CITY HALL STUDY SHOWS LARGE INCREASE IN OFFICE RECYCLING

VALLEJO – A just-completed study has revealed that a comprehensive office paper recycling program at Vallejo City Hall and other city facilities has increased the amount of office paper recycling by 260 percent.

"We're extremely pleased with these results," said Derek Crutchfield, the City's Recycling Coordinator. "This was really an employee-driven study that proved we could all be doing a lot more to increase our level of recycling."

Built around a six-month contest held at the beginning of 2002, the goal was to increase office paper recycling in all City of Vallejo offices by doing the following:

- Providing desk side recycling bins for all City employees.
- Placing office paper recycling bins near all copy machines.
- Informing City employees of which paper materials were acceptable and non acceptable for recycling.
 - Insuring consistent recycling pickup from workstations and copiers.

Crutchfield and Sara Gallegos, Vallejo Garbage Service Recycling Manager, performed a simple waste stream audit at the beginning and end of the contest to determine the amounts of material that were being recycled. Following the audit, approximately 300 desk-side recycling bins were distributed to City employees and 56 large square recycling bins were placed in the vicinity of most copy machines in the offices in the following City facilities: City Hall, Fleming Hill Water Treatment Plant, Housing Authority, Fire Departments, Fighting Back and the Police Departments.

Each recycling bin was accompanied with a list of acceptable and non-acceptable types of office paper that could be recycled.

Periodic checks of recycling bins and trash receptacles were conducted during the six months of the contest. Employees were given a ticket for properly recycling office paper and if there were no recyclables found in the trash. A winner was selected by a raffle drawing every two weeks and winners were presented with a gift certificate of lunch for two.

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Local businesses that contributed lunches to the contest were Sac's Tasty Hot Dogs, Tacos Jalisco, Mangia Bene and Empire Buffet.

Since the contest has ended the janitorial staff reports that City employees are continuing to recycle office paper, and there continues to be less office paper in the trash then before the contest.

"This contest really raised the level of awareness among our employees," Crutchfield said. "We're finding that our employees are more conscious of their office paper recycling practices at their work stations.

"We hope this study inspires other businesses in Vallejo to look at incentives to increase their recycling efforts and reduce their garbage bill," Crutchfield added. "We need everyone's help to meet the 50 percent waste diversion goal by the end of 2003."