

DATE: January 11, 2012
FROM: Jackie Ostashek, Manager, Communications and Strategic Planning
RE: Parkland County Recycling Initiative Final Report
Project timelines: May to September 30, 2011

Project Overview

In 2011, Council requested that we “step up our communications and promotion efforts to encourage Parkland County residents to adopt an even greater acceptance and participation in their recycling efforts.” Communications and Solid Waste Services worked together to develop the “Blue is the New Green” recycling campaign with the following goal:

Parkland County residents will increase their recycling efforts thereby increasing waste diversion to 25%*

*According to the Integrated Waste Management Plan, waste diversion measured at the Parkland County Transfer Station and Recycle Centre in 2008 was 10%. This number jumped to 19% in 2009, and increased again to 21% in 2010.

Prior to launching the campaign, Parkland County conducted a survey of residents to gain an understanding of attitudes towards recycling. Survey invitation cards were sent out via unaddressed ad mail to Parkland County residents and inviting them to participate in an online survey on our website. Those who participated were invited to enter a draw for one of five \$50 gas cards. The survey was launched in mid-April and concluded May 15th. Response to the survey was exceptional, with 426 residents completing the online survey.

The campaign itself was launched in May 2011, as follows:

- Monthly ads on County page in Reporter/Examiner and in Community Voice and Devon Dispatch
- Brochures and fridge magnets with information on how, where, and why to recycle
- *Parkland Communicator* Newsletter ads and articles
- Updated information on website and promotion through Facebook and Twitter
- Telephone system on-hold message
- Promotional sample package partnership with Glad Canada that included a \$3.00 off purchase coupon and two sample blue bags (distributed with brochure and fridge magnet with the June Communicator). Sample packages were also available at the transfer stations, the County Public Services Building and as part of an information display at County Centre during the month of June.

A special campaign budget of \$12,250 was approved by Council and utilized for this campaign.

Measurement of Outcomes:

Administration recommended a target of 25% for waste diversion at the Parkland County Transfer Station and Recycle Centre, which is the only facility that has weigh scales and therefore the only location capable of providing quantitative data through comparison of waste diversion. Further data was obtained by including questions regarding recycling and the campaign itself as part of the Resident Satisfaction Survey that took place in Fall 2011.

Campaign Results:

Waste Diversion at Parkland County Transfer Station and Recycle Centre:

May 2010	23%	August 2010	24%
May 2011	28%	August 2011	30%
June 2010	23%	September 2010	19%
June 2011	28%	September 2011	26%
July 2010	21%	Average diversion	
July 2011	29%		
		2010:	22%
		2011:	28.2%

Based on the foregoing, there was an increase in waste diversion of 6.2% for the five-month time period, with a total percentage of 28.2%, surpassing the target of 25%.

Interesting are the user visits to the PCTS for the same time period, particularly in June and July, when user visits decreased, but there were increases in the waste diverted:

May 2010	7096	August 2010	6900
May 2011	8621	August 2011	7546
June 2010	7617	September 2010	6742
June 2011	7521	September 2011	7291
July 2010	7883		
July 2011	7435		

Resident Satisfaction Survey Results:

Banister Research and Consulting conducted a survey of 400 residents in October 2011. Of those surveyed, 41% recalled the Blue is the New Green recycling campaign, and 71% recalled receiving the recycling sample package with the June *Communicator*. 62% of respondents indicated they always recycled, and 28% indicated that the campaign influenced them to recycle more. This is further evidenced with the post-campaign waste diversion statistics to the end of the year:

October 2010	23%	December 2010	11%
October 2011	31%	December 2011	20%
November 2010	25%	Average diversion	
November 2011	30%		
		2010:	19.6%
		2011:	27%

Summary:

During the Blue is the New Green Recycling Campaign period of May to September 2011, Parkland County surpassed its goal of 25% by reaching 28.2% of waste diversion at the Parkland County Transfer Station and Recycle Centre. Increases in waste diversion continued through to the end of 2011 by 7.4%, with an overall percentage of waste diversion from May to December 2011 of 27.6%, compared to 20.8% in 2010.

Based on the data from the Parkland County Transfer Station and Recycle Centre combined with the results of the Banister Research and Consulting survey, it appears that the targeted recycling campaign was very successful in encouraging Parkland County residents to participate more actively in recycling initiatives.