

DEP Awards \$863,000 Grant to Promote Continued Growth of State's Recycling Industry

On behalf of Governor Edward G. Rendell, Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty on Nov. 18 awarded a \$863,429 grant to Penn State University to create the Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center at PSU-Harrisburg to encourage the continued growth and economic health of the Commonwealth's recycling and reuse industry, which already leads the nation in employment, payroll and sales numbers.

"The success of our recycling program is proof that environmental stewardship can be a driver for sustained economic growth," said Secretary McGinty, who made the announcement at the Penn State Harrisburg Campus in Middletown, Dauphin County. "This center will assist in developing healthy, accessible markets for Pennsylvania's recycled materials."

Pennsylvania's recycling industry comprises more than 3,247 recycling and reuse businesses and organizations that generate more than \$18.4 billion in gross annual sales, pay \$305 million in taxes and provide jobs for more than 81,322 employees at an annual payroll of approximately \$2.9 billion.

The mission of the Recycling Markets Center, or RMC, is to expand and develop more secure and robust markets for recovered secondary materials, stimulate demand for products with recycled content, and research and maintain up-to-date market trend data. The center will be the lead organization to develop recycling markets in Pennsylvania, working with environmental, technical assistance and economic development organizations to support generators, haulers, processors, manufacturers and end-users of recycled materials and products.

"Our job is to create the center, and get it up and running. However, the RMC will have its own board of directors and staff, and will operate as an independent entity," said Dr. Charles A. Cole, Berg Professor of Environmental Engineering and Director of the Environmental Training Center at Penn State Harrisburg, which, as the parent entity, will

review such items as RMC strategic plans, business plans and financial reports. "The center is an exciting prospect and will continue Pennsylvania's leadership in the important field of recycling, by showing the way to develop new markets for recycled products."

DEP earlier this month awarded \$485,270 in recycling markets infrastructure development grants to finance equipment purchases that will increase the use of Pennsylvania-generated recycled feedstock at Waste Not Technologies LLC of Saylorsburg, Monroe County, and St. Jude Polymer Corp. of Frackville, Schuylkill County. The increased ability of manufacturers to locate and consume materials from state recycling programs will encourage the development and expansion of Pennsylvania's recycling industry, directly benefiting both our environment and the economy.

"The RMC is the next logical step in our recycling program," Secretary McGinty said. "For us to recycle more of our trash instead of sending it to landfills, which is better for our environment, we must make sure there are viable local markets for all the recycled materials."

Act 175 of 2002 requires DEP to develop a recycling program plan, including a market-development program, and formulate strategies to make recycling programs in Pennsylvania self-sufficient. Market development programs will be financed by the Recycling Fund, which is supported by a \$2 per ton fee on all materials disposed of in landfills in Pennsylvania. Act 175 extended the Recycling Fund fee through 2008.

Governor Rendell has proposed an \$800 million bond referendum to expand and enhance Growing Greener. Part of this initiative would provide \$25 million a year to the Recycling Fund to assist municipalities with existing programs that give more than 10 million Pennsylvanians access to recycling. The money also will help 42 municipalities newly mandated to recycle as a result of the 2000 federal census. However, the Legislature did not pass the Governor's initiative before adjourning for summer.

<> For more information on Pennsylvania's recycling market development programs, visit www.dep.state.pa.us, Keyword: "DEP Market Development."