



# Reduce Re Use News Recycle Think

## TO CONTACT US

COLLEEN MURPHY  
RECYCLING COORDINATOR  
(305)289-6037  
MURPHY-COLLEEN@MONROECOUNTY-FL.GOV

ROSA WASHINGTON  
SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR  
(305)292-4432  
WASHINGTON-ROSA@MONROECOUNTY-FL.GOV

## Local Action and Updates

### *Bad Bag Blues ....*



A recent field trip to the Reuters Materials Recycling Facility in Pembroke Pines (see page 4) was a good reminder that even though curbside collection is easier than it has ever been, **SOME PEOPLE** continue to toss in all kinds of **trash** that causes trouble at the plant. This photo is a great example of **the worst offender- PLASTIC BAGS**. It's not hard to see how they get tangled up in the equipment! At times, the entire sorting system has to be shut down so staff can cut away the bags and other problematic contaminants like rope and metal wire hangers. Please help educate family and friends; **carry reusable bags and recycle or reuse plastic bags**. It's no wonder that plastic bags are such a problem: **Americans use approximately 1 billion plastic shopping bags each year, but we recycle less than 1 % annually.**

### **New Phone Numbers and Hours for Electronics Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Collection**

**Cudjoe Key Transfer Station**, US 1 at MM 21.5- Blimp Rd  
305-745-2513, **HHW**: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 10am-2pm  
**E-Waste**: Monday-Saturday, 8am-4pm

**Long Key Transfer Station**, US 1 MM 68, 305-664-2263 /  
664-2263/664-2269, **HHW**: 1st & 3rd Fridays, 10am-2pm  
**E-Waste**: Monday-Saturday 8am-4pm

**Key Largo Transfer Station**, County Rd 905, 305-367-4236

**Key Largo Recycling Center**, US 1 MM 100.3 south to  
300 Magnolia St, 305-664-2263 or 664-2269

**HHW/ E-Waste**: 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 10am — 2pm

## Global Impact

### *Coastal Cleanup Crews Green Up the Keys !*

Our oceans unite the shores of every continent on the planet, but unfortunately water-borne trash is one of the most common problems that brings volunteers together for local action. To address this chronic source of pollution, the Ocean Conservancy's 26th Annual International Coastal Cleanup recently took place all over the world on **Saturday, September 17, 2011**. Organizations coordinating the effort included the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, T.R.A.S.H.E.D. in the Keys, and Reef Relief. This year 230 local volunteers collected 5,000+ pounds of trash at 22 locations.



Maya Totman, Florida Keys Wildlife Rescue, weighs and records debris removed from refuge lands on Big Pine Key.

In addition to removing trash and debris from the world's beaches and waterways, volunteers work to identify the types and sources of the debris. Learn all about their research in "[Tracking Trash: 25 Years of Action for the Ocean](#)"

Because the Florida Keys are surrounded by the sea, on-going cleanup efforts are being planned throughout the year. Green-up days November 5th, 12th, and 19th will promote EcoWeek and America Recycles Day; volunteers are now organizing cleanups in all areas of the Keys.

You can be part of the solution too! Join a sponsoring group or get your neighborhood, school, church, or civic group involved. **Call 305 289-6037 for local dates/contacts and information about trash collection and plastic bags.**

## Being the Change...Every Day



Monroe County School District students who celebrated Earth Day by competing to create Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that promote recycling will soon hear their winning entries on local radio stations. This contest was the second annual competition sponsored by the Monroe County Recycling Department to promote recycling, waste reduction, reuse and composting in the Florida Keys. Now the radio announcements have been recorded by another group of student activists, members of **Be the Change of the Florida Keys, Inc. (BTC)**.

This youth development and service organization is a Keys-wide group that participates in service projects that address issues like resource conservation, hunger, housing, and peace initiatives. The high school students work closely with local schools and community groups under the guidance of BTC Prevention Coordinators Michele Sutter (Upper Keys) and Mindy Vinson (Lower Keys). On this occasion, Monroe County Media Specialist Jethon Williams helped BTC students record the winning PSAs in the BOCC Chamber and then edited them in the media studio.



Students can participate in **Be the Change** activities by contacting Michele Sutter at 305-852-1664. Monroe County Recycling looks forward to working with **Be the Change** on many future community 4R events and projects. Residents and businesses can also help to "be the change" by encouraging recycling at home and at work.

## America Recycles Day School Challenges

As schools get back to education basics, Monroe County Recycling Department plans to sponsor a number of "4R Challenges" for District students. Four ways to celebrate **America Recycles Day on November 15th** will be offered:

**Pledge to Recycle:** Once classrooms or schools do a presentation about recycling (provided by the County Recycling Coordinator or regular school staff), students will have a chance to take the America Recycles Pledge. All pledges will be entered in a county-wide drawing for gift cards donated by local businesses. Pledges will also be included in the state-wide drawing that awards schools with the greatest number of pledge cards (per capita).



Three other creative competitions are also being sponsored. All you have to do is submit a photo and a brief description of your entry by 5pm on November 10<sup>th</sup> (email submissions). Each school will choose their own top 3 picks with County staff and members of local non-profit organizations selecting the top 3 in the Keys.

**HallowGreen Contest:** Since Halloween is just before America Recycles Day and EcoWeek, this year will include a contest with awards for the best costume created using recycled materials; extra points will be awarded for costumes that actually promote recycling. Gift cards will be awarded to the top 3 costumes.

**RecycleMe Sculpture:** Students will compete to create the best 3-D sculpture using recyclables and reused materials. Sculptures can be a maximum of 3 feet in height and must weigh less than 30 pounds. Gift cards will be awarded to the top 3 sculptures.

**4R Holiday:** Create the best holiday ornament out of recycled or reused materials. Gift cards will be awarded to the top 3 creations.





*Coming Soon..... Keys Green Up Days!*



**Electronics (E-Waste) Recycling  
and  
Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Disposal  
Saturdays, 9am to 1 pm**

**Sponsored by:**



**January 7th  
County Public Works Yard, Marathon  
10600 Aviation Boulevard**

**January 21st  
Key Largo Recycling Center  
300 Magnolia St at MM 100.3**

**January 28th  
Cudjoe Transfer Station  
Blimp Road at MM 21.5**

**TBA  
Key West**

***FREE for Unincorporated Monroe County, Key West,  
Marathon, Key Colony Beach, Layton and Key Largo Residents***

Call 305 289-6037 for additional information about:  
acceptable items, regular collection hours and locations for  
e-waste and HHW disposal, commercial fees and limitations.

## Wheelabrator Turns Trash Into Energy !

Monroe County media representatives and public officials recently participated in one of Waste Management's public tours of the facilities that handle most of the solid waste from the Florida Keys. Reporters Bill Becker (US 1 Radio), Mark Howell (Solaris Hill), and Jason Koler (Keys Weekly) joined Key West City Manager Jim Scholl and Mark Terril from the Environmental Health Department. The four hundred mile round-trip took them from Key West to the Reuters Recycling Facility in Pembroke Pines and the Wheelabrator Waste to Energy plant in Pompano. Since ReNews visited the recycling facility in a previous issue, today's trip highlights the ultimate destination for everything we do NOT recycle- the North Broward waste-to-energy facility. [Take a virtual tour to see how the plant operates.](#)

The process starts with a massive area where the trash is unloaded and managed by two huge overhead cranes that control the supply of trash fueling three furnaces. Crane operators constantly monitor temperatures to maintain combustion at close to 2,500 degrees! The burning trash boils water, producing steam to propel giant turbines which power the electrical generators. The entire process is highly supervised from a "high tech" control room that looks like the helm of a space craft.



Modern WTE facilities are nothing like the incinerators that were used in the Keys during the 80s and early 90's. In addition to producing electricity for around 50,000 homes per day, the plants focus on keeping toxic emissions near zero with ammonia, charcoal and limewater scrubbers /filters. They use and recycle waste-water for producing steam for turbines and for removing emissions in a closed loop system. The white areas above the smokestacks are clouds; there are no visible emissions even when fully operational!



The \$800 million plant receives 2,500 tons of trash per day (360 tons from the Keys) and has a 95% waste reduction rate. The 500 acre complex includes a lined landfill where residual ash is deposited and methane gas is also collected to help power the waster-to-energy facility.

Although transporting Monroe County trash to Pompano (almost 200 miles from Key West) is an expensive option, landfills and incinerators were banned in the Florida Keys during the 90's due to environmental concerns. Building modern lined-landfills and non-polluting incinerators was simply not cost effective for our island community.

For now, increasing local recycling rates and minimizing the volume of trash sent to Wheelabrator is still the best alternative currently available for Monroe County.

