

OHA EnviroNews

Environmental and Occupational Safety Issues

November 2009

OHA Receives Grant From Ohio Environmental Education Fund

OHA was awarded a \$41,400 *Pharmaceutical Waste* grant by the Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF). The funded project will determine legal and practical barriers to implementing a pharmaceutical **take-back and redistribution**, and a **best disposal practice** program for hospitals. An operational manual will be prepared to assist health care facilities in developing such a pharmaceutical disposal program and educate health care workers and the community about the importance of proper pharmaceutical waste management. The Ohio Environmental Council is collaborating with the OHA on the project.

The OEEF received 43 proposals requesting more than \$1.4 million in funding. Ten proposals were ultimately approved by the Ohio EPA Director for funding, for a total of \$350,000.

OHA's grant will enable the following during 2010:

- Conduct a regional hospital meeting focusing especially on pharmaceutical waste management regulations, best practices and related issues;
- Offer a low-cost seminar to hospitals regarding pharmaceutical waste management;
- Develop a written resources summarizing current pharmaceutical waste regulations, identifying regulatory trends and describing best practices;
- Plan and conduct a community medication take back event as a pilot; and
- Based on the above, prepare a booklet on the topic of "planning and conducting a medication collection event" that any Ohio hospital could use.

Hospital Electronics Recycling Makes Major Impact

Last year OHA's Environmental Leadership Council (ELC) recommended that hospitals consider the use of TechDisposal (www.techdisposal.com) for recycling of their electronic equipment such as computers and monitors. The ELC's recommendation was based upon the responsible manner in which TechDisposal recycles equipment, erases hard drives and documents what it does.

TechDisposal continues to track what Ohio hospitals have recycled. Even this modest project has had a significant environmental benefit. The U.S. EPA has calculated the benefits by using EPEAT Program Electronic Environmental Benefit Calculator. The data was based upon recycling 991 computers (CPUs), 1,067 monitors and 1,341 miscellaneous equipment. The calculated energy conservation was equivalent to the electricity necessary to power 47 households for a year (and a reduction of approximately 40 metric tons of carbon equivalents being emitted into the environment). In addition, the solid waste avoided was equivalent to that which would be generated by 19 households over the course of a year (approximately 103,073 lbs of waste diverted from the landfill) and 35,393 lbs of hazardous waste avoided along with a savings of \$52,839.

TechDisposal to Offer Free Webinar

TechDisposal is offering a free webinar Nov. 20 at 3 p.m. The webinar will give information about electronic waste recycling as well as new products being using to help hospitals in their P2 efforts. The new products TechDisposal is now offering include:

- **"Green Report"** - This document provides a look at how many pounds of materials TechDisposal has processed for a hospital during a specified time period and breaks

down the weight by the components present. This tool allows you to track exactly how much good you are doing for the environment.

- **On-Site Technicians** - On-site specialists can ensure that no data will leave your location as well as relieve you of the hassles associated with packaging and palletizing your retired assets.
- **Employee Recycling Program** - Give hospital employees an easy and cost effective solution with the employee recycling program. TechDisposal will supply the TechBox of your choice and help you set up a drop off center.
- **Upcoming Certification - IATRDD** - The International Association of Technology Recycling and Data destruction, Inc., brings corporations, suppliers and consultants together to establish a benchmark for secure data destruction and technology recycling processes.

Some lucky participant in this Webinar will win a \$50.00 American Express Gift Card to help with your holiday shopping. Not only will you have a chance to win you will learn all the new things TechDisposal is doing to help you be more Green.

TechDisposal is also working to help hospitals dispose of medical equipment waste. If you are interested in participating in the webinar please RSVP by Nov. 13 to Susan Zabo at susan.z@ohanet.org or 614.738.2186.

Farmers Market a Hit at Cleveland Clinic

In its second year, the Cleveland Clinic weekly farmers market has proven to be a hit with a mix of hospital staff, patients, visitors and the surrounding community.

A joint venture between the Cleveland Clinic and Cleveland's North Union Farmers Market, the market began last year as an effort to offer healthy, local food options to the surrounding neighborhood and employees in an environmentally friendly way. It averages more than 2,000 visitors per week.

This year's season was increased from 13 weeks to 18 weeks. Visitors were able to sample produce, meats, dairy, eggs, bread, flowers and other foods from more than 35 different local producers and farmers, an increase from the 25 that participated last year.

Many attendees expressed an interest in enjoying a healthy meal while shopping at the market, so organizers incorporated new prepared food options for visitors this year. The community atmosphere of the market is also enhanced with music from a local steel drum band, as well as cooking demonstrations, free food samples and recipes for items in the peak of their season. The clinic also provided health information and free health screenings for all visitors.

Recycle Your Old Ceiling Tile

In 1999, Armstrong Ceilings introduced the industry's first ceiling recycling program. To date, Armstrong has recycled over 80 million square feet of old ceiling material. That's more than 35,000 tons of construction waste that's been diverted from landfills. So far this year in the state of Ohio, Armstrong Ceilings has recycled over 500,000 square feet old ceiling tile.

Consider the savings of only one ton of material:

- 456kg CO2 equivalent of greenhouse gas emitted, the global impact of not driving a car 3,675 miles
- 11 tons of virgin raw materials, which saves 1,892 gallons of potable water
- 1,390 kWh electricity, the monthly energy to power a home for 1.4 months

For more information on recycling your ceiling tiles contact Dean Printy, Interior Supply, Inc, Regional Reclamation Coordinator and Dryvit Sales at dprinty@interiorsupplyinc.com or 419.466.3971.

EPA Tightens Air Emissions for Hospitals, Medical and Infectious Waste Incinerators

The EPA is setting new limits that will affect most existing hospitals, medical and infectious waste incinerators. The final action will reduce about 390,000 pounds of several pollutants each year including acid gases, nitrogen oxides, and metals such as lead, cadmium and mercury. The EPA is also finalizing additional testing, monitoring and inspections requirements. The final action revises the September 1997 new source performance standards and emissions guidelines for these incinerators and responds to the court remand and regulations. It also satisfies the Clean Air Act requirement to conduct a review of the standards every five years. For more information visit www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/t1sfs.html. (Practice Greenhealth list serve)

Federal Government to Require Polluters Report Greenhouse Gas Emissions

About 10,000 facilities nationwide will have to start telling the federal government how much greenhouse gas they emit each year.

The facilities that emit the greatest amount of heat-trapping gases linked to climate change, which account for about 85 percent of the country's greenhouse gas emissions, will have to submit data starting in 2010.

According to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, this is a major step forward in efforts to address the greenhouse gases polluting the skies. It will give the American public, and the industry itself, important knowledge to use in determining how to best reduce those emissions.

The Ohio EPA is still working to determine how many Ohio facilities will be subject to the new requirements. Efforts to limit the emissions would have a major impact on Ohio, which is among the heaviest producers of greenhouse gases. Facilities in the state produced 287 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2000, according to the Ohio Environmental Council. (Gongwer News)

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