



# MassDEP NEWS

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

November 13, 2006

**CONTACT:**

Ed Coletta 617-292-5737

## **Mass. Convention Center Authority's Recycling & Waste Diversion Efforts Garner 'WasteWise Reduction Leadership Award'**

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today awarded the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) a "WasteWise Reduction Leadership Award" in recognition of a food-waste composting initiative that was seamlessly integrated into the day-to-day operations at the Boston Convention and Exposition Center (BCEC).

The BCEC is the first convention center to join the WasteWise program nationally and the first in the area to implement food-waste diversion into existing efforts at waste reduction and recycling. Over the past few years of operation, for example, the BCEC has consistently worked with individual trade shows in order to minimize wastes that are commonly generated and at the same time maximize recycling. The many materials that were routinely collected for recycling include: glass, aluminum, plastic, paper, cardboard, pallets, grease and organics.

Now, in addition, any food scraps generated in the preparation of meals at BCEC are diverted from the waste stream by the kitchen staff and hauled to local farms for composting. Also, any excess prepared food that cannot be donated to charitable organizations is relegated to the composting program rather than tossed in the trash. These simple changes have brought positive returns. For example, during one four-day conference last spring, the BCEC diverted over 20 tons of food waste.

"The MCCA has truly taken a leadership role by demonstrating that large venues can successfully integrate recycling and waste diversion into their business operations," MassDEP Acting Commissioner Arleen O'Donnell said. "We are looking to partner this approach with other large venues, such as hotels and stadiums, in order to improve these programs, making Massachusetts a place where citizens and visitors alike can more easily participate in recycling."

"EPA is pleased to honor the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority for its commendable achievements, ongoing dedication and continued commitment to waste reduction," said Susan Bodine, Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response.

*(more)*



# MassDEP NEWS

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

James Rooney, the Executive Director of MCCA, in accepting the award noted, “This is a great recognition for the team at the MCCA, which has done a wonderful job finding ways to decrease the impact our facilities and events have on the environment. Because conventions are so huge and short term by nature, there is an enormous amount of waste associated with every event. We have and will continue to find new ways to reduce, reuse and recycle the waste we produce – including things like recycling carpets for state highway asphalt.”

Massachusetts Convention Center Authority owns and oversees the operations of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center in Boston, the MassMutual Center in Springfield, and the Boston Common Parking Garage. The MCCA plans to use lessons learned at the BCEC to further expand their recycling and food waste programs at all their facilities.

The Massachusetts WasteWise Awards, sponsored by MassDEP and EPA, are given to companies that demonstrate recycling leadership, sustainability and innovation. The two agencies jointly support the Massachusetts WasteWise Program, which provides waste reduction assistance to businesses and organizations. Participation is voluntary.

###