



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network

November 3, 2023

To: Members and Prospective Members of the
New Jersey WasteWise Business Network

From: Steven Rinaldi, Chair
New Jersey WasteWise Business Network
NJDEP, Bureau of Sustainability

Subject: Minutes from the 11/1/23 New Jersey WasteWise Business Network webinar

Minutes:

Welcome –Network Chair Steve Rinaldi (Steven.Rinaldi@dep.nj.gov) welcomed everyone and explained that the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is the DEP’s free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn more about waste reduction, recycling, recycled product procurement and sustainability. Steve also mentioned that five of this year’s DEP Recycling Award winners are members of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, L’Oreal USA, Joe Slomian, Anthony Marrone and Marie Kruzan. Steve also mentioned that America Recycles Day is coming up (11/15/23) and that the DEP’ Recycle Coach Case Studies document is available at recycle.nj.gov.

Booksmiles Donation Program – Advancing the Causes of Reading and Reuse – Larry Abrams, Founder and Executive Director, Booksmiles, larry@booksmiles.org - Booksmiles, which was founded in 2017, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to find homes for used children’s books. There are many children in New Jersey that have few, if any, books to read. Booksmiles looks to change this situation by organizing book donation drives and donating

books to children and to teachers in need of books for their students. This program not only advances the cause of reading but also keeps many books out of the landfill. Thus far, almost 500 tons of children's books have been collected and kept out of the waste stream by Booksmiles. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

Innovative Reuse and Recycling Programs Emanating from the Plastic Bag Ban - Reusable Bag Program – Renee Lundahl, renee.lundahl@goatote.com, Co-Founder, GOATOTE; and Plastic Film Recycling Program – Stuart Newman, Union County Recycling Coordinator, stuart.newman@ucnj.org - Ms. Lundahl of GOATOTE explained that while the single-use plastic bag has been a big success, consumers are accumulating more reusable bags than they need and have no recycling option for these bags. GOATOTE is a company in the business of collecting surplus reusable bags and then re-distributing them to food pantries in need of such bags. The bags are checked over and sanitized before being reused. GOATOTE is working with Union County on a reusable bag collection initiative and looks to expand its reach in New Jersey. Mr. Newman discussed the Union County plastic film recycling program, which collects produce bags, ice bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, bubble wrap and more. The plastic film is baled and ultimately transported to the Trex recycled plastic lumber company in Virginia. Thus far, thirteen drop-off sites have been established in Union County for this material with two more drop-off sites to open soon. In just under a year, the county has recycled over nine tons of plastic film. (PowerPoints to be available at www.anjr.com)

“Terracycle Home” and TerraCycle’s Cigarette Waste Recycling Program – Eric Ascalon, Global Director of Community Development & Strategic Partnerships and Kariina Rand, North America Manager of Community Development & Strategic Partnerships, TerraCycle, eric.ascalon@terracycle.com and kariina.rand@terracycle.com – Mr. Ascalon discussed the TerraCycle cigarette waste program, which accepts cigarette butts that are collected through programs established in communities and businesses and recycles this waste into new products. The program is free and has recycled a quarter of a billion cigarette butts thus far. The Keep America Beautiful non-profit organization is a partner in this program and provides free cigarette butt receptacles through its program. Ms. Rand explained that TerraCycle has established a home collection program that accepts and recycles many items that cannot be recycled through curbside collection programs, including hard-to-recycle plastics, baby food pouches, water filters, coffee capsules and more. Participants in the program purchase Zero Waste bags, which are then collected by TerraCycle or a hauler once they are full. The materials are ultimately recycled into a variety of products. The program currently services residents and businesses in select parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com.)

Bergen New Bridge Medical Center’s Food Waste Reduction Initiatives and Other Successful Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiatives – Scott Kolvek, Director Environmental Health and Safety and Sabyn Matli, Director Food and Nutrition, Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, SKolvek@newbridgehealth.org and SMatli@newbridgehealth.org - Bergen New Bridge Medical Center in Paramus, Bergen County, implemented food waste reduction measures that prevented 14,562 pounds of food waste from occurring in 2022, which was the equivalent of saving 12,134 meals. The facility’s food waste reduction initiative is run as an employee engagement program, which recognizes team members tracking food waste as

Waste Warriors. The entire medical center was included in a campaign to raise awareness about the food waste initiative through their managers, internal communications, and posters in food service locations. Mr. Kolvek discussed Bergen New Bridge Medical Center's single stream recycling program, polystyrene recycling program, energy and water conservation programs and other sustainable initiatives. These measures have not only resulted in environmental benefits, but also financial benefits. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

SR: Minutes November 1 2023