

1998-99
Washington State
Waste Reduction and Recycling
Public School Awards Program

OVERVIEW

July 1999
Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program

Enclosure for How to Make Waste Reduction and
Recycling Happen in Your School
Washington Department of Ecology
Publication #94-179

Overview of the 1998-99 Washington State Waste Reduction and Recycling Public School Awards Program

All of Washington's 1,700 public schools received applications to apply for the Department of Ecology's annual Waste Reduction and Recycling Public School Awards. On May 14, 1999, at a ceremony in the state Capitol rotunda, Ecology Director Tom Fitzimmons presented \$15,000 in cash awards to twelve schools. Ecology's Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program administer the awards. Each winning school was judged on the basis of comprehensive, efficient, and innovative approaches to waste reduction and recycling during the 1998-99 school year.

The annual awards program was established by the Legislature in 1989 as part of the Waste Not Washington Act. Several of this year's winning schools had also won awards in past years, and they continue to build on previous accomplishments and win new recognition.

Immediately prior to the ceremony, recipients posed for photographs with Governor Gary Locke followed by some quick remarks and congratulations from the Governor.

The winning schools carry out active waste reduction and recycling programs during the school year. Each school also has an active education component in place to support their waste reduction and recycling goals, often based on Ecology's waste management teacher training and curriculum package, "A-Way with Waste."

In varying numbers, each school recycles aluminum and other metals, glass, cardboard and mixed paper, white paper, newsprint, food wastes, and plastic. The schools also practice many classroom and office waste reduction techniques, such as making two-sided copies, purchasing recycled products, reuse of surplus items, etc. These techniques are listed in Ecology Publication #91-38, *How to Make Waste Reduction and Recycling Happen in Your School*. Many schools practice environmental stewardship with school-based beautification projects and community outreach.

Each of the winning schools, as well as other schools that applied for but did not receive cash awards, is working for a better environment. They are reusing and recycling items that would otherwise go to the landfill. They are learning and doing. They are part of the reason why Washington is a national leader in waste reduction and recycling. Many of them are taking their programs into the communities—in several cases, the school program is the most important recycling effort the community has.

The following summaries show what makes the programs of the winning schools unique, but they are meant as summaries only. For detailed information, contact the Recycling Coordinator at the school.
