

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORT

January 17, 2008

Solid Waste, Recycling

- SCORE Report preparation for 2007
- Burn Barrel Grant
 - Developing educational materials
 - Coloring book grades K-3
 - Activity book grades 4-6
 - Climb Theater presentations at 7 schools
 - Bernie the Burn Barrel
 - Burn barrel buy-back program
- Multi-County Solid Waste meeting
 - Rice County wants to explore waste-to-energy
 - Township zoning issues around landfills
- E-Waste programs
- State Solid Waste Policy Report
- Monopoly charges against Waste Management

Ponderosa Landfill

- 2007 Annual Report being prepared
- Biofilter rebuilt for landfill gas
- Re-Permitting Process
 - Submitted to MPCA mid-November
 - Gas management plan
 - Stormwater plans
 - Cell construction in 2008
 - Leachate Recirculation component
 - MPCA guidelines
 - Landfill gas utilization feasibility study

Hazardous Waste

- Final materials loadout for 2007
 - 3255 participants
 - 124 latex drums
 - More old waste
- Preparing for training for the 2008 Season
- Pharmaceutical wastes

Miscellaneous

- Environmental Health Specialist position
- Updates of Land Use Ordinances
- Electronic Permitting software
 - Request for Information (RFI) returned from 12 companies
 - Preparing Request for Proposal (RFP)

Information Articles

- Free Press "Waste Management Settles Monopoly Charges"
- Star Tribune "Bottles, Bottles Everywhere"
- Waste News "Taking Out the Trash"
- Public Works Magazine "Gas Attack"
- Free Press "China: Bag It"
- Star Tribune "Electronics Show Goes for Green"

Waste News "Analog's Epilogue"
Star Tribune "Public Has Need to be Freed of Tech Trash"
Free Press "E-Waste Economics"
Minnesota Counties "It's Eleven O'clock. Do You Know Where Those
Septic Systems Discharge?"
Duluth News Tribune "Does the Federal Government Need to do More to
Assure Clean Water?"
Star Tribune "Shoreline Buffers? NYMBY is the Reply"
Star Tribune "Murky Lakes: What to Do"
Star Tribune "From Pond Scum to Your Tank"
Time Magazine "It's Inconvenient Being Green"
Time Magazine "Diapers Go Green"
Free Press "Building Green"
Time Magazine "Need to weed your roof?"
Star Tribune "A 'Green' Bridge Teardown"
Star Tribune "I-35 Bridge Remnants Will Be Recycled"
Star Tribune "U.S. Getting Greener from Ground Up, but Roadblocks
Remain at the Top"
Duluth News Tribune "Wasteland Crops"
Star Tribune "Past, Present and Future Collide in Rice County
Debate"
Star Tribune "Why Hotter is Harmful"
Waste News "Congress to Address Climate in 2008"
Star Tribune "Global Warming Info Just a Click Away"
Star Tribune "U.N.: 2012 is Deadline for Action"
Star Tribune "Plants and Animals Already Falling Victim to Global
Warming"
Star Tribune "China Blames West's Lavish Lifestyle for Global
Warming"
Time Magazine "Change of Climate"
Time Magazine "Cutting a Climate Deal"
Star Tribune "The Arctic is Screaming"
Free Press "Climate Forecast Bleak Ahead of Pivotal Meeting"
Star Tribune "State's Peat Bogs 'Wild Card' in Global Warming"
Star Tribune "Mercury Vapors Pose Worst Threat"
Star Tribune "Minnesota Joins Lawsuit Against EPA Rule Change"

Waste Management settles monopoly charges

MANKATO — Waste Management monopolized commercial waste hauling business in the Mankato area by using complex contracts that made it difficult for customers to cancel, according to state officials.

Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson announced Monday that her office had reached a settlement with Waste Management to settle an

investigation into the waste hauler's business practices in Blue Earth, Le Sueur and Nicollet counties.

No one from Waste Management could be immediately reached for comment.

"Our investigation revealed that Waste Management's contract terms, coupled with an extremely high market share, were harming competition in the commercial waste haul-

ing market in Mankato," Swanson said in a press release. "Commercial customers, many of them small businesses, were being squeezed."

Swanson said Waste Management's contracts with commercial customers (including restaurants, offices, retail, and other businesses) contained unfair terms that made it extremely difficult for customers to can-

cel, even at the end of a contract term.

For example, Waste Management required customers to send a cancellation notice to the company by certified mail, and the notice had to arrive between 90 and 180 days before the expiration of an initial three-year contract term. If the notice was not received within this

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MONOPOLY: Contracts to change

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window, the contract would automatically renew for an additional term.

The investigation found that these and other contract terms helped Waste Management maintain its monopoly power and created an obstacle for other waste haulers trying to enter or expand in the Mankato area.

Under the settlement, Waste Management has agreed to make substantial changes to its contracts with commercial customers in the three counties, where the hauler has a market share of 80-90 percent.

Specifically, the company agreed to: Change the initial length of its commercial contracts from three years to two years; provide a written renewal notice to commercial customers at least 90 days before the renewal date to inform them that their contracts will automatically renew if they do not cancel before a specified date; allow commercial customers to send their cancellation notice by fax or certified mail; and provide a prominent notice to customers that the contract will automatically renew unless the customer cancels in a timely manner.

Waste Management will send a notice to each of its current commercial customers within the next 60 days, offering them the option to enter into a new contract with the above terms.

If customers have questions, they can contact the Minnesota Attorney General's Office at 1-800-657-3787.