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Ends and Beginnings

Summer days have grown noticeably shorter, students have returned to school, and our beloved Husker men and women have returned to their sports arenas. Ends and beginnings offer an opportunity to take stock of one's habits. Did you know that municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills are the third-largest human-generated source of methane emissions in the United States and that decomposition of organics (30 to 40% of all MSW) produces methane? Large quantities of food and packaging waste are generated from school lunches and at tailgate parties, but there are many steps we can take to reduce this.



SCHOOL LUNCHES

Single serve items such as juice pouches, yogurt cups, chip bags, prepackaged cookies, and sandwiches packed in plastic bags are generated daily by kids who bring their lunch from home. According to WasteFreeLunches.org, "it is estimated that on average a school-age child using a disposable lunch generates 67 pounds of waste per school year. That equates to 18,760 pounds of lunch waste for just one average-size elementary school. Waste-free lunch programs favor the use of reusable food containers, drink containers, utensils, and napkins and discourage the use of disposable packaging." An estimated \$246.60 could be saved per person each school year by packing foods in reusable containers.

TAILGATE PARTIES

If you're hosting a tailgate, make it easy for guests to compost and recycle their paper plates, beverage containers, and leftovers. Set up bins, buckets, or bags and clearly label them. If you have a big crowd, make signs that clearly illustrate what materials should go where. For a smaller crowd, ask each one to bring their own reusable drink container, cloth napkin, and utensils.

Compostable plates, cups, napkins and utensil sets are much less expensive than they were a few years ago. It makes disposal easy because the dinnerware and food residue go in the same bin. Contact your local composting service to arrange for disposal.

If you must serve beverages in plastic bottles, make sure they can be recycled before purchasing. Coach guests to empty contents from all single use beverage containers, replacing caps on plastic bottles before placing in the recycle bin.

Do a little research, plan ahead, buy local, and everyone wins. Go Huskers!

Why should you attend Nebraska Recycling Council's Annual Awards Luncheon and Workshops?

THINKING IN SYSTEMS

REGISTER

One of the key components of NRC's annual meeting is the workshops. If you're looking to attend a workshop (and we may be biased, but you totally should!), you can register solely for that, or if you're looking for the whole shebang, you can register for a workshop in conjunction with the awards luncheon. Workshops happen in the morning, just after breakfast and the start of the vendor show – two things you'll for sure want to take advantage of. Workshops allow for discussion and Q&A with the panelists and other attendees. Take a look at what our panelists will be presenting.



Epiphany Ramos, *presenter of the Community Workshop: Thinking in Systems*

"We often look to measure the success of our recycling program based on industry standard metrics we have developed and tracked over time. In this workshop, I will address how to evaluate that solid waste program meta-data more in-depth and determine if a programmatic change should be evaluated as part of your strategic plan to reach your established goals. I will review the steps the City of Bellevue has taken to create it's new pay-as-you-throw program, including a detailed look at the evaluation methodology, navigating the political

landscape, contracting options, marketing and education, lessons learned and the plan forward for program improvement."



Larissa Binod, *presenter of the Community Workshop: Thinking in Systems*

"Operating recycling programs in rural Nebraska communities present logistical complications and funding deficiencies, in addition to contamination and quality factors. I will be sharing best practices rural communities have adopted to sustain recycling programs in western Nebraska. WRG is a resource recovery facility providing recycling collection services, consolidation and cross-dock of recyclable materials for the matrix of communities within the region. They also manufacture products utilizing recyclable materials. Participates can learn what

WRG does to capitalize on commodity prices and minimize freight costs by supporting communities to develop and maintain local recycling programs. We can ensure quality resources make their way to the national markets and Nebraska manufacturers while decreasing the amounts taken to landfills. In this workshop, I will candidly share the realities and benefits."



Megan Jackson, *presenter of the Business Workshop: Measuring What Matters*

"Businesses aren't only motivated by the bottom line when it comes to having a greater social, ecological footprint. However, when there are opportunities to produce less waste and create higher efficiencies that also result in better savings, taking a zero waste approach to resource management can be pretty compelling. In this workshop, I'll walk through some key strategies for how facilities can achieve cost savings while using systems that encourage material reuse and recycling."

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

A Chance to Display Your Creative Talent

Feeling artistic? Have an idea for a Cool the Climate compost poster? The ICAW poster contest has started, and entries will be accepted until midnight November 5, 2018. Anyone 10 and older can submit a design and have a chance to win \$500.

The theme this year for the International Compost Awareness Week is Cool the Climate - Compost! to highlight that soil management practices with compost is key to soil health and migrating climate change. Let's put Nebraska on the map with the posters being distributed internationally prior to the week of May 5-11, 2019.

For contest rules and more information visit: <https://www.compostfoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Poster-Contest>



Webinars & Events



[Kansas PFAS Community Engagement](#)

Wednesday, Sept 5th | 1:00 pm - 7:15 pm | Leavenworth, KS

[The Future of Transportation Discussion](#)

Thursday, Sept 6th | 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm | Turbine Flats Reactor Gallery

[Electronics Recycling in Wayne](#)

Saturday, Sept 15th | 8:00 am - 10:30 am | Wayne Green Team

Articles of Interest



[The Conflict of Interest That is Killing Recycling](#)

Some of the biggest recycling operations are owned by landfill companies whose profits improve when recycling doesn't work well.

[In Response: The Conflict of Interest That is Killing Recycling](#)

The Product Stewardship Institute's Scott Cassel and Megan Byers respond to the New York Times' August 15th Opinion piece, The Conflict of Interest That Is Killing Recycling.

[Alter to purchase Tenenbaum Recycling Group](#)

The acquisition unites two scrap metal recycling companies.

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