping up a two-year pilot program to test the feasibility of diverting food from the waste stream through food recycling.

The King County Solid Waste Division partnered with the cities of Bellevue,

Redmond and Kirkland, along with Public Health - Seattle & King County, garbage hauling companies and Cedar Grove Composting. Together they worked with nearly 100 businesses to capture 650 tons of food waste and food soiled paper.

“We’ve had very positive results and feedback,” said Josh Marx, project manager with the County’s Solid Waste Division. “Food composting has been popular with businesses; they felt it was a positive environmental program.”

Businesses who participated in the program included chain and fast food restaurants, a preschool, grocery store, senior center, hospital and a butcher. Businesses were chosen based on their location and size.

Here’s how it worked. Each business was given a food waste kitchen collection bin, biodegradable bags, and educational materials. Then they were trained on what types of food, suitable for composting, to put in the kitchen collection bins. The kitchen bins were emptied into wheeled carts for pick up by the garbage hauler, and finally the food was delivered to Cedar Grove where it was turned into compost!

“For most businesses this was a new concept, when I would say ‘food

government is the latest LinkUp partner. It is one of the only operations in the Northwest that is recycling latex paint and making a 100 percent recycled latex paint product. MetroPaint will work with LinkUp to begin selling its paint in King County.



WoodStraw use approved by WSDOT

[Forest Concepts](#) was recently awarded approval from the Washington State Department of Transportation for its WoodStraw product to be used for state highway projects. WoodStraw is made from recycled veneer manufacturing waste and is used in place of straw for erosion control along the side of roadways. The wood-strand product is wind-resistant and lasts up to two years. The company had worked to earn the qualified product listing for more than a year. “Now state highway and other projects can benefit from this unique product, which has a number of qualities that are superior to commonly used agricultural straw,” said Jim Dooley, Forest Concepts’ President and Executive Manager.

Custom Handweaving on display

Later this month, the work of [Custom Handweaving](#) owner Susan Snover will be featured in a gallery show. “Transformations: Materials Plus.....” will feature fiber art by various artists. Susan’s series of rugs will be themed “re” and made entirely from recycled materials including bicycle tubes, neckties and grocery bags. The show will be held from mid July through the end of August, with an opening reception on July 16, at the Seven Muses Gallery in Tacoma. To find out more, visit www.thesevenmuses.com.

News You Can Use

Environmental performance

Find out how your industry is doing when it comes to the environment. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released the second edition of its [Sector](#)

recycling' it was the first time they had heard about this," said Sam Wilder, a consultant who helped train the businesses. "I was impressed by how they embraced the program and it's exciting to think about pulling this resource out of the waste stream and diverting it from disposal."

Wilder says businesses found other unexpected benefits from food recycling – restaurants found they lost fewer utensils, a pizzeria found it was making too much dough each day, and recycling food prevented birds from being attracted to and getting into the garbage.

The pilot programs are ending and the cities are negotiating with their waste haulers with the hope of being able to offer this service to all food waste generating businesses that are interested in participating in the coming months. The county will continue to provide technical assistance and work with other cities as part of its program to divert more commercial as well as residential food waste from disposal.

For more information on King County's Commercial Food Waste program contact Josh Marx at 206-296-4429 or josh.marx@metrokc.gov.

Fast Facts

Commercial food loss

Commercial retail food establishments in the United States throw out 54 billion pounds or 27 million tons of food annually. A significant portion of that is from food loss due to storage equipment failures or inadequate cold storage capacity; operational decisions; lack of management, training or oversight; and other factors.

In King County, it is estimated that up to 15 percent of the 80,000 tons of commercial food waste disposed may be edible. In addition to working to divert foodwaste for composting (see "Putting food waste to good use" above) the county is analyzing how to capture foodwaste that is edible, and diverting it for human consumption through partnerships with the nonprofit food collection and distribution network.

Here are the national projections for food lost per day by store type, in pounds.

[Strategies Performance Report](#). It includes a section called "Beneficial Reuse of Materials" which gives information on how different sectors are using recyclable and reusable material resources.

Green Living Expo

Visit West Seattle's newest neighborhood, High Point, in September for the [Seattle Green Living Expo](#). It will showcase the latest innovations for sustainable urban livability. High Point has become the largest sustainable mixed-income development in the country. The Expo takes place Sept 16, 17, 23 and 24.

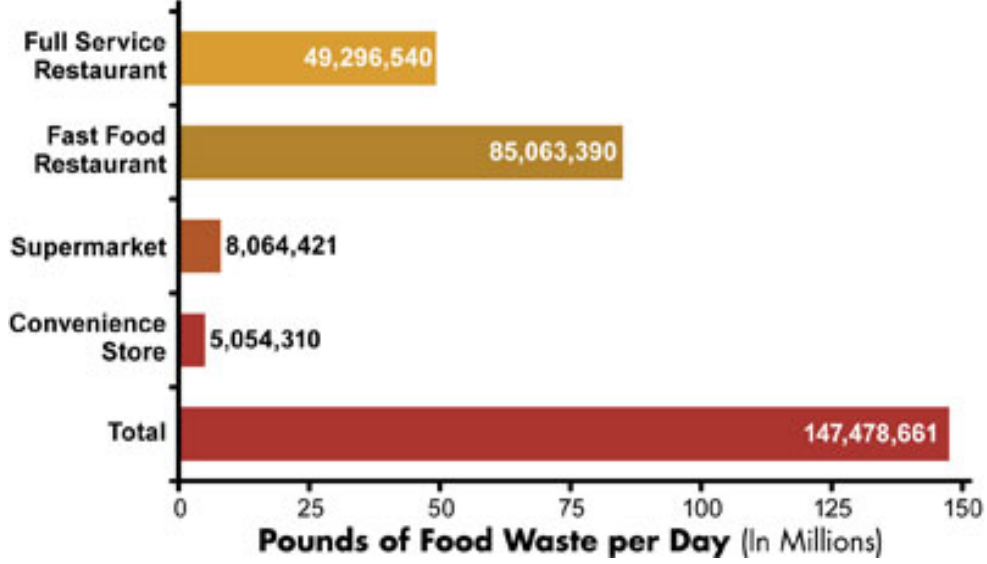
Pets can protect the environment too!

This summer's pet accessory will be "The Reggie." The six-foot-long leash is made from retired climbing rope from Northwest climbers and climbing gyms – many of the ropes have been used on climbing expeditions on the world's highest peaks, including Mount Everest. Leash maker [Krebs](#)

[Recycle](#) says its design philosophy is "to transform material headed for the landfill into useful products." And... if you've got a retired rope hanging around your place, give Krebs a call, it may be destined to become the next "Reggie."

Transfer station closed

The [First Northeast Transfer Station](#) in Shoreline is closed as of May 1 until Oct. 31, 2007 for major renovation. In the meantime, visit the King County Solid Waste Division Web site for [alternative disposal options](#) or call 206-296-4466.



Source: Jones, MartinezNocito; The Volumes and Caloric Values of Commercial and Household Food Loss, Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, Letter report to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Rome, 2004.

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