



Waste Management Marks First Year Generating Green Energy for 7,500 Homes Across Pacific Northwest

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Renewable energy and greentech investments signal company's transformation to extract value from waste

MCMINNVILLE, Ore. and ARLINGTON, Ore., June 23, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --

For the communities of McMinnville, Ore., and Seattle, Wash., the "circles of sustainability" are now one year old.

That's how long it has been since Waste Management began providing residents in these communities with renewable energy - generated from garbage collected, in part, from the McMinnville and Seattle areas.

Waste Management generates renewable energy at its landfills as part of a companywide program to extract energy from ordinary garbage and use it to create energy and clean transportation fuels. WM pioneered the landfill gas technology 20 years ago. Today, the company uses landfill gas to generate energy at 129 plants across North America.

McMinnville's Circle of Sustainability

Waste collected from the McMinnville area is disposed of at Riverbend Landfill, where a \$10 million energy plant has been using landfill gas to make electricity since last June. The plant sends 4 megawatts of electricity to McMinnville Water and Light to power 2,500 local homes.

The new plant has also attracted a steady flow of visitors eager to learn about green technologies, renewable energy, and recycling. More than 200 students from McMinnville elementary schools toured the new plant in the first year. Other visitors included more than 50 groups representing environmental, business and academic interests from across Yamhill County and the state.

Seattle's Circle of Sustainability

Waste collected from Seattle is disposed of at Waste Management's landfill near Arlington, which is home to another new \$10 million energy plant. The plant at Columbia Ridge Landfill generates 6 megawatts of electricity, which the company sends to Seattle City Light. That's enough electricity to power 5,000 homes.

Columbia Ridge Landfill is also a platform for wind power and a demonstration technology project designed to generate either renewable energy or clean fuels. The wind power is generated by 67 windmills as part of a PacifiCorp project with the capacity to generate 100 megawatts electricity. Future plans include 25 more windmills capable of producing another 50 megawatts.

The demonstration project at Columbia Ridge is a joint venture called S4 Energy Solutions, which unites Waste Management and InEnTec LCC. The purpose of the project is to develop the commercial viability of plasma gasification to convert waste into transportation fuels and renewable energy.

"These projects show Waste Management's increasing focus on green technologies that extract value from waste," said Paul Burns, director of landfill operations for Waste Management-Pacific Northwest.

"They also show our commitment to bringing renewable energy and innovative, sustainable technologies to the Pacific Northwest," Burns said. "There is a great deal of excitement among our community partners about this idea of turning waste streams into value streams."

Generating Green Energy from Landfill Gas

Waste decomposes naturally in a landfill, emitting methane, a greenhouse gas. At most landfills in the United States, the methane is burned off in flares. By capturing the methane and using it instead to produce power, Waste Management reduces methane emissions. This technology also creates an alternative power source, offsetting the use of fossil fuels.

The U.S. EPA has endorsed landfill gas as an environmentally friendly resource that reduces reliance on coal, oil and other fossil fuels. Like wind and solar power, landfill gas is a natural resource that can be harnessed to produce energy and offers distinct benefits and advantages compared to fossil fuels and other alternative energy sources.

ABOUT WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste Management is the leading provider of comprehensive waste management services in North America. Through its subsidiaries, the company provides collection, transfer, recycling and resource recovery, and disposal services. It is the largest recycler in North America and also a leading developer, operator and owner of waste-to-energy and landfill gas-to-energy facilities in the United States. The company's customers include residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal customers throughout North America. To learn more information about Waste Management visit www.wmnorthwest.com or www.wm.com

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