Recycling Committee ’07-'08

The committee met on May 2, 2007 and elected Burton Callicott chair.

On May 17, representatives of the committee met with William Lee, Recycling Crew Leader, Jeff Snyder, Campus Contracted Custodial Service Head, and Mark Hane Engineering Assistant, to discuss recycling efforts and bin placement recommendations. Outside of the recommendation to incorporate housekeeping into recycling collection, everyone was in favor of the recommendations. It was decided that the Science Building would provide a testing ground for the proposed changes. Unfortunately, the “test run” never transpired and none of the recommendations were put into place. The recommendations are as follows:

1) **Have only two types of recycling bins**: one bin for paper and one bin for solid recyclable items (plastic, aluminum, and tin “soup” cans). We feel that this will reduce confusion among the campus community, reduce “contamination” of the recycling bins, and increase efficiency for the recycling and housekeeping staff. Loss of redeemed can revenue will likely be made up by fewer trips to recycling centers and increased waste diverted from the trash dumpsters. If this measure improves the recycling rate, we could conceivably switch out a trash dumpster for a Charleston Co. Recycling dumpster to be serviced by Charleston Co and save money that has been going to pay for trash removal.

2) **Reduce the number of trashcans and ensure that there is a recycling bin next to every trashcan**. Numerous studies have shown that people will recycle if it is convenient. In order to make recycling convenient it is necessary to have a recycling bin next to every trashcan. This could be possible if we reduce the number of trashcans and make it policy that a recycling bin stand next to every trashcan.

3) **Incorporate recycling into the regular housekeeping trash removal**: we feel that recycling rates could be dramatically increased if housekeeping were more involved. By incorporating recycling into trash removal procedures – have the staff collect the recycling along with the trash and bring it all down to be removed at the same time – we feel that the College could greatly reduce the amount of trash going to the landfills. We also suggest getting input from the custodial staff as to the best location for trash and recycle containers. These locations could be put into a “floor diagram” for each building. We notice that both trashcans and recycle bins are often moved but rarely returned to their original location, so a diagram could be helpful.

4) **Involve student workers**: the College has access to federal work study money that will cover a significant percentage of their salary. We feel that the recycling program could be one that might benefit from this program.

The committee met on September 7 to discuss plans for the year. We decided to focus on an “Adopt a Building” campaign where various clubs, departments, and groups on campus would be encouraged to take responsibility for ensuring a high rate of recycling at a building on campus. Duties included monitoring recycling bins so that they remained
in designated places and were not “contaminated” with trash or mixed with paper and containers. Participants that were particularly motivated were encouraged to also monitor the trash cans and to pull out recyclables and place them in the appropriate recycling bins. We had moderate success with this program and eventually had four clubs adopt a building or floor of a building.

Under my direction, The College of Charleston participated in Recyclemania this year for the third time. The Recycling Committee helped promote this though, once again, the College ranked very low in this nation-wide competition. In fact, due to an inability to get weights of recycled material in a timely fashion, we did not rank at all this year (last year we were 2nd to last out of 78 schools).

The ’08–’09 Committee met on April 28th and elected Deborah Bidwell chair of the committee.

Burton Callicott
Recycling Committee Chair ’07–’08