

**September 2008**

## **SHWEC Co-Director Jack Annis Retires**

*Cathleen Condon*



**Jack Annis (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) with SHWEC staff and colleagues**

Recognized for the expertise he brought to Wisconsin business and industry through his role as Industrial Education Specialist, SHWEC co-director, Jack Annis, has retired.

Annis joined SHWEC in 1992 after a career in active duty service with the United States Air Force. In his sixteen years with SHWEC, he was based in Milwaukee and Green Bay prior to nine years in Stevens Point.

A significant contribution Annis made was Environmental Management Planning, which enabled businesses and industry to implement Environmental Management Systems (EMS). He helped design a web-based tool for small businesses to develop a draft EMS internally without the expense of hiring consulting services.

Annis' work with the Wisconsin Fabricare Institute, offering the Wisconsin Dry Cleaner Environmental and Professional Certification Program, is a model of national significance for helping the industry reduce its emissions of pollutants.

Over 700 businesses were visited by Annis as he helped them become more efficient through elimination or reduction of waste and reduced exposure to regulations through reduction in hazardous waste.

At a farewell gathering with SHWEC staff, Annis was presented with a GPS navigation system to guide him as he and his wife, Marilyn, enjoy touring the country during his retirement.

## **Wisconsin Healthcare Facilities Go Green**

*Steve Brachman*

As significant users of materials, energy, water and other resources, healthcare facilities impact the environment as well as their patients, staff and neighbors. When a healthcare facility chooses to operate sustainably, it not only improves environmental health but can also cut costs, comply with regulations, meet accreditation criteria, improve patient outcomes, improve staff safety and morale, retain staff, attract patients and improve public relations.

Many Wisconsin healthcare facilities are taking bold steps to achieve the above benefits. Assisted by an EPA grant administered by SHWEC, Wisconsin healthcare facilities have placed students in summer internships, reduced pharmaceutical waste, performed waste assessments and formed a new organization to promote sustainability in healthcare.

This past summer, SHWEC hired four student interns to examine healthcare waste streams for pollution prevention opportunities. Marshfield Clinic, Tomah Memorial Hospital, Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital, and Mercy Health System (Janesville) each hosted an intern (see text box below).

SHWEC and the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program teamed up in the fall of 2007 to present a Pharmaceutical Waste webcast, aimed at helping Wisconsin healthcare facilities manage and reduce their discarded medications.

As a result of this workshop, over 80 participants from around the US learned more about pharmaceutical waste pollution prevention and compliance issues.

SHWEC staff provided waste assessments at two Wisconsin healthcare facilities and is available to do more audits through 2009. They offer an independent opinion of a facility is managing its wastes and recommend ways to reduce the amount and toxicity of those wastes.

In December 2007, healthcare facilities, technical assistance providers, vendors, DNR and SHWEC formed "Wisconsin Healthcare for a Healthy Environment" (WH2E) so that all parties who influence healthcare's impact on Wisconsin's environment might work together to share ideas and overcome barriers. A steering committee has been formed to coordinate quarterly meeting agendas, develop long range educational goals, and provide recommendations regarding organizational structure.

WH2E's members meet quarterly. At the group's September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting in Green Bay, Wisconsin DNR will roll out its Healthcare Hazardous Waste compliance initiative and attendees can find out how St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center (Green Bay) has become a national leader in environmental stewardship.

To join WH2E or to register for the September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, send an email to [wi-h2e@uwm.edu](mailto:wi-h2e@uwm.edu) stating your name, affiliation and interest in the group. To find out more about the healthcare pollution prevention student internships and waste assessments, to view the pharmaceutical waste webcast, or to find out what WH2E is up to, go to <http://www4.uwm.edu/shwec/wh2e/index.cfm>. To find out more about sustainability in healthcare in general, visit Practice GreenHealth's website <http://www.practicegreenhealth.org>.

## **EPA Cites Wisconsin Counties for Fine Particle Air Pollution**

*David S. Liebl*

In a letter to Governor Jim Doyle on Tuesday, EPA Region 5 Administrator Lynn Buhl, proposed six Wisconsin counties (Brown, Columbia, Dane, Milwaukee, Racine and Waukesha) be designated as non-attainment areas under new and more stringent federal fine particle standards put in place in September 2006.

An EPA designated non-attainment area either does not meet this new standard, or has been determined to contribute to air quality in a nearby area that does not meet the air quality standard for fine particle pollution. EPA is expected to make a final decision on the designations by December 18, 2008.

Fine particles are a complex mixture of extremely small particles with a diameter less than 2.5 microns - about 1/30th the diameter of a human hair. Contributors to fine particle pollution include trucks, passenger cars, off-road equipment, electric power generation, wood combustion and agricultural sources.

SHWEC placed four students in hospitals this summer as part of Wisconsin's initial effort to implement a pollution prevention student internship program.

Modeled after our surrounding Midwestern states, students were trained in the basics of pollution prevention and waste reduction, with an eye on generating cost savings and improving environmental compliance in the facilities.

The twelve week experience generated impressive results if all of the p2 opportunities are implemented including:

- Projected cost savings of over \$30,000
- Nearly 16 tons in waste reduced
- Potential air emission reductions of more than 5,700 pounds.

SHWEC will continue the P2 student internship program in 2009, as well as explore the feasibility of establishing an ongoing program.



## Winter Heating Season Brings Additional Fine Particle Pollution

*David S. Liebl*

Once again, high fuel prices are leading to an increase in the use of outdoor wood-fired boilers (OWBs) in Wisconsin, and raising concerns about the effect of increased levels of wood smoke on air quality. A study cited by the Massachusetts Department of Health states that emissions of fine particles by a single outdoor wood-fired boiler could equal four heavy-duty diesel trucks, 22 EPA-certified wood stoves, or 8,000 natural gas furnaces.

In 2002, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) began statewide monitoring for levels of fine particulates, like those produced when fuels such as coal, oil, diesel, or wood are burned. The DNR now issues air quality advisories by email when fine particle levels threaten public health, see: <http://dnr.wi.gov/air/newsletters/>

Wisconsin has an estimated 27,000 OWBs in place. Using wood as a residential heating fuel contributes more to fine particle pollution than any other type of heating fuel. When outdoor wood-fired boilers are used in urban and suburban areas, excessive amounts of smoke and low chimney heights can create serious health concerns for neighbors.

USEPA has issued voluntary emission targets for OWB manufactures. Phase 2 boilers are expected to emit less than 0.32lb of fine particles per million BTU of output. Currently only two OWB models meet this target. For more information on EPA's program see: <http://www.epa.gov/woodheaters/>

## DNR Announces Reduction in Recycling Grants

*Joe Van Rossum*

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced last week that it will not be making \$1.9 million of grant dollars available in 2009 for local recycling programs through its Recycling Efficiency Incentive (REI) grant program. The announcement stated "the \$1.9 million will be used to pay down the department's \$13.2 million obligation to the state's deficit reduction efforts." The REI Grant program is a program designed to reward local recycling programs for collaborative efforts to improve recycling programs and reduce program cost.

The DNR has also informed applicants for the Waste Reduction and Recycling Demonstration Grant program that no projects will be funded this year. This grant program typically provides \$500,000 in funding annually to businesses and municipalities seeking to implement innovative waste reduction, reuse and recycling projects on a pilot or demonstration scale.

In other DNR recycling program news, Cynthia Moore, Recycling Program Coordinator will be taking another position within the DNR's Office of Great Lakes where she will work as a Water Resources specialist.

## **Lead Wheel Weights to be Phased Out in California**

*David S. Liebl*

Lead wheel weights used to balance vehicle tires will be phased out in California by the end of next year under a court settlement reported in the Los Angeles Times August 21, 2008.

The settlement ends a lawsuit filed in May by the Oakland-based Center for Environmental Health. In the suit, the group contended that wheel weights falling off vehicles release 500,000 pounds of lead each year into the environment in California. "Wheel weights have been identified as the largest new route of lead releases into the environment," said Michael Green, executive director of the Center, "By moving the industry away from lead wheel weights, we are helping to keep the lead out of our kids' drinking water."

Lead has been used to make wheel weights for decades because it is cheap and heavy, allowing mechanics to use relatively small weights when balancing tires. Lead wheel weights have been under attack for several years by environmentalists, were banned by the European Union in 2005, and are being phased out in Japan and South Korea.

As lead weights are phased out, weights made of steel or zinc alloy are being used for tire balancing. Those weights are larger and cost 20% to 30% more. However, because wheel weights typically cost less than 50 cents each, and there are generally only two per wheel, the higher cost should not have a big effect on consumers.

## ***Environmental News Briefs of Interest .....***

### **Performance Track Members Renew Commitments**

Several Fortune 100 companies, including Hewlett Packard, Lockheed Martin, and Xerox, are among the 96 facilities that have renewed their membership in EPA's National Environmental Performance Track program.

Performance Track supplements EPA's existing regulatory activities by encouraging facilities with strong environmental records to work toward goals that are beyond legal requirements. The program's 506 members include facilities from major corporations, small businesses, and the public sector in 49 states and Puerto Rico.

Renewing Performance Track members must set four new environmental goals (such as reduced energy use), have an independent review of their environmental management system, and be screened by EPA for sustained compliance with environmental laws.

Forty renewing members will work toward challenge goals over the next three years. This time, members had a new challenge option – to preserve and protect at least 10 acres of habitat. Thirteen renewing members accepted the habitat challenge. For example, Xerox, located in Yukon, Oklahoma, has pledged to restore 10 acres of habitat by working with the National Resource Conservation Service to plan and implement a habitat restoration plan for part of its 121-acre campus.

Since its inception in 2000, Performance Track members have set more than 3,500 goals for environmental improvements, many of which will achieve environmental results in areas that are not covered by current regulation. Collectively, Performance Track members have saved enough energy to power 46,000 homes for one year, reduced greenhouse gases to offset the emissions of 57,000 cars for one year, and conserved or restored more than 16,000 acres of land and habitat.

Additional information about Performance Track:

[http://www.epa.gov/performancetrack/events/renewing\\_facilities\\_aug08.htm](http://www.epa.gov/performancetrack/events/renewing_facilities_aug08.htm)

## **EPA Announces Web-Based System for Companies to Self-Disclose Environmental Violations**

EPA announced a pilot project that allows regulated facilities nationwide to self-disclose environmental violations in a secure environment on EPA's Website under the Agency's audit policy.

This electronic self-disclosure system, or eDisclosure, should reduce transaction costs for companies by ensuring that each disclosure contains complete information.

Under the pilot, regulated facilities nationwide will be able to use eDisclosure to disclose violations of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (for example, failure to submit toxic chemical release forms to EPA's Toxic Release Inventory).

Regulated facilities located in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas will be able to disclose violations of all environmental laws. Based on the results of the pilot, EPA will consider expanding eDisclosure to other states in the near future.

EPA's audit policy provides incentives to companies that voluntarily discover, promptly disclose and correct and prevent future environmental violations. EPA may reduce or waive penalties for violations if the facility meets the conditions of the policy. EPA will not waive or reduce penalties for repeat violations, or violations that resulted in serious actual harm.

Since 1995, more than 3,500 companies have disclosed and resolved violations at nearly 10,000 facilities under the audit policy.

More information on eDisclosure:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/incentives/auditing/edisclosure.html>

## **Cascade Asset Management Recognized for Growth**

Cascade Asset Management, a Madison WI company that provides full service IT asset retirement solutions, again joined the ranks of the Inc. 5000 fastest growing private companies in the U.S. Cascade ranked 25th among Wisconsin companies and 2,809th overall with a three-year revenue growth of 128.9%. The company collects, receives and processes office electronics from sites across North America.

## **EPA Seeks Applications for Clean Air Excellence Awards**

EPA and the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC) are accepting applications for the Ninth Annual Clean Air Excellence Awards Program.

Winners are honored for outstanding accomplishments in programs, projects or technologies that reduce air pollution emissions. Applicants are judged in five awards categories: (1) clean air technology; (2) community development/redevelopment; (3) education/outreach (4) regulatory/policy innovations; and (5) transportation efficiency innovations.

In addition, winners will be recognized in two special award categories. The Gregg Cooke Visionary Program Award is given to the air quality project or program that successfully blends two or more of the five existing awards categories. The Thomas W. Zosel Outstanding Individual Achievement Award recognizes one individual for his or her outstanding achievement, leadership, and commitment to promote clean air and achieve better air quality.

All applications for the awards should be postmarked on or before September 19, 2008. The awards will be announced in spring 2009. The CAAAC is an independent policy committee that provides advice to EPA on air issues.

Information on applying for the awards: [http://www.epa.gov/air/caaac/clean\\_award.html](http://www.epa.gov/air/caaac/clean_award.html)

## *Events, Training, Workshop and Tour Opportunities*

September 9-10, 2008, **Energy Modeling for High Performance Buildings**, Pyle Center, Madison, WI. For information or to register call Joy Altwies, 1-800-462-0876.  
<http://epdweb.engr.wisc.edu/Courses/webJ935>

September 13, 2008, **Blue Sky Green Field Wind Energy Center Tours**, Malone, WI. Tours will be given every 30 minutes between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., N9470 County Road W. For information call Joan Herriges, 414-221-4264,

September 15-16, 2008, **The Green Building Process: Real World Strategies & Tools**, Pyle Center, Madison, WI. For information or to register call Joy Altwies, 1-800-462-0876.  
<http://epdweb.engr.wisc.edu/Courses/webJ936>

September 17, 2008 **SE2 Conference of the WI Green Building Alliance**. Country Springs Hotel, Waukesha. A conference on the decision driving issues, risks and benefits related to green building. Register on line at [www.wgba.org/se2.html](http://www.wgba.org/se2.html)

September 18-19, 2008, **Upper Midwest Planning Conference – Planning for Sustainability**, Monona Terrace, Madison. To register go to <http://www.planning.org/chapters/conferences.html>

September 30- October 2, 2008, **12th Annual Conference on Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Solutions**, Best Western Grand Seasons Resort, Waupaca. Agenda topics include pharmaceuticals, business recycling, product stewardship, sustainability and more! Conference jointly sponsored by the Northeast Wisconsin Cooperative Marketing Group (NEWCMG) and Wisconsin Counties Solid Waste Management Association (WCSWMA). For more information or to register contact Manitowoc County MRF Manager, PO Box 351, 3000 Basswood Road, Manitowoc, WI 54220 or call (920) 683-5031.

October 2, 2008, 12 noon - 1:30 p.m., **Focus on Energy Webinar: Sustainable Energy for Green Communities**. The webinar presents an overview of creating a community energy plan designed to address carbon emissions and environmental quality, and explains how such a plan integrates with other sustainable community goals. To register online go to [www.ecw.org/sustenergy](http://www.ecw.org/sustenergy).

October 3, 2008, **Solar Domestic Hot Water Systems**, LaCrosse, WI. Learn how to use the sun's energy for domestic uses. This class provides an overview of a variety of system types. For more information go to <http://www.the-mrea.org/workshops.php?id=1198165148>

Oct. 3 & 4, 2008 **Wisconsin Solar Tour**. Homes and business all across Wisconsin. Owners throw open their doors to let people see how renewable energy is practical, reliable and affordable in today's economy. Although it is officially called the Wisconsin Solar Tour, sites include all sorts of renewable energy technologies and other innovative features. Sponsored by the Midwest Renewable Energy Association. More information at <http://www.the-mrea.org>.

October 6-8, 2008, **Renewable Energy from Organics Recycling**, Madison Marriott West, Madison, WI. For preliminary agenda or to register, go to [www.biocycle.net](http://www.biocycle.net) or call 610-967-4135 x 21.

October 28-30, 2008, **Mechanical System Design for Green Buildings**, Pyle Center, Madison, WI. For information or to register call Joy Altwies, 1-800-462-0876.  
<http://epdweb.engr.wisc.edu/Courses/webJ937>

October 27-31, 2008, **The Commissioning Process for Delivering Quality Constructed Projects**, Pyle Center, Madison, WI. For information or to register call Joy Altwies, 1-800-462-0876.  
<http://epdweb.engr.wisc.edu/Courses/webK410>

November 19-21, 2008, **Green Build International Conference and Expo**, Boston. For information go to <http://www.greenbuildexpo.org/>