



September 2005

REGISTER NOW!!

17th Annual Upper Peninsula Recycling Conference
Wednesday, October 5, 2005

Premiere Center, Iron Mountain, Michigan
(see enclosed Registration Forms)

EARTH KEEPER CLEAN SWEEP.....A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

A Clean Sweep (hazardous waste collection) event in Michigan's Upper Peninsula under the Earth Keeper initiative was an unprecedented success. A total of 45.7 tons of toxic materials were collected in the event held on Earth Day, April 23rd, in the parking lots of 100 Upper Peninsula churches, temples, and other houses of worship. Wastes collected included: pesticides, herbicides, mercury (including over 40 pounds of raw mercury), oil-based paints and thinners, car batteries, anti-freeze and harsh cleaners. The hazardous wastes were distributed to the Delta County and Marquette County hazardous waste processing facilities with 25.5 tons going to Delta County and 20.2 tons to Marquette County.

To put the success of the event into perspective: the Delta County facility received more hazardous waste in the Earth Keeper event than in the last seven years. The Marquette facility received more than it does in an entire year!!

Earth Keeper is an Upper Michigan environmental initiative begun in 2004 when representatives of nine different faiths (Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Buddhist, Jewish, Unitarian, B'hai, and Episcopal) signed the Earth Keeper Covenant pledging their commitment to work in partnership with Tribes, government, and citizen organizations for the stewardship and protection of the natural environment of the Great Lakes Basin. Annual clean sweep events are among the commitments made in the Covenant.

The Clean Sweep Project was funded in part by USEPA, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, and the Michigan Department of Agriculture. The Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership and the Cedar Tree Institute coordinated the project. The Clean Sweep project responded to a huge unmet need in the Upper Peninsula since only two of the fifteen counties have hazardous waste processing facilities. The project's success was due in large part to the publicity given the event by the Earth Keeper faith network which included approximately two-thirds of the Upper Peninsula's total population represented in over 125 congregations/churches and over 50 communities.

For more information, contact: Elizabeth LaPlante at 312-353-2694 or email her at laplante.Elizabeth@epa.gov; or Carl Lindquist, Director of Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership at 906-226-9460 or email to carl.lindquist@macd.org.

33,000 POUNDS AND COUNTING.....

The Western Upper Peninsula District Health Department, as some of you may remember, received a grant to recycle electronic waste in its five-county area. The program is scheduled to run for two years, with the drop-off dates beginning in May, 2005.



Ironwood, Ontonagon, Hancock, and L'Anse have had their first pickups – and the stuff seems to have come out of the woodwork (and put into the collection containers)!! In the first three pickups, 142 printer/fax/scanners, about 200 keyboard/mouse combos, 40 microwave ovens, 103 stereos, and about 135 fluorescent bulbs were received. Put them all in a big box and weigh it – and you end up with 16.5 tons of e-waste, which will all be recycled by Star Industries. None of the items will end up in a landfill or in the hands of scam artists or computer rebuilders, or out in the woods.

All of the equipment is processed by de-manufacturing: the plastic is sent back to the plastic materials commerce stream so it can be made into fences and chairs and new computer cases, for instance. The gold and other precious materials in the printed circuit boards and connectors are removed by a benign chemical process. Did you know that it's not uncommon for a computer to have a couple of dollars' worth of precious metals? The metal in the chassis/frame is easy to recycle, and the copper wire, and the little wire ends of the components, and so on – all get recycled.....nothing gets landfilled. The fluorescent lamps are recycled at Lamp Recyclers, in Green Bay, where the glass is separated from the fluorescent powder itself, the metal end caps are removed, and everything is handled properly and safely. The powder, which contains mercury, is shipped in DOT approved containers to a facility where it can be properly returned to the marketplace. Recycling – NOT landfilling – and safely, too.

If you'd like further information about the program at the health department (in Hancock) please consider getting in touch with the program director, Barb Maronen at 906.482.7382. Or, you can visit their website at www.wupdhd.org for collection dates and schedules.

As we go about our daily lives, we must remember the victims of Hurricane Katrina as they struggle to put their lives in order.

We must also keep in mind our brave soldiers fighting overseas. They are protecting our great country, keeping our nation free.

Please, keep them all in your prayers.

