



# Waste Watcher

Spring 2003



Quarterly, electronic resource conservation newsletter for state agency resource coordinators

## Energy and Water Conservation Policy

DAS is considering some revisions to the energy and water conservation policy. They have listened to tenants and watched what's been working and what hasn't been working in buildings over the last two years. One possible change may be to set temperatures to 72° year-round. But tenant comfort could have a high price. DAS might have trouble meeting the 10% savings (see article to right). For this to work, they will need the help of all tenants in their buildings. Other power consumers will need more attention: turn off your computers, monitors, radios, coffee pots, foot warmers, copy machines, and anything else that plugs into an outlet when you will be away for more than an hour. Manage your blinds to keep out the cold and let in the sun if you sit by a window. All of this will save electricity and gas. DAS is monitoring the buildings' performance and is planning to try the change on a trial basis. So please help DAS keep you comfortable.

## Conservation Big Picture

What do resource conservation, state budget woes, and our environment have in common? They all help each other.

- Recycling reduces fees for garbage collection, since the costs are based on weight of containers. Less weight = more items recycled.
- Energy conservation reduces bills for heating fuels, such as natural gas and oil, and electricity. That can add up to millions of dollars a year. State agency conservation also puts that power back into the grid, which helps utilities from buying more contracts and keeps prices lower for everyone.
- Water conservation reduces bills for water and sewer charges for state agencies which average hundreds of thousands of dollars per large agency, and helps water supply for drinking, as well as salmon and other wildlife in our communities.



## Miscellaneous Resource Updates

- **Garten Paper Recycling Contract** – The Garten contract is in the final stages of renewal. There were some minor “housecleaning” contractual format and template changes, but nothing major that would affect agencies' programs. Watch for the updated contract to be on the State Procurement V.I.P. system by late March 2003.
- **Weather & El Nino** – according to NOAA, “the outlook for March - May 2003 calls for above normal temperatures over much of the Western U.S. and Alaska - due primarily to recent trends with some additional help from El Nino along the immediate pacific coast and in the Pacific Northwest. El Nino is forecast to weaken and become a negligible factor after about May - leaving only the influence of long term trends on the forecasts beyond April – June.”  
<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/Portland/afd?SLCPMD90D>
- Watch for DAS building energy reports for January and February 2003 in the April Energy Update.

## State Agencies Accountable for Energy Savings

On July 1, 2003, agencies will start to be measured on how they're meeting OAR 330-130-0080 [http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS\\_300/OAR\\_330/330\\_130.html](http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_300/OAR_330/330_130.html). This rule requires all facility-owning state agencies to reduce electric and heating fuel consumption in their buildings by 10% over the year 2000 usage. This means that each six-month period after July 2003 will be measured against the same period in 2000.

Over the last two years, agencies have been monitored by DAS and sent “report cards” of their progress, so there will be no surprises on July 2003. This gave agencies a chance to make any operational changes or increase tenant education in their buildings and try to meet the 10% prior to the rule taking affect.

Most agencies are doing a great job and should have no problem meeting 10%. In fact, many agencies are exceeding the goal. For the agencies that won't meet the goal, the Oregon Office of Energy (OOE) will adjust the data for weather or outside influences. They will further assess their situation and determine if it is impossible for that agency, due to security, 24/7 operation, or other factors. If none of these factors apply, OOE will require they draft an acceptable plan of how they plan to achieve the 10% energy savings and in what timeline. OOE will then re-visit the agency to ensure their plan was followed and savings were achieved.

The rule is not only a way to help the energy conservation efforts in Oregon, but also a way to save money for state agencies. If all state agencies saved 10% over the year 2000, there could be additional savings in the state budget.



## Water Conservation

Sometimes we get so focused on saving energy and recycling that we forget about another precious resource in Oregon: water.

In state agencies, water and sewer charges are another expensive part of running facilities. For DAS buildings alone, these charges amount to about \$225,000 a year. This budget item will only go up as many cities repair aging sewer systems, and the costs for those repairs are paid through increased rates. In the Cities of Salem and Portland, that increase will be 9% a year for the next four years.

Aside from the economic advantages of saving water in our buildings, there are countless environmental benefits as well. More water in our rivers means healthier streams, fish and wildlife, as well as increased drinking water for our communities. More water can mean easier access for fish as they spawn and travel in our rivers. More water can also mean improved energy production at our dams, which helps keep our electric rates down around the Pacific NW.

You can take many actions to help conserve water in state buildings. In fact, you are the eyes and ears for your building management. Report any water leaks you see in sinks, toilets, drinking fountains or irrigation lines. Also, report any leaks from heating and air conditioning equipment you may notice. Don't leave sinks running longer than you need to in bathrooms and break rooms.

These few simple actions could save money, help the environment, and keep the building in better condition.



## Tip of the Month

Every four to eight years when the State of Oregon proudly welcomes in a new governor, state agencies must buy and use new letterhead paper. Any paper with the former governor on the top can no longer be used in official business. Some of us have boxes and palettes of this old stuff. What can we do with it now? Here are a few ideas:

- ▣ Cut off the top listing the former governor's information, cut down into smaller sheets and use as scratch paper.
- ▣ Cut off the top and donate to local schools for art projects or writing practice.
- ▣ Send to the DAS Print Plant or internal agency print shop to cut down and turn into official scratch pads.
- ▣ Use the back side in a draft printer, if for internal use only and everyone knows not to use the front side.
- ▣ Encourage creativity among staff in your area to reuse, rather than recycle, and save the state money on buying new material.
- ▣ If all else fails and there is no way to reuse the paper in your work area, make sure it gets put into recycling and not the trash.
- ▣ Finally, establish a policy to review letterhead paper supply six months before the governor leaves office to lessen the overstock next time.

**CORRECTION:** the February Energy Updated listed the L&I Building at +16% energy savings. Further review and analysis has shown that was incorrect. The actual figure was -6%. Sorry for the confusion.

## State Agency Update

Here's an update of great projects in resource conservation and sustainability that state agencies are working on around Oregon.

The Oregon Department of Transportation has been busy working on many sustainability projects around the State. In addition to retrofitting street lights along highways, environmental clean-up, and countless other projects, ODOT recently completed a lighting retrofit project in the Materials Testing Lab in Salem. They received a \$12,000 rebate from PGE and the payback will happen within the next two years. The light fixtures were equipped with high efficiency ballasts and other components. They also installed motion/light sensing features to reduce electricity even further.

ODOT is also working with the Community Solutions Team to combine resources with other agencies to make state projects in small communities the easiest and of most benefit to the area. In addition, DMV works with a company who picks up all damaged or unusable micro film and recovers the silver. Great job on these and your many other important projects!

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