
FACTS TO ACT ON

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We encourage you to disseminate this information to community advocates and decision-makers.
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Fighting for Control of Local Garbage Resources

For years, post-consumer recycling was community-based because the small quantities of materials recovered did not represent enough profit to interest large private companies. Now, citizens groups' success in pushing for recycling has meant a dramatic increase in the amount of recyclables people are recovering. Cities are reporting 40, 50, even 60 percent recycling levels, as documented in a forthcoming study by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance entitled *Beyond 40 Percent: Record-Setting Recycling and Composting Programs*.

The increase in materials collected, however, has encouraged large garbage corporations to squeeze out local recycling groups in the drive for profit and market share. If communities retain ownership and control over recovered plastics, paper, old tires, oil, metal, and organic matter, they can produce new products and create wealth from within their own borders.

The following are four approaches that communities can use to retain local control:

1. Use set-asides or "sheltered markets" that establish strict guidelines to channel recycling activity to existing civic and community development groups.
2. Write non-competitive contract bids that favor joint ventures with bonafide community development corporations.
3. District the city and award contracts to many bidders, and prevent one company, particularly a non-local company, from winning too many districts in the same city.
4. Retain ownership of recovered materials no matter who does the collection and processing.

In June 1990 the Department of Public Works in Los Angeles will hold a conference on how community development corporations can win contracts with the city.

Citizens have invested their taxed income in the raw materials in their city's garbage. Instead of going toward the profit of foreign corporate entities, the value added from these "renewable resources" -- aluminum, glass, metals, paper, and organic matter -- should, to the maximum extent possible, accrue to the rightful owners of these materials -- the citizens.

The following are examples of community-based companies that have succeeded in retaining control of the recycling process in their areas:

Adams-Brown Recycling Station 9620 Mt. Orab Pike Georgetown, OH 45121 Ben Pedigo (513) 378-3431	collection, processing, marketing
Sun Shares, Inc. 813 Ellis Rd. Durham, NC 27713 David Kirkpatrick (919) 596-1870	collection, processing, marketing
National Temple Recycling Company 1201 W. Glenwood Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19133 Mjenzi Traylor (215) 787-2760	multi-material buy-back enterprise
Garbage Reincarnation, Inc. P.O. Box 1375 Santa Rosa, CA 95402 Mike Anderson (707) 584-8666	collection, processing, marketing
Flint Environmental Action Team 2051 West Bristol Flint, MI 48507 Tom MacGillivray (313) 235-2002	glass, plastics, aluminum, and paper processing
Earthworm, Inc. 186 South Street Boston, MA 02111 Adam Mitchell (617) 426-7344	commercial paper processing
Ecology Center 2530 San Pueblo Avenue Berkeley, CA 94702 Cathy Evans (415) 548-2220	public education and curbside collection
Community Conservation Centers 669 Gilman Berkeley, CA 94710 Kathy Evans (415) 524-0113	buy-back and drop-off center

Urban Ore
1231 2nd Street
Berkeley, CA 94701
Dan Knapp
(415) 526-7080

transfer station salvaging and reusables

The following community-oriented companies provide finished products to industry and consumers:

Western Community Industries
5450 East Home Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727
Bill Eidson
(209) 251-8235

manufactures cellulose insulation

Eco-Encore Incorporated
860 South 19th Street
Richmond, CA 94804
Peter Heylin
(415) 234-5670

wine bottle washing

TERRE (based in Belgium)
c/o Eurotec, Inc.
3242 Grace Street NW
Washington, DC 20007
Andre Bodart
(202) 625-7200

manufactures Pan TERRE: paperboard products from waste materials

References

Christian Science Monitor, "Treating Trash as a Valuable Municipal Resource," November 12, 1987.

Leuci, Mary, *Clearinghouse and Tool Kit for Community Economic Development*, University of Missouri, 628 Clark Hall, Columbia, MO 65211.

Waste to Wealth, Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1985.

Waste Utilization Study, Newark, New Jersey, City Engineering Department.

This article is part of an ongoing series of releases on materials policy as it relates to economic development. We encourage you to disseminate this information to community advocates across the country. Please credit the Institute for Local Self-Reliance when you use ILSR's FACTS TO ACT ON. If you wish to receive future FACTS TO ACT ON, please contact ILSR.