



RECYCLING
ASSOCIATION
of Minnesota

MINNESOTA
WASTE WISE

New business participation in innovative recycling program

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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New business participation in innovative recycling program

St. Paul, Minnesota-The Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM) and Minnesota Waste Wise (MWW) announce new businesses and organizations participating in the innovative It's in the Bag™ (IITB) and Message in a Bottle™(MIB) programs in the Duluth area.

"These organizations exemplify smart use of resources and we would love to continue to help businesses recycle more in the Duluth area," stated Ellen Telander, Executive Director of RAM.

The 148th Air National Guard base and Irresistible Ink, among other Duluth area businesses, collects stretch wrap and beverage containers in-house and for people on the go to be recycled through the It's in the Bag™ and Message in a Bottle (TM) programs, diverting a substantial portion of their waste stream from the landfill while saving money on dumpster charges.

"The message in a bottle program provides an environmentally responsible outlet for plastic beverage containers and shrink wrap at the 148th Fighter Wing. This reduces our solid waste output, reducing solid waste removal costs and ultimately saves taxpayer money. It's a win/win situation for the environment and the taxpayer!" stated Ryan M. Blazevic, 2nd Lt and Environmental Manager at the 148th.

The programs, which launched in the Duluth area in November of 2009, are partnering with Airpark Products & Services (APS), a division of the Minnesota State Operated Community Services programs that employs adults with disabilities. APS employees pick up recyclables at participating businesses, and then sort and package them for transport. The program has created 20 plus full-time jobs at APS.

"By diverting stretch wrap and bottles and cans out of the waste stream, participating Duluth area businesses are not only saving money on their waste bills, they're protecting the environment and employing adults with disabilities. A win all around," stated Mark Blaiser, Executive Director of Minnesota Waste Wise.

Both of these recycling programs have been highly successful at many other businesses throughout Minnesota. This success is partially due to the eye-catching recycling containers used by the programs. MIB containers are shaped like soda bottles and IITB containers are clear, making it easy to see what's inside. To date, MIB has recycled more than 500,000 pounds of beverage containers and other plastics. IITB has recycled more than 5.5 million pounds of plastic bags and shrink film.

If your business wants to start participating in the It's in the Bag™ program by recycling its stretch wrap, please contact Mark Blaiser at (651) 292-4663. For more information on the It's in the Bag™ program visit: www.itsinthebagmn.org. If your business wants to begin participation in the Message in a Bottle™ program to recycle beverage containers, please contact Ellen Telander at (651) 641-4560. For more information on the Message in a Bottle™ program visit: www.recycleminnesota.org.

The program expansion is possible due in part to a grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development's Solid Waste Management grant program which provides funding to launch the programs in 10 additional areas throughout Minnesota. Additional assistance and funding for the expansion has been provided by the Minnesota Beverage Association and the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District. "The beauty of this program is that it becomes self-sustaining in six to twelve months time," said Telander.

Minnesota Waste Wise is a nonprofit affiliate program of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and is committed to helping Minnesota businesses save money through waste reduction, resource conservation and energy efficiency. Waste Wise has enjoyed more than 15 years of experience consulting with businesses to achieve their environmental sustainability goals.

The Recycling Association of Minnesota is committed to promoting resource conservation through waste prevention, reuse, recycling, composting and purchasing practices using the most cost-effective and environmentally sound methods available in Minnesota. RAM also provides outreach activities to the public through the America Recycles Day campaign, its Web site, recycled product educational kits and other means. RAM has more than 200 members from the public, private and nonprofit sectors. RAM is the state organizer for America Recycles Day. RAM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Airpark Products and Services is located near the Airport and the 148th Air Guard Base. Airpark is a Waste wise member.

Western Lake Superior Sanitary District provides award-winning wastewater and

solid waste services to residents, businesses and industries within its 530 square mile legislative boundaries in Southern St. Louis and northern Carlton counties, and is a nationally recognized leader in pollution prevention.

USDA Rural Development finances housing, infrastructure and economic development projects in rural areas. Since 2001, the agency has invested over \$4.2 billion throughout rural Minnesota.

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About RAM: The Recycling Association of Minnesota RAM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with more than 200 members from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. RAM is the Minnesota affiliate of the National Recycling Coalition. RAM is committed to promoting resource conservation through waste prevention, reuse, recycling, composting and purchasing practices using the most cost effective and environmentally sound methods available in Minnesota. RAM is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

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