

## Rachel's Environment & Health News

### #50 - Incinerator Fighters, Recycling Advocates Get Monthly Source Of News: Materials Recovery Report

November 08, 1987

If you're fighting an incinerator or a landfill (or both), you need to know about what's happening with these technologies. And you need to keep abreast of the alternatives, such as re-use and recycling. A new newsletter focused on these topics has just appeared--MATERIALS RECOVERY REPORT (MRR) edited by Mary Lou VanDeventer. Ms. VanDeventer is taking over some of the publishing load that Ellen and Paul Connett have been carrying the past couple of years. The Connetts' organization, Work on Waste--U.S.A., will continue to get out information but it will be supplemented regularly by MATERIALS RECOVERY REPORT.

Ms. VanDeventer says the subject of her newsletter is "comprehensive recycling systems that receive discarded materials and turn them back into productive resources. An integral part of this effort, MRR opposes technologies that compete with comprehensive recycling by treating discards as garbage, which contaminates useful materials. Such systems are now the dominant method of handling discards. New versions of them are widely touted as solutions to the current 'garbage crisis,' which the old versions created."

True to her credo, Ms. VanDeventer's first issue of MRR describes how Marin County, California is already recycling about 25% of its discards. A new \$9.5 million Resource Recovery Center, which opened in April, 1987, looks like it will eventually recycle 50% of the county's discards. (To put a \$9.5 million investment into perspective: a municipal solid waste (msw) incinerator often costs more than \$100 million.) A recycling success story like this one will be hard for local officials to ignore.

On the other side of the coin, this first issue of MRR contains ammunition useful to incinerator fighters: John J. Sullivan, president and CEO of Signal Energy Systems, a manufacturer of municipal solid waste (msw) incinerators, predicts that 50% of existing contracts between incinerator companies and municipalities will be violated because the plants will not produce the promised amount of energy per ton of garbage, or because the necessary garbage, supposedly guaranteed to the incinerator by contract terms, won't be available. "The loss associated with the missing [energy per] ton and missed throughput levels [of garbage to burn in the plant] will have to be paid for by either the vendor or by the community, depending on the way the contract is written." The economic life of an incinerator depends upon a guaranteed source of fuel (garbage) and a steady output of energy. If these assumptions aren't met, who will pay off the huge loans? Incinerator fighters will want to look closely at the proposed contract in their town.

Another success story in the first issue of MRR is the birth of The Arise Foundation Antipollution Committee, a group formed to fight the Miami Monster, one of the nation's most notorious msw incinerators and a major source of pollution in Dade County. Arise Foundation's leader is Ed Benson, an environmental fighter with the tenacity of a bulldog and a genius for publicity. Mr. Benson and his fellow Miamians have revealed that the Monster, which used to be touted as the technology of the future, has made people sick and polluted the Biscayne aquifer.

MRR is a fine newsletter. And useful. Many of the stories contain a paragraph that begins with a star and the words To Do; what follows is some action citizens can take to promote recycling and discourage belching incinerators and leaking landfills.

Get this monthly newsletter from Materials World Publishing, 1089 Curtis, Albany, CA 94706; phone (415) 524-8883. It's \$25/year (12 issues).

Visitors are welcome at the Marin Resource Recovery Center, 565 Jacoby St., San Rafael, CA 94901; phone (415) 485-5646. Joe Garbarino is the driving force here. If you can't get to San Rafael, you can still see this recycling center in operation: buy a videotape from Roger Bailey at Video-Active Productions, Box 322, Rt. 2, Canton, NY 13617. Ask for Tape No. 9: "Joe Garbarino,

'Recycling--The Only Way to Go!'" It's \$25.00. While you're at it, ask for a complete list of Video-Active's videos on recycling.

The Connetts' organization, Work on Waste--USA, can be reached at 82 Judson Street, Canton, NY 13617. Everyone should join Work on Waste--USA. Phone (315) 379-9200.

Ed Benson's impressive research and publicity efforts have turned the tables on the Miami Monster, providing solid evidence that this incinerator is a dog, a turkey, a disaster. If you want to see examples of effective publicity, write Ed Benson and ask for samples of his work. The Arise Foundation needs donations so they can keep the Miami Monster in the public eye; thanks to people like Ed, the next Miami Monster will be much easier to defeat. Send donations to Arise at One Costa del Sol, Boulevard, Miami, FL 33178; phone (305) 592-2767.

--Peter Montague

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FREE EPA REPORTS ON INDOOR AIR POLLUTION AVAILABLE NOW, BUT YOU BETTER GET YOUR ORDER IN SOON

U.S. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has just published the full report of the TEAM study showing that indoor air pollution is worse than outdoor air pollution even in heavily industrialized areas like Bayonne, NJ. (See HWN #43). We received a 192-page hard-bound SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: VOLUME 1 and a 14-page PROJECT SUMMARY free from: EPA Center for Environmental Research Information in Cincinnati, OH; phone (513) 569-7391. The hardbound volume is EPA document number EPA/600/6-87/002a and the project summary is document No. EPA/600/S-6-87/002. The full four-volume TEAM study is available for \$151 from National Technical Information Service (NTIS), 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161; phone (703) 487-4650. The order number for the full set is PB 88-100 052. The individual volumes are also sold separately.

We suggest you order the free reports soon (like pick up the phone now)--they probably won't last long.

--Peter Montague

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Descriptor terms: indoor air pollution; epa; msw; incineration; work on waste usa; recycling; miami, fl; fl; dade county, fl; ed benson;