Continuous Improvement in UVM Recycling

“All Hands” Meeting – July 2002

Presented by: Erica Spiegel, Solid Waste Manager
UVM began recycling over 10 years ago.

Now, we collect over 400 tons of paper, cans and bottles every year.
The “Old” Way

- Paper and bottles were collected in plastic bags.
• Recycling Staff picked up bags using a van.

• Staff lifted between 300-350 bags per day, each weighing between 10 to 30 pounds.
Then, bags were taken to Centennial Field, opened, and the contents were emptied into large containers.

Containers were hauled away by a private contractor.
The “New” Way

Using more automation, less “muscle”
New Collection Truck

We tested several types of trucks, did cost analysis…and purchased new vehicle in Summer 2001.
Custodial staff were trained on new ways to collect paper....and reduce the use of plastic bags.
New Truck...

- Uses hydraulic lifting, rather than manual lifting
- Reduces time spent on collection route
- Reduces back strain & injury
Eliminate Use of Contractor for Hauling

• UVM staff drive directly to Recycling Facility in Williston to drop off materials.
In its first year, truck transported 429 tons of paper, cans and bottles directly to the Recycling Facility.
Results...

- Amount saved by reducing plastic bags: $6,000 per year
- Amount saved on contractor hauling fees: $12,000 per year
- Reducing back strain on recycling crew: Priceless!
Other Innovations in Waste Management & Recycling
Trash Compactors

- Installation of large self-contained trash compactors
  - Improves ergonomics (loading trash off a dock)
  - Improves sanitation, odor and rodent control
  - Reduces trash hauling costs (holds 2 weeks of trash at a time)
Better Recycle Bins

• Over the next several years, we will **phase in** new “standard” recycle bins.
  – Easier for Custodial staff to service.
  – Maintenance-free.
  – Lower purchase cost
  – More sturdy and better décor for UVM buildings.
UVM Recycling…
Improving for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century