

Monday, 6.13.11

**Dear Principals, Custodians, Teachers, Staff, Students, and Administration--**

Below, please find a summary of my visit to the **Casella Recycling Center & Waste Management Incinerator**, our green **Tip of the Week**, an **Energy Update**, and an **end-of-year Waste Reduction / Recycling Update**. Thanks for taking the time to read.

- My visit to Casella Recycling Center & Waste Management Incinerator

*There is a simple yet high-impact way you can make a positive difference for the environment in your schools. This June, as you clean out your classroom, office, or locker, recycle your waste. This requires the collaborative effort of teachers, students, staff, administrators, and custodians. Please let me know if you have any questions. Just about everything--from paper to electronics to clothes--can be recycled instead of burned.*

Touring the facilities gave me a chance to view the behind-the-scenes process of recycling and incineration. At the Casella Recycling Center in Charleston, I saw aluminum, glass, paper, and plastics of all shapes and colors sorted and packaged. They are sorted and packaged in order to be sold to 3rd-party manufacturers who buy the sorted material in bulk, and use it to make new, recycled products to sell.

At the Waste Management Incinerator (Wheelabrator Technologies, Inc.) in Saugus I experienced the smell of burning garbage and saw the inside of the factory, including a warehouse containing mountains of garbage, and also viewed through a small window the interior of a fire-burning incinerator. Outside the facility, I saw many large industrial-sized trucks driving down a winding road towards the place where ash is landfilled.

This experience drove home the point for me that recycling is a beneficial alternative to burning trash, and that all it takes is a simple decision before we toss something into the trash.

Not only does the process of recycling require less energy and allow for a product to be re-used, but recycling also prevents the burning and release of chemicals that happen at an incinerator, and prevents trash from becoming toxic ash which is then landfilled.

As a district, our actions to recycle at the end of the year will divert waste from the landfill and incinerator, reducing emissions and chemical waste. *Your decision to recycle makes a positive difference.*

See below "End-of-Year Waste / Recycling Update" for a detailed list of items you may be wondering about. Feel free to share this list with students and colleagues, and remind people around you to recycle if you can.

- Tip of the Week: Only print graphics "as needed." **Why?** *Because graphics use a lot of ink and paper.*

- Energy Update: The electrical grid can become overwhelmed with increased energy loads on the hottest days of the year. With summer fast approaching, there are several steps you can take to reduce energy use inside.
  - Turn off all non-essential lights
  - Close the window shades/blinds
  - Use stairs instead of elevators
  - Turn off lab equipment or smartboards when not in use
  - Unplug appliances when not in use
- End-of-Year Waste / Recycling Update:

Attached please find the district's recycling numbers for May.

End-of-Year Waste--Wondering What and Where to Recycle Various Items??---

I. PLACE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN RECYCLING BLUE BINS / TOTERS (\*all blue toters are SingleStream Recycling, which means you can put everything in there\*) :

-PAPER & CARDBOARD, including NOTEBOOKS & UN-USABLE BOOKS:

Please make every effort to recycle all that PAPER!! Notebooks, file folders, construction paper, magazines, workbooks, white and colored paper, index cards, paper posters, and pocket folders can all be recycled. Even soft and hardcover books that aren't good for reuse can be recycled. No need to remove paper clips, staples, or spiral binding. Paper items that can be REUSED should go to a reuse closet / collection area.

-CONTAINERS:

Place rinsed bottles and cans in the blue bins & toters.

-RIGID PLASTICS:

Large rigid plastics, like buckets, toys and baskets can go in your recycling toters

II. ELECTRONICS - COMPUTER EQUIPMENT:

Give extra computer equipment and related items to your school's tech liaison. Examples include: scanners, power adapters, speakers, keyboards, mice, cords, etc.

III. APPLIANCES & OTHER ELECTRONICS:

Give anything with a plug that's not MIS-distributed to your school's senior custodian. Examples include: microwave, toaster oven, CD player, etc.

IV. FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS, NON-ALKALINE BATTERIES & PRINTER CARTRIDGES:

Give to your school's senior custodian. Some ink jet and laser printer cartridges can be returned to the manufacturer, or you may have a fundraising collection in place. (To find out more family liaisons can contact: jimcusack2003@gmail.com.)

V. COMPUTER FLOPPY DISKS, ETC.:

Sorry, old computer disks go in the trash.

#### VI. CLOTHING & REUSABLE SCHOOL SUPPLIES:

Items that can be REUSED, including binders, pens, pencils, art supplies, clothes, books, CDs, DVDs, audio books, and records should be collected separately to be kept out of the trash and given a new life. Place collection boxes around your school and have items donated (some orgs will pick-up donations). Be sure to work with the senior custodian on this. You may already have a collection area in your school for reusable items.

#### VII. SCRAP METAL:

Custodians collect large metal items such as tables, chairs, desks and cabinets for recycling. Pickup is scheduled with DPW. DONATION DROP-OFF SPOTS: There are many donation places in the area, including:

Big Brother Big Sister Foundation - will pickup donations:

[www.bbsfoundation.org](http://www.bbsfoundation.org)<<http://www.bbsfoundation.org>> - Accept: appliances (small), bedding, draperies, books, toys, clothing, electronics, household goods and more.

Goodwill - 520 Mass. Ave., Central Square / 230 Elm St., Davis Square - Accept: antiques, small appliances, artwork, bedding, curtains, books, decorative pillows, bicycles, music, DVDs, jewelry, clothing, clean rags, accessories, kitchenware, household goods, sporting goods.

More donation locations can be found here:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/recyclingandtrash/curbsidecollections/getridofitright/furnitureandhouseholdgoods.aspx>

(Questions? Feel free to reply to this e-mail, or e-mail Meryl Brott, Recycling Manager, [mbrott@cambridgema.gov](mailto:mbrott@cambridgema.gov))

**-Kristen**