

Community Connections

Fall 2015

News from the Atascocita Recycling and Disposal Facility

Manager's report



Gordon Spradley
District Manager

I'm proud to report that our wildlife habitat work here has just enabled us to once again earn program certification by the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC). Announced at the organization's annual Conservation Conference in Baltimore on November 12, this new certification means that our project has been continuously recognized by WHC since our initial certification in 2010.

As you may know, the newest part of that effort has been our collaboration with the Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition

on The Nature Preserve at Garner's Bayou (see *Habitat news*, below), and we remain enthusiastic about this program and its ability to enhance environmental quality and garner public participation.

In terms of our operations, we've recently completed a new disposal cell in the southeastern part of our property, and we'll begin placing it into active service very soon. In addition, we have also just completed a routine expansion of our landfill gas collection system, adding 15 new wells to gather the gas. For years now we have made use of landfill gas to produce electricity at our landfill's on-site gas-to-energy plant; by making beneficial use of waste, this effort conserves natural resources and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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Habitat news

Habitat enhancement and related projects at the Atascocita facility were recognized once again last month by the Wildlife Habitat Council, which renewed our program's Wildlife at WorkSM certification. But, thanks to changes being made by the international organization, as of January 1 our facility will be designated as a Conservation Certification program.

That's because WHC is in the process of enhancing its certification programs, unifying *Corporate Lands for Learning* and *Wildlife at Work* certifications into one program—Conservation Certification. According to WHC President Margaret O'Gorman, "WHC's Conservation Certification is built on best practices of global recognition programs, reflects contemporary conservation efforts, and aligns our collective works with the future of biodiversity conservation across the globe." The new Conservation Certification will remain in effect until 2017.

During the most recent certification period, in addition to maintaining its existing 10-acre habitat area, Waste

Management expanded its efforts by launching a collaboration with the Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition to develop The Nature Preserve at Garner's Bayou. This 43-acre section of our property will serve as a natural outdoor space for employees and the community, and is planned to include features such as a pond and wetlands, hiking trails, a natural playground and fitness stations.

Waste Management has contracted with S&S Trail Services (the only full-time trail building company in Texas) in helping to develop the site, but also got a big helping hand recently from the Student Conservation Association. The group sent a team of high school students who spent a full week in August clearing trails at the Preserve.

According to Waste Management's Sherrell Cordas, "we're really excited to see this ambitious project moving along. The amount of work the SCA team accomplished in a short time was inspiring—and it was during the hottest part of the summer!"

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Atascocita Recycling and Disposal Facility

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Please call us any time to arrange for a landfill tour, or if you have any questions about our operations.

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Habitat news, *cont'd from front*



In mid-August, a team of high school students from the Student Conservation Association spent a full week clearing trails at the Preserve.



Atascocita Recycling & Disposal

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The holidays are coming!

Don't forget to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle this Christmas!



- Recycle your Christmas Tree here any time during operating hours, from Monday, December 28 through Monday, January 11.
- Learn more about recycling at recycleoftenrecycleright.com.



Manager's report, *cont'd from front*

Finally, we have just completed our seasonal re-seeding of the grassy areas around our site. You might not realize it, but in addition to our other activities here, we are also practically grass farmers. A healthy grass covering is really important to our operations, as it helps to stabilize the landfill structure and reduce runoff. We also adjust our plantings according to the season, and this time of year

it's typically winter rye; we'll be fertilizing it soon—weather permitting—to help make sure it takes hold before the winter.

Speaking of winter's pending arrival, as 2015 races to a close all of us here wish you and your family the warmest, safest and most peaceful of holiday seasons!



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