

News Release



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

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DEQ Settles with Portland Recycler Over Disposal of Recyclable Materials

*Settlement includes \$4,800 penalty and \$19,200 contribution to program
aimed at improving regional recycling efforts*

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Smurfit-Stone Container Enterprises, Inc., have settled alleged violations related to disposal of recyclable materials processed at the company's material recovery facility at 6328 SE 100th Ave. in Portland. The incidents occurred from January 2003 through August 2004.

The settlement stems from Smurfit-Stone's shipment of recyclable materials (non-fiber materials such as plastic and metal that were accepted at the facility from residential curbside collection) to the Wasco County Landfill for disposal. Under Oregon law, recyclable materials may not be disposed. While Smurfit-Stone does not agree that the disposal was illegal, the company cooperated with DEQ in reorganizing its operations to ensure that more materials would be recovered from its sorting process. Under the settlement terms, Smurfit-Stone will pay a \$4,800 penalty and also contribute \$19,200 to a Metro government regional program designed to improve local recycling efforts by reducing the amount of garbage that contaminates recyclables in curbside recycling bins and carts.

"Recycling is very important to Oregonians and it is important for Oregonians to have confidence in the state's recycling system. That is one reason why DEQ took this enforcement action," said DEQ Director Stephanie Hallock. "We are pleased that Smurfit-Stone has stepped up to improve its operations and also that the company is contributing to a Supplemental Environmental Project which will provide tangible benefits to the residents of Portland and the region."

(More/over)

Smurfit-Stone, based in Chicago, Ill., is one of the world's largest recyclers and marketers of paper, and its Portland plant has been in business for more than 100 years. Prior to 2003, Smurfi-Stone sorted its paper and cardboard fiber materials and marketed its non-fiber materials to Columbia Resource Co. in Vancouver, Wash., for further processing. These shipments were detailed in Smurfit-Stone's annual Material Recovery Surveys to DEQ solid waste officials. Smurfit-Stone's 2003 survey, however, showed that while it continued to accept recyclable materials, it did not market any of the non-fiber materials that year from curbside sources. In subsequent investigations last fall, DEQ determined that on many occasions between January 2003 and August 2004, Smurfit-Stone disposed of bales of allegedly recoverable solid waste to the Wasco County Landfill and marketed little if any of the non-fiber materials from curbside sources.

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