NMRC
NEW MEXICO RECYCLING COALITION
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NM Recycling and Solid Waste Awards Announced

The New Mexico Recycling Coalition (NMRC at www.recyclenewmexico.com) and the Solid Waste Association of North America NM Roadrunner Chapter (NMSWANA at http://www.nmswana.com) are pleased to announce the 2014 NM Recycling and Solid Waste Awards winners. Since 2002 NMRC has recognized individuals, businesses and communities that work to reduce waste and support recycling and composting in New Mexico. NMSWANA has recently launched their awards program. 2014 Award Winners include:

- **Lawrence Grijalva, Southwest Solid Waste Authority,** Recycling/Composting Facility Employee of the Year
- **Southwest Solid Waste Authority,** Recycling/Composting Facility of the Year
- **NASA Johnson Space Center White Stands Test Facility,** Most Innovative Recycling/Composting Project of the Year
- **Anna Mayberry, Puesta del Sol Elementary, Rio Rancho,** Recycler of the Year
- **Steven Ray, Pueblo of Laguna,** Solid Waste Facility Employee of the Year
- **East Mountain Transfer Station, Bernalillo County Solid Waste Department,** Solid Waste Facility of the Year
- **Estancia Valley Solid Waste Authority, Septage Dewatering Facility** Most Innovative Solid Waste Facility of the Year
- **Joe King, Waste Connections,** The Terence L. Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award for the NM Roadrunner Chapter of SWANA

The Awards Ceremony will take place during the jointly hosted New Mexico Recycling and Solid Waste Conference: Integrating Solutions at the Hotel Albuquerque (800 Rio Grande Blvd) in Albuquerque on Tuesday, September 23rd from 4:30-5:30 pm.

A few highlights of awardees include:
Anna Mayberry, selected as Recycler of the Year, is an Educational Assistant at Puesta del Sol Elementary in the Rio Rancho School District and has been instrumental in the school's cafeteria pilot food waste recovery program. With the pilot's success, the program will be replicated in other Rio Rancho School District elementary schools. Ms. Mayberry organized all the educational assistants who work in the cafeteria to train students at each grade level to separate out food waste at each of the six lunch periods. With more schools coming on to the program, the landfill diversion will be massive – Rio Rancho Public Schools is the City's single largest contributor of food discards to the local landfill for the days it is in session. Mayberry partnered with a local non-profit, Galloping Grace Youth Ranch, to arrange for the pick up of food discards every school day, which were then either composted or fed to chickens. In a four-month period, more than 10,000 pounds of cafeteria food waste was diverted from the local landfill. Most of this material was composted at the ranch, but a portion of the scraps were fed to chickens; once the chickens are mature enough to lay eggs, the eggs will be donated to a local food pantry.

The East Mountain Transfer Station, run by Bernalillo County, is unique to New Mexico. Design elements, such as having a walking floor conveyor at floor level, remove some of the hazards posed by a collection pit making it safer and more user-friendly. This system reduced the number of hauls made over the highway to the landfill by 75%. The facility, which serves 100,000 customers a year, has not had any violations in the past 3 years, has had zero lost time accidents in the past 10 years and conducts weekly and monthly risk management trainings. The facility also put in a new recycling center a year ago that includes: A three sided building, a horizontal baler with a pit conveyor system and 30-yard low-to-the-ground bins for easy access. Since the new recycling center has been in use, Bernalillo County has been able to cut back its carbon footprint and save on labor hours. This new recycling center has brought in 50% more recycled materials in the one year of operation, saving county tax payers roughly 5,000 gallons of fuel and reducing the number of recycling hauls made over the highway to recycling plants by 100% since going to a baler system.

The National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) Johnson Space Center White Sands Test Facility (WSTF) is a pre-eminent resource for testing and evaluating potentially hazardous materials, space flight components and rocket propulsion systems. Due to the decommissioning of the Space Shuttle, WSTF initiated a project to disposition the Space Shuttle fuel cell plates as excess material. The Project Team determined the Space Shuttle fuel cell plates contained economically significant amounts of precious metals to include gold, platinum and palladium, but some of them also contained asbestos, which needed to be handled in an environmentally safe manner and in compliance with regulatory requirements. The plates were recycled and precious metal sales generated $5.5 million for recycling and reuse projects at the Test Facility. To allocate the generated funds, the WSTF Sustainability Initiative Team established a procedure for soliciting “green” project proposals from site employees, of which 43 were submitted. To date, twenty-seven projects have been funded that focus on recycling, energy, water, resource conservation, sustainable acquisition, hazardous material and hazardous waste reduction. Additional recycling activities that were made possible with this funding include transformer recycling and disposal, material repurposing, and recycling station upgrades. WSTF also has an exemplary recycling program that includes diversion of single stream materials, electronics, construction & demolition materials, metals, and yard waste.

The Estancia Valley Solid Waste Authority Septage Dewatering Facility was constructed in the summer of 2011 with initial operations in 2012. Rather than managing the challenges of septage through a wastewater treatment plant or discharging on a field, Estancia Valley developed a facility that allows the solids and inorganics to be filtered from the liquids for separate processing. This processing takes place in a composite lined lagoon filled with wood chips, which act as a bio-filter to remove the solids. An underdrain under the mulch at the bottom of the lagoon serves to allow the filtered liquids to be removed. The recovered liquids are used to enhance the composting. When the wood chips become saturated with solids, they are removed for composting, as well. The facility has provided a cost effective alternative to hauling the septage waste across the mountains to a wastewater treatment plant. In addition, this innovative alternative has provided an environmentally-sound and controlled alternative to discharging and disking the septage directly into the soil, controlling the negative impact of the readily decomposable solids that represent a portion of the septage recovered. In fact, regional septage collectors were so receptive and supportive of using this facility, the Authority plans to add a second dewatering lagoon to significantly increase the facility capacity.

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NMRC is a member-supported non-profit organization with the mission of leading New Mexico to value waste as a resource. NMSANA is also a member-supported nonprofit organization with the mission to improve solid waste management practices in the Land of Enchantment by providing, training, technical support and professional assistance to advocate the advancement of solid waste professionals as we strive to improve waste management practices.

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