

Gustavus Disposal & Recycling Center (DRC) Quarterly Staff Report
Ian Barrier, DRC Manager\Operator
Wednesday October 13th, 2023

My last quarterly was for the August 14th General Meeting. My next quarterly report is scheduled for the February 12th, 2024 General Meeting.

General Operations and Management

Labor

This past quarter\summer season I had Sydney Glasmann as my main temp employee and sadly she left on the 1st of October which has left me working solo for the majority of October. Syd plans to return sometime in May to join in on the fun at the DRC for another summer season. Syd learned to preform many of the tasks at the DRC and became fluent in the use of our equipment and more commonly used tools such as reciprocating saws, angle-grinders, and crow bars. I arranged for her to participate in a online class in the middle of October named “Solid Waste Bootcamp” which is taught by ADEC and has a lot of good information on waste management and strategy. I have taken this class before and joined in again as a refresher. We both completed this class on 10-26-2023.

Sven Hoosan work agreement has expired and he currently hasn’t rejoined the labor pool. Paul Dzuby helped during the summer, working three days a week, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. He is currently back at his job at the Gustavus School. Paul plans on staying in the labor pool. I did have an individual apply and they were employed for a few days but unfortunately the work load was more than anticipated and they resigned. Anything helps and I appreciate the few days they were here.

Equipment

As I mentioned in my last report we had our yellow GPI baler fail in June due to an internally leaking hydraulic pump which left the baler unable to compress waste. This left us to use our larger purple Cram-A-Lot baler for all baling. During our peak season It was demonstrated that we can handle the flow of materials coming into the DRC with just the Cram-A-Lot baler. It did mean there were moments when we had a large amount of trash present in the building when we were baling recyclables instead of trash; but it was never a major issue beyond appearance.

During September the new parts arrived for the GPI baler and included a new electric motor, new hydraulic pump, new hydraulic lines, and a new hydraulic fluid reservoir. The kit is an upgrade kit release in the early 2000s. I managed to get the components installed during September and got the GPI baler back into operation. Due to the success of using the Cram-A-Lot we are going to continue to bale all materials with this baler and have been using the GPI as a pre-crusher for bulky objects and to compact waste that doesn’t require sorting. This reduces the volume of waste on the floor at a given time. Once the GPI baler is full we eject the material and move it the Cram-A-Lot for final baling. It is quick and easy to load the pre-compacted waste into the Cram-A-Lot baler.

I have yet to find the time to make any structural repairs to the Cram-A-Lot but have been collecting materials to do so.

Annual Reports\Data Reports

I have successfully compiled a 5 year comparison which is attached to the bottom of this report. Thanks to Paul Berry for coming in and helping me with compiling the comparison report.

Recycling

The DRC bales, boxes, and palletize many different kinds of materials, most of it is shipped to Seattle for recycling. Recently I learned from Sean Mattson who is in charge of the NPS waste depot that Skookum recycling in Juneau will take large quantity of scrap metal for a small price. I then contacted Skookum and discovered they would charge \$150.00 for a 20' container of scrap metal which is a great deal compared to the expense to ship this material to Seattle. I would still need to find a way to get the 20' container to Skookum and the cost. I plan to investigate this option further the next time I consider shipping scrap metal. If it all works out the city could save money by shipping scrap metal to Skookum. The final details are yet to be determined but I wanted to share.

A recent and unfortunate event occurred relating to my first scrap metal shipment to Seattle. A container of scrap metal was refused my Seattle Iron & Metal Works due to radioactive activity coming from our shipment. Fortunately after many phone calls from Kathy Leary and I along with help from AML an investigation by the USCG was performed and it was concluded that the radioactive substance was Radium-226 which is a naturally occurring element found in rocks, soil, and metals everywhere on earth. I am happy to say this means nobody has been exposed to a dangerous or harmful amount of radiation and wasn't due to neglectful action in the Gustavus waste stream.

Compost Yard

This past quarter I have had the opportunity to fully experience the entire process of our compost program, from the mixing to the screening, to caring of the compost cure pile. Previously I have mixed the food waste and piled it inside the quonset building but never had the experience of screening the compost piles. Overall it is an enjoyable process to experience but I have realized it can be a delicate and time consuming procedure to screen the compost piles. Correct speed settings of our trommel is important.

Too slow and the process takes an eternity; too fast and I have noticed the screened material is coarser. Correct moisture content is very important. During the summer our compost piles become too dry and the composting process stops prematurely. The dry material doesn't move on the trommel belt very efficiently when it's too dry and requires being poked with a stick or danced upon to keep the process moving. When the material is moist it seems to flow on the conveyor much better. I believe this has to do with weight of the material. I have been leaving our "overs" (coarse material screened out of the compost) pile exposed to the rain and have been mixing it periodically as well which has increased its moisture content and I believe this has helped as my last screening event took less time. I'm excited to have this year's compost tested and sold to the public next spring.

Community Chest

The Community Chest was busy over summer and I saw a lot of material flow in and out of the chest with a big purge this October. The Chest has also shipped several boxes of donations to the thrift store in Hoonah. The volunteers over the summer include: Annie Mackovjak, Viki Bender, Maribeth Jarvis, Becky King, Mary Williams, Robynn Jones, Jeanette Dehart, Vikki Garret, Trisha Dawson, Betty Hanson, Michelle Bray, Deb Johnson, Rose Marie Gray, Cheryl Smith, Joyce Gallagher, Kim Ney, Paula Kitchu, Hellen Buttram, Maggie (O'Brian?), and Joyce Lupro. I would like to thank our volunteers as they are the heart of the chest. Sorry if I missed anyone!

This concludes my report and feel free to reach out with any questions, thank you.

Report compiled by ian.barrier@gustavus-ak.gov