

Okaloosa County News Release

July 22, 2016

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NR16

Photo Caption: Public Works-Recycling Employees were recognized by the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners for receiving the **Household Hazardous Waste Program of the Year Award** by the State. L-R: Back Row, Commissioners Trey Goodwin, Vice Chairwoman Carolyn Ketchel, Chairman Kelly Windes, Nathan Boyles, Wayne Harris and County Administrator John Hofstad. Award Recipients Recognized L-R: Jay Shartz, Hazardous Material Technician II, Chauncey King, Hazardous Materials Technician I, Public Works Director Jason Autrey and Recycling Coordinator Jim Reece.

Okaloosa Recycling Offices Awarded Household Hazardous Waste Program of the Year

The Okaloosa County Recycling Office was selected as the “**HouseholdWaste (HHW) Program of the Year,**” by the Florida Chapter of the North American Hazardous Materials Management Association (NAHMMA). The North America Hazardous Materials Management Association (NAHMMA) is a professional organization dedicated to pollution prevention and reducing the hazardous constituents entering municipal waste streams from households, small businesses and other entities that may be exempt from local, regional or national regulations.

In 1991 Okaloosa County received \$100,000 from the Hazardous Waste Collection Center Grant managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Since that time the County has grown its program by participating in as many as 10 Cooperative Collection Center Arrangement Grants supporting 10 neighboring Counties throughout the Florida Panhandle.

Amnesty day type events have been offered annually to a population base of about 500,000 residents. **Students, farmers, and emergency responders throughout the County have participated in the following, in order to better manage hazardous waste generated in the county while reducing exposure to the environment:**

- Selected High Schools’ and Middle Schools’ chemistry lab inventoried to catalog, identify, and dispose of chemicals that were outdated under the School Chemical Cleanout Campaign (SC3) sponsored by FDEP.
- Participated in Operation Cleansweep sponsored by FDEP and The Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (DACS) to collect and properly dispose of Cancelled, Suspended, and Unused Pesticides (CSUPs).
- Through Innovative Technology Grants from FDEP, experimented with and promoted research for methods of disposing of latex paint in concrete and in a patented roofing system.

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Aside from providing free drop-off of Household Hazardous Waste to residential customers, the **Recycling Office obtained approval from FDEP to accept Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator (CESQG) Waste from small businesses for a fee**, utilizing its existing contract with its licensed hauler.

In FY 14 the Board of County Commissioners approved hiring two full time Hazardous Material Technicians in FY 15. The new employees have implemented cost saving measures while improving operational efficiencies. **Our permanent facility in Fort Walton Beach is now open every Tuesday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., while the satellite drop-off facility in Crestview is open behind the County Public Works Building, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

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