

APD > News & Reports > Media Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 22, 2008

CONTACT:

Sarah Williams, DEP,
(850) 245-2112 or (850) 519-2897
Linda McDonald, DMS,
(850) 921-5266
Melanie Mowry Etters
Communications Director
850-488-4257

THREE Florida State Agencies Partner To Increase Recycling In State Buildings

~ State employees practice environmental stewardship ~

TALLAHASSEE - The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) and the Florida Department of Management Services (DMS) are partnering to enhance recycling opportunities in state office buildings as well as provide employment opportunities. As a pilot effort, DEP's Bob Martinez Center will add additional receptacles for collecting plastic, aluminum and tin cans. Paper collection will also expand beyond the current level of just white paper and cardboard to include all mixed paper. After evaluation of the pilot project, APD plans to add more state buildings to its recyclables collection route.

"By adding plastic and aluminum to the office paper already being collected, our employees at this particular building will be able to increase our recycling efforts," said DEP Secretary Michael W. Sole. "We are thrilled to be collaborating with two of our sister state agencies to put this vision into action."

APD will provide the building with receptacles to collect plastic bottles and aluminum cans, and DMS staff will empty them in a central outside container. APD will then coordinate collecting the recyclables, providing employment opportunities for about 90 residents who have developmental disabilities at Sunland Marianna. The recycling program at Sunland Marianna collects and recovers recyclable materials from surrounding communities, sorts the materials on-site and then sells the materials. The money collected supports resident activities at Sunland.

APD Director Jane E. Johnson said, "The state is looking for ways to make Florida greener and support the Governor's environmental initiatives. People with disabilities want to work and learn new job skills, plus help the environment. We are so happy that we can combine these two important initiatives-employing people with disabilities and recycling, as part of this new effort."

In the past year, DEP employees in the Bob Martinez Center have recycled 833 tons of office paper. With the addition of plastic and aluminum recycling, DEP will divert even more recyclable waste from landfills. In 2005, more than nine million tons of municipal solid waste was recycled in Florida, including 578,000 tons of newspaper, 165,000 tons of glass, 44,000 tons of aluminum cans and 51,000 tons of plastic bottles.

"Good environmental stewardship begins with state government," said Linda H. South, secretary of the Department of Management Services. "This partnership is a great testament of how we can lead by example with sustainable efforts to protect our state's resources."

On July 13, 2007, Governor Charlie Crist set a new direction for Florida's energy future by signing a groundbreaking set of executive orders during the Serve to Preserve Florida Summit on Global Climate Change. In Executive Order 07-126, Governor Crist challenged Florida's state government to lead by example to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase energy efficiency and conserve energy and natural resources.

For more information about recycling, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/recycling/.

###