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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cities, Businesses, and Schools Honored for Recycling Efforts

Anoka County municipalities recycled more than 31,888 tons of materials in 2010, exceeding their goal by 9.5 percent.

Of the county's 21 municipalities, 15 met or exceeded their 2010 recycling goals: Andover, Bethel, Blaine, Centerville, Circle Pines, Columbia Heights, Columbus, Coon Rapids, Ham Lake, Hilltop, Lexington, Lino Lakes, Nowthen, Ramsey, and Spring Lake Park. Their achievements were recognized recently by the Anoka County Solid Waste Abatement Advisory Team, which advises the Anoka County board on issues related to recycling and solid waste management.

"There has been a sea change in the way people think about recycling," said Anoka County Commissioner Jim Kordiak, who chairs the county's Waste Management and Energy Committee. "In the past, people didn't think twice about throwing bottles or cans in the garbage. Now, because of increased awareness and because municipal recycling programs have made it easier and more convenient, recycling is second nature in most households."

The City of Andover received special recognition for having the most prolific municipal recycling program in Anoka County. Andover has consistently met its recycling goals every year since 1988. In 2010, Andover residents recycled more than 3,580 tons of materials and collected more than 82 tons of problem materials for proper management. The city's recycling rate of more

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Cities, Businesses, and Schools Honored for Recycling Efforts – Add 1

than 230 pounds per person per year for all materials is the highest of any Anoka County municipality. Andover promotes recycling through the city newsletter and website, cable TV, ads in the local newspaper and movie theatre, and flyers. A drop-off recycling center is open during daylight hours seven days a week. The city also provided recycling of plastic bottles, cardboard, and tennis shoes at the annual Andover Family Fun Fest.

The City of Columbia Heights was honored for having the most improved recycling program, increasing recycling amounts from 153 pounds per person in 2009 to 189 pounds per person in 2010. “In 2010, the city allowed recyclables to be picked up in the alley rather than at the curb,” Kordiak said. “They also moved from 18-gallon recycling boxes to 60-gallon co-mingled rolling carts. By making it easier and more convenient for residents, Columbia Heights boosted its recycling total by 328 tons!”

Cummins Power Generation (CPG), Fridley, was recognized for its efforts to recycle metal, cardboard, pallets, cans and bottles, fluorescent bulbs, and electronics. CPG shreds cardboard onsite for reuse as packing material and works with vendors to reuse totes, plastic drums, wooden and metal skids, and wire spools. The company also introduced a powder coat painting process that has cut the amount of paint and solvent waste by 70 percent.

Two recycling initiatives by local school districts also were commended. Ryan Parsons, a paraprofessional at Andover High School, was frustrated at the amount of perfectly good food being thrown away each day in the school’s cafeteria. In response, he founded Project Plenty to save and repackage uneaten food and distribute it to families in need. Approximately 400-550 pounds of food is collected and distributed each week. “This program supplies nourishing food to people in need,” Kordiak said. “There is no red tape keeping families from getting the food they need, especially when it would otherwise have been thrown away.”

Since 2002, Independent School District 15 in St. Francis has implemented a food-to-hogs food waste recovery program where food scraps and uneaten food are collected and delivered to an area hog farm. All food waste is heated to kill potentially harmful bacteria before it is fed to the

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hogs. Since 2002, more than 1.3 million pounds of food waste has been recycled. “This program is really a win-win for everyone,” Kordiak said. “The food-to-hogs program reduces odor and pest problems for the school district and also teaches students that food waste is a resource.”

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CUTLINES



Photo #1 City of Andover

The City of Andover was recognized for having the most prolific municipal recycling program in Anoka County. From left: Anoka County Commissioner Carol LeDoux; Andover staffers Chris Olson, Cindy DeRuyter, Erick Sohr, and Dana Peitso; and Andover Mayor Mike Gamache.



Photo #2 Columbia Heights

The City of Columbia Heights was honored recently for having the most improved recycling program in Anoka County. From left: Kevin Hansen and Jesse Davies from the City of Columbia Heights; Dale Schuetz, Columbia Heights/Fridley Kiwanis; and Anoka County Commissioner Jim Kordiak.

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Photo #3 Cummins Power Generation

Cummins Power Generation was recognized recently for its recycling efforts. From left: Tom Gerrety, Stephanie Boysen, and Anita Costello with Cummins; and Anoka County Commissioner Jim Kordiak.



Photo #4 Project Plenty

Anoka County Commissioner Carol LeDoux congratulates Ryan Parsons, representing Project Plenty, for efforts to save and distribute uneaten cafeteria food at Andover High School.

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Photo #5 St. Francis School

Independent School District 15 in St. Francis was recognized for a program that collects food scraps for a local hog farm. From left: ISD 15 representatives Mae Hawkins, Sharon Waits, and Wendy Klube; and Anoka County Commissioner Jim Kordiak.

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