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County's Household Hazardous Waste Program Recognized for Recycling Rechargeable Batteries

The Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program of the County's Division of Solid Waste Services (Department of Public Works and Transportation/DPWT) was recognized today with a regional award for its successful efforts in recycling rechargeable batteries.

The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) presented a 2007 "Regional Recycling Leadership Award" to DPWT Director Arthur Holmes and HHW Manager Rick Dimont during a ceremony at the Recycling Center located on Route 355 in Derwood.

As a participant in RBRC's *Call2Recycle*[™] program, Montgomery County's HHW Program has conducted collection programs for rechargeable batteries at various household hazardous waste stations throughout the county. In 2006, more than 6,300 pounds of rechargeable batteries were collected.

Call2Recycle is "the most comprehensive nationwide rechargeable battery and cell phone recycling program." Currently, more than 6,000 communities and public agencies from across the United States and in Canada are enrolled in the program that provides information and resources for recycling old cell phones and used portable rechargeable batteries.

Speaking at the ceremony, Arthur Holmes, director of the Department of Public Works and Transportation said, "More and more, we're realizing how fragile our ecosystem is and how severely we're challenging that delicate balance. Technology has given us many new products that add convenience to our lives, especially with portable, battery-run devices.

"But," Holmes noted, "with that convenience comes a responsibility to take care in how we dispose of them. Our rechargeable battery recycling program helps to ensure that the various products used in these batteries do not contaminate our environment."

Household Hazardous Waste Program earns award

Dimont said the success of Montgomery County's program was due to the "support and participation of our local community." He also thanked "RBRC for giving us the means to protect the environment in such an effective and efficient way."

Atlanta-based RBRC is a nonprofit, public service corporation dedicated to rechargeable battery recycling. More than 50,000 retail, business and community collection locations in the United States and Canada participate in the organization's rechargeable battery recycling program.

Hugh Morrow, RBRC's Northeast Regional Recycling manager said, "The Household Hazardous Waste Program in Montgomery County is especially commendable because of the group's dedication to creating an internal recycling program. It is our hope," he added, "that their hard work inspires other organizations to answer the *Call2Recycle*."

Montgomery County's program was one of just four regional award winners. Also recognized were Hennepin County Environmental Services in Minneapolis, the City of Austin (TX) Household Hazardous Waste Management Program and the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune Environmental Management Division (NC).

The annual Recycling Leadership Awards are presented to four regional and two national (one in the US and one in Canada) winners.

For more information about the County's rechargeable battery and Household Hazardous Waste Program, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/solidwaste, click on "Collection Services," then "How do I recycle/dispose of...?" and go to "Batteries – household, rechargeable."

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