



# How to Start a Recycling Program

Suzanne Smith Hirrel  
ARC Board Member

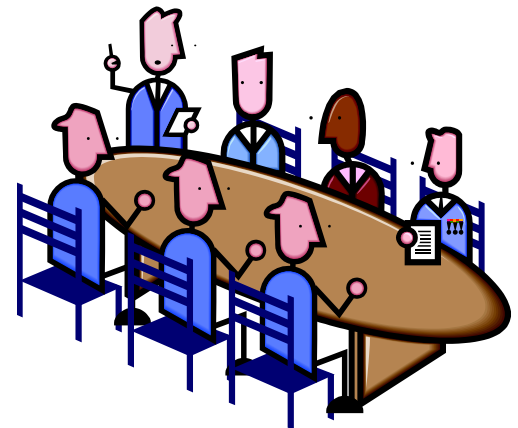
RETIRED

Associate Professor/Extension Specialist –  
Environmental Management



# Find Some Friends!

- Get a commitment from administration
  - Recycling is not FREE = funding and/or a budget must be considered
- Establish a Committee or Green Team or Task Force
  - Remember diversity
  - Students, teachers, custodians,
  - Administration





# Get to Know Your Trash

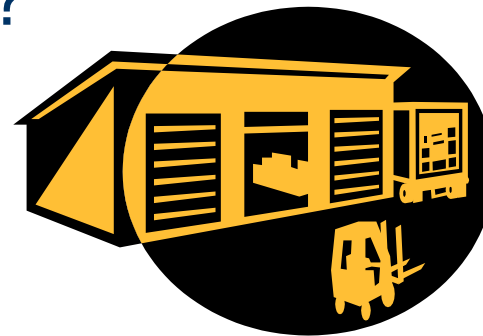
- Review current situation
  - Who hauls the trash?
  - How often?
  - Current costs?
  - Where does it go?
  - Any recycling now?
- Examine what's in the dumpster
- Conduct a Waste Audit
  - What materials are being generated?





# Identify a Home for Recyclables

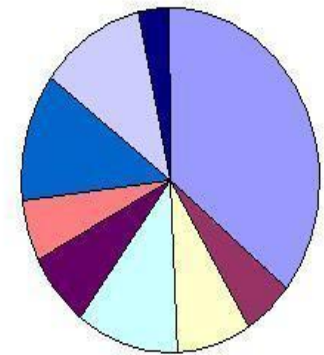
- What are the Markets?
- Will someone pick up recyclables?
  - City, County or SWD
  - Private hauler
- Do you need to deliver?
- What will it cost?
- Minimum amounts?





# Start with the Biggest & Easiest

- Look at the Waste Audit
- What is there the most of?
- What are the local options or market(s)?
- Enough material?
- Easy to collect
- List potential recyclables
- Keep it simple – 1 – 4 items  
at first



# Waste Audit Results

50%

500 lbs

Material	Percent	Daily	Weekly
White Paper	35%	70#	350#
Cardboard (OCC)	15%	30#	150#
Food Waste	10%	20#	100#
Newspaper	7%	14#	70#
Plastic bottles	10%	20#	100#
Aluminum cans	3%	6#	30#
Other	20%	20#	200#
Total	100%	200#	1000#



# Collection Bins

- Where do place them? - Make it convenient
- How many are needed?
- How many to buy? Cost?
- City / Solid Waste District
- Make your own
- Don't forget signage!
- Pair recycling & trash bins





Near copiers/printers



Public areas



Break rooms/Stair ways



Classroom





Outside

Inside



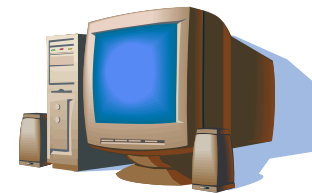
**Storage**



# Items Not Generated Daily – But Easy to Recycle



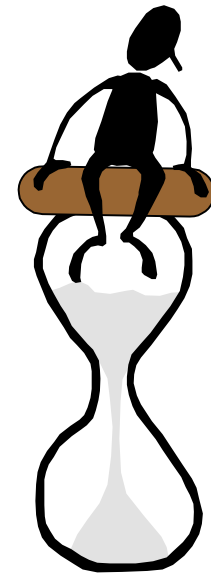
- TerraCycle – [www.terracycle.com](http://www.terracycle.com)
- Printer/toner cartridges
- Rechargeable batteries (Call2Recycle)
- Cell phones
- Electronics
- Landscaping/organics





# Patience

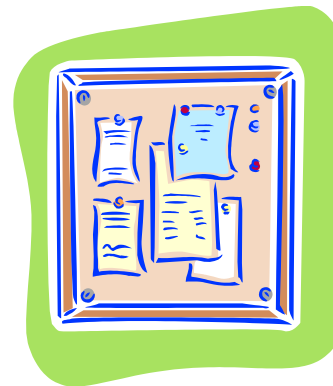
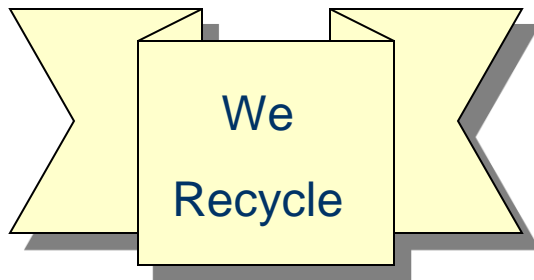
- Getting a program set up takes time
- Start small and grow the program
- Don't rush – think things out
- Be flexible





# Tell Everyone

- Signs
- Flyers
- Kick off event
- Bulletin boards
- Web Page
- Morning announcements





# Monitor and Maintain

- Educate, Educate, Educate
- Timely reminders and encouragement
- When contaminants show up in bins – use as a teachable moment
- An on-going process





# Big Picture

Students are learning about responsibility and the effect our behavior has on the environment.



# Share Your Successes

- Newsletters
- E-mail
- Apply for ARC Awards
- Banners



Recycler of the  
Year Awards





## Where to Go for More Info & Help

- Regional Solid Waste Management Districts
- ADEQ – Recycling Division 501-682-0822
- Suzanne Hirrel – [suzannehirrel@gmail.com](mailto:suzannehirrel@gmail.com),  
501-680-7061



**Arkansas recycled 45.5% of its waste  
in 2017**

**Our goal is 45%**

**The recycling rate in the US is 34.6%  
(US EPA 2014)**

**Do your part to help AR meet our  
recycling goals**



# Questions?

