

BCIT UPDATE

YOUR CAMPUS BULLETIN

MAY 31, 1989

STUDENTS PROPOSE CAMPUS RECYCLING PROGRAM

Recycling, which is becoming a growing trend with consumers, businesses and governments, is gaining a foothold in educational institutions, including BCIT.

As well as the University of Western Washington in Bellingham, and the University of Alberta, which have had recycling programs for over a decade, SFU recently adopted a campus-wide recycling plan after a year of research and experimentation. The University of Victoria has also started a program, Douglas College, VCC and other colleges and high schools are trying to get the ball rolling and BCIT, where office recycling exists as a desire in the minds of many, but as a reality in only a few departments, a sequence of events has been quietly unfolding that may see campus-wide recycling become a reality within the next few years.

With the blessing of former president, Roy Murray, Gavin Davidson, a second year Marketing student, spent the past year developing a Student Association business plan for campus recycling. His quest took him on a cross campus odyssey to find out (a) how much waste BCIT actually generates (b) how much interest there is in the concept of recycling and (c) how to go about setting up a realistic set of goals. "I found a great deal of support for the concept in principle," said Gavin, who personally interviewed over 20 people on the subject. Senior administrators like Paula Pick, V.P. Student Affairs and Educational Support and Wayne Hepple, director of Materials Management were very supportive. "Wayne has met with me on many occasions and his assistance has been invaluable in helping me to develop a realistic program that will work for the campus," says Gavin.

Gavin discovered during his research that real awareness of the importance of recycling exists, that several departments have already set up their own arrangements with recycling companies and that more are considering doing so. The Registrar's Area, Computer Resources, the Print Shop and many trades areas have been recycling routinely for some time. More recently other departments, like the Library, Print Services, and Audio Visual Production have also initiated schemes. On an individual level, awareness of recycling is usually brought sharply into focus each year when new telephone directories are



Recyclers! Print Services staff, Lynda Bennett, Trisha Mason, Bill Murray and Johane Imoo recently set up their own office recycling project with specially labelled boxes designed to store all separated paper materials.

issued and the question of what to do with old ones comes up. Although the Institute does not have a central repository for collection of the books by recycling companies, increasing numbers of people have realized that these companies will pick up from individual offices.

Gavin Davidson, who won an award for his film, 'Absolute Trash,' a video for school children on recycling, says the Student Association is seeking approval from BCIT's administration for a three phase proposal that would come into effect this September and take about four years to fully implement. Approval would mean the allocation of start-up capital costs to cover steel bins with lids, plastic waterproof bins for pop cans, notice boards and a main storage area. A person will also be needed to coordinate the program and Gavin is confident that funds for this will be self-generating once the program is up and running. All recycling companies pay for waste paper — the higher the grade, the higher the dollar return.

Phase 1 of the plan would start September, 1989 and concentrate on collecting paper and aluminum from high volume waste areas. Phase 2 would see more departments participating and phase 3 would complete the phasing in of departments and test the feasibility of using janitorial staff to collect the recycled materials from central collection points. "We intend to make the process of individual re-

cycling simple and not time consuming for staff," says Gavin. "Each person would have their own box by their desk or work station and all waste paper would go into it instead of the garbage bin. At the end of the week, these boxes would be emptied into a storage cage located nearby and these would be emptied on a regular basis by the contracted recycling company." But why should staff make the effort to change their habits? According to Gavin most people are genuinely concerned about the amount of wasted resources that pass through a large organization like BCIT and if an efficient program were set up would be prepared to do their bit for the sake of the environment. An added incentive, he says, is the monetary reward. Recycling companies pay a flat rate for all waste recovered and a portion of this would be returned to participating departments.

The Student Association will be presenting their recycling proposal to Paula Pick and President Watson sometime this summer. In the meantime Gavin is busy putting together a BCIT recycling display for the SFU Recycling Fair on June 3, 4 and 5. The display will consist of large sized mounted photographs of current recycling activity at BCIT, including a typical recycling office (Print Services) and the students' own paper and pop can recovery projects. Gavin received a \$1,359 grant from Environment Canada for the project, which is part of Environment Week, starting June 1.

RECYCLING AT HOME

by Clare Fodness,
BCIT Staff Society

My kids now call me a Recycling Freak. A year ago I wasn't like that. A year ago, at the first appearance of the word "recycling" in an article I'd have swallowed a large gulp of guilt and quickly moved on to the next page. For years I listened with admiration to the proponents of recycling, agreeing that their efforts were virtuous, but too much work for me. Besides, I reasoned, what difference did one person's efforts make, when the world pollution problem was so gigantic? I was continually harangued, however, by a friend to whom recycling was a way of life. His constant sermonizing finally brought me to the point that I reluctantly said, "OK, how do I start recycling? Show me."

So he did, and it turned out to be very simple, and much less time consuming than I had imagined. Here's how you can do it in three easy steps!

1. Obtain five containers (I use cardboard boxes), place them in a convenient location. (I use the landing to my basement stairs.)

2. Label the boxes, and fill them as follows:

Newspapers: all newsprint from newspapers, flyers, etc.

Other Paper: all writing paper, envelopes, folded up cardboard boxes (kleenex boxes, cake mix boxes), paper wrappers (flour and sugar wrappers).

Tins: remove labels, rinse out the can and throw it in the box. To conserve space you can remove the bottom and squash the can be stepping on it, but this is not mandatory.

Glass: all glass bottles, broken glass, etc., washed, and labels removed.

Plastic: labels removed, and rinsed. (I know, removing all those labels, rinsing the cans and jars, sounds like extra work. But I found out that the extra work is very minimal. The labels on tins tear off easily. The jars just soak in the hot dishwater and peel off easily as well.)

3. When your boxes are full make a trip to the nearest recycling depot and drop them off. To find out where the nearest depot is call the GVRD Recycling Hot Line at 736-8636.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I am involved in recycling because I hope that in the future people will have to justify the right to waste recyclable materials rather than our having to justify a recycling program now. I believe environmental concerns and economic survival are not opposite issues but necessary partners."

Trish Glanfield, SFU Recycling Group.



SFU RECYCLING FAIR

- Alternatives and Solutions -

Saturday June 3 - Sunday June 4 - Monday June 5, 1989
11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Debate and Panel - Tuesday June 6
3:00 to 4:30 p.m. and 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

North Concourse and Images Theatre, Simon Fraser University



Bring recyclable materials to 'recycle' into fair discounts and activities.
FREE Admission Wheelchair Access

What are you WAITING for?

For information, or to volunteer
call SFU Recycling Group, c/o B.C. PIRG 291-4360

PACKAGE POLLUTION

by Jo Currie

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

By volume, 50 per cent of our garbage is now packaging, according to John Hanson, executive director of the Recycling Council of Ontario. The total volume has increased dramatically in the past three decades — and even the rate of increase is increasing. Most of us seldom thought about packaging until a series of garbage crises across the country brought it forcefully to our attention. And now that Canadians are sitting up and taking notice, we realize that the where-to-put-it question is only a small part of the problem. We're starting to look at our lifestyle and our environment as a whole, and question our right to unbridled consumption and waste.

William Rees, a professor of planning and resource ecology at the University of British Columbia, says that until very recently consumption for its own sake was considered by many economists essential to a nation's healthy economy. "In classic economic theory," says Rees, "the assigned role of ordinary people is to consume. What a degrading view of humanity! But, he adds, "it's a learned attitude that we can unlearn."

Not that solutions are going to be simple. Glenn Munroe of Pollution Probe and a former coordinator of the Ontario Government's Recycling Advisory Committee, points out that the issue is twofold. First, we use far more packaging than we need, and it's exacting a huge toll on our resources (trees for paper, petrochemicals for plastics, metal for cans); on our energy (for producing, transporting and disposing); and on our land, where landfill sites are overflowing, and both urban and rural



environments are threatened by litter. Second, few of us are aware of the environmental implications of various types of packaging. "It's not enough to ask: Is it biodegradable?" says Munroe. "From manufacture to disposal, the whole life cycle of a package must be taken into account because it affects the environment at every stage in its history."

To combat the packaging deluge, environmentalists have adopted the three Rs — REDUCTION, REUSE and RECYCLING. Of the three, reduction is the most vital. Solutions, they agree, must come from many sectors: from industry, from governments at all levels and from us, the consumers. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has called for a 50 per cent reduction in packaging by the year 2000 — a level, points out Richard Gilbert, chairman of the federation's environment committee, that would merely bring us in line with most Western European countries, including some with living standards higher than Canada's. Two regulatory approaches are under study by the federation: the outright banning of certain package types and sales tax or deposit incentives. . . .

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