



PRESS RELEASE

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NERC Announces Environmental Sustainability Leadership Award Winners

Earlier this year the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) inaugurated a new recognition program – the Environmental Sustainability Leadership Awards. Lynn Rubinstein, NERC Executive Director explained that “this is an exciting new initiative that we are delighted to launch in conjunction with our 30th anniversary.”

Award winners were announced yesterday, at NERC’s 30th Anniversary Celebration in Amherst, Massachusetts. NERC is honored to recognize the award recipients for their work consistent with NERC’s mission to promote sustainable materials management by supporting traditional and innovative solid waste best practices, focusing on waste prevention, toxics reduction, reuse, recycling and organics recovery.

“The quality of the nominees and the importance of the work they have accomplished is remarkable,” commented NERC Board President Robert Isner, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

The Involvement in NERC Award recognizes a person who has made a substantial contribution to furthering NERC’s mission. George MacDonald of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection was the recipient.

George was one of the longest serving NERC Board members; 22 years. According to NERC Vice President, Rick Watson of the Delaware Solid Waste Authority, “during his tenure, George demonstrated a true commitment to the organization. He was an inspiration to NERC staff and many others around the region, not only for his dedication to NERC, but also as a leader in advancing materials management.”

The Greatest Impact from Collaboration with NERC award recognizes an organization or individual that has helped drive measurable change as a result of partnering with NERC. Resource Recycling Magazine was honored with this award. Lynn Rubinstein, NERC Executive Director observed that “Resource Recycling Magazine and its topic-specific publications have provided significant support to NERC by regularly helping to promote our events, webinars, and project outcomes. Thanks to this support, NERC’s initiatives have garnered national recognition and engagement, and improved collaborative opportunities for the organization and its members.”

In the category of NERC Environmental Sustainability Leadership, NERC recognized three award winners. Each achieved significant environmental results through waste diversion efforts in the Northeast.

In the private sector, Cox Enterprises was recognized for its national Zero Waste to Landfill program. "Cox locations in the NERC member states have implemented comprehensive waste diversion programs, led public engagement campaigns, and participated actively in environmental cleanups. The result is that their facilities have achieved an average 50 percent waste diversion rate," noted Kaley Laleker, Maryland Department of the Environment and NERC Vice President.

In the category of young professional, Alex Williams of Blue Earth Compost was the winner. Isner explained that "Blue Earth is a food scrap collection company based in Hartford, Connecticut. Alex and his family have grown this business from a small collection program of 20 homes to close to 150 homes and 35 businesses. Alex has done every job in the business from accounting to food scrap collection, and with the growth of the business has been able to create 3 jobs for his community."

In the public sector category, Molly Ettenborough, Recycling & Sustainability Manager for Newburyport, Massachusetts, was the award recipient. Molly was recognized for her leadership on Zero Waste initiatives, the Newburyport Organics Pilot, and the Recycle IQ program. She has also contributed to of LED street light deployment and solar energy projects.

In addition to the Environmental Sustainability Leadership Award winners, NERC recognized the following organizations and individuals for their outstanding work.

- Chittenden Solid Waste District, Vermont for leadership in food waste reduction strategies and programming.
- Casella Recycling for its recycling sustainability program and efforts to make glass recycling viable.
- Organix Solutions for its efforts to promote curbside collection of organics.
- Alisha Raby Cefalo, City of Lynn, Massachusetts, for her leadership in implementing the Recycling IQ program in the City of Lynn.

NERC also acknowledged the excellent work and contributions of:

- Samsung
- The Carton Council
- Ray Dube, Sustainability Manager, Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Northern New England
- Keurig Green Mountain
- Stephen Greene, Lowell Folk Festival, Massachusetts

- NRRA School CLUB, New Hampshire
- Dominick Cingari, Grade A Shop Rite, Connecticut
- James Bentley, St. Johnsbury Academy, Vermont
- Armstrong World Industries Ceiling Tile Recycling Program
- Shannon Choquette, Northeast Kingdom Solid Waste Management District, Vermont
- Adam Clark, City of Concord, New Hampshire
- Syracuse University Sustainability Management