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Creating a Green Cincinnati - Message from the Mayor

Making Cincinnati a more environmentally friendly and more “green” city is one of the top priorities of my administration. That is why one of my first initiatives was reestablishing the Office of Environmental Quality (OEQ). With the help of Council and many concerned citizens, we were able to fund the new office in the City Budget last December.

I am glad to welcome the new Director of the OEQ, Larry Falkin. The City Manager chose the new director after an extensive nationwide search. Mr. Falkin began in the beginning of July and I am looking forward to working with him to make the OEQ a success. He comes to Cincinnati with an exceptional record of leadership in environmental management and law in Kansas City, Missouri.



Mayor Mark Mallory

As the OEQ was being reorganized, we moved forward with several environmental initiatives. We launched the Cincinnati Green Initiative in the Park’s Department to focus on energy efficiency through solar powered trash-compactors, bio-fuel, and a pilot solar and wind energy project. We started a pilot recycling program at Cincinnati Public Schools that collected 13.5 tons of recyclables. We passed a new green building tax credit to encourage builders to use energy efficient green design elements in projects. And I joined with Mayors across the country to sign the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the city level.

Now, as we welcome the new director of the OEQ, we can take our efforts to the next level. It is time for the city of Cincinnati to become a leader on combating global warming by promoting conservation, decreasing our energy usage and reducing energy costs. It is our responsibility to make our community a healthier place to live.

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New OEQ Director

Dear Friends,

I am honored and excited to have the opportunity to serve the citizens of Cincinnati as Director of the Office of Environmental Quality. It is my intention to be an advocate for sustainability and for good environmental stewardship practices within city government and throughout the community.

In more than 20 years as an environmental professional, I have learned that there is rarely if ever a true conflict between a community's environmental, economic, and social objectives. To be successful, a community must take care of its natural resources, its people, and its business community. No one of these sectors can advance for long when any of the others are lacking. This approach is sometimes referred to as the triple bottom line.

I believe that city government has a crucial role to play in promoting sustainability. While people and businesses may come and go in our increasingly mobile society, the City of Cincinnati will never retire to Florida or relocate its offices offshore. City government is here in this location for the long haul, and our long term success will depend on the degree to which we are able to simultaneously nurture our environment, our residents, and our economy.

I look forward to becoming a part of the Cincinnati community, and hope that many of you will join me as advocates for sustainability in Cincinnati.

Sincerely,

Larry Falkin, Director
Office of Environmental Quality

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Air Quality

The Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services "2006 Air Quality Data Report" is now available online at <http://www.hcdoes.org/airquality/pdf/2006DataReport.pdf>

2006 Air Quality Index Summary

AQI Level	Description	Number of Days
0-50	"Good"	124
51-100	"Moderate"	223
101-150	"Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups"	16
151-200	"Unhealthy"	0
201-300	"Very Unhealthy"	0

Note: Cincinnati air quality complaints/Title X enforcement data will be available in the October 2007 OEQ newsletter.

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Brownfield Redevelopment

The City's MetroWest (Queen City Barrel) Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund (CORF) \$3 million grant application is one of the highest scored applications in the state. The project property is approximately 18 acres in size and is located in Lower Price Hill, southwest of the intersection of Gest and Evans Streets. A plan is in place to develop 250,000 sq. ft. of light industrial/office-flex space and create 400 new jobs. Grant awards will be made on July 25, 2007.

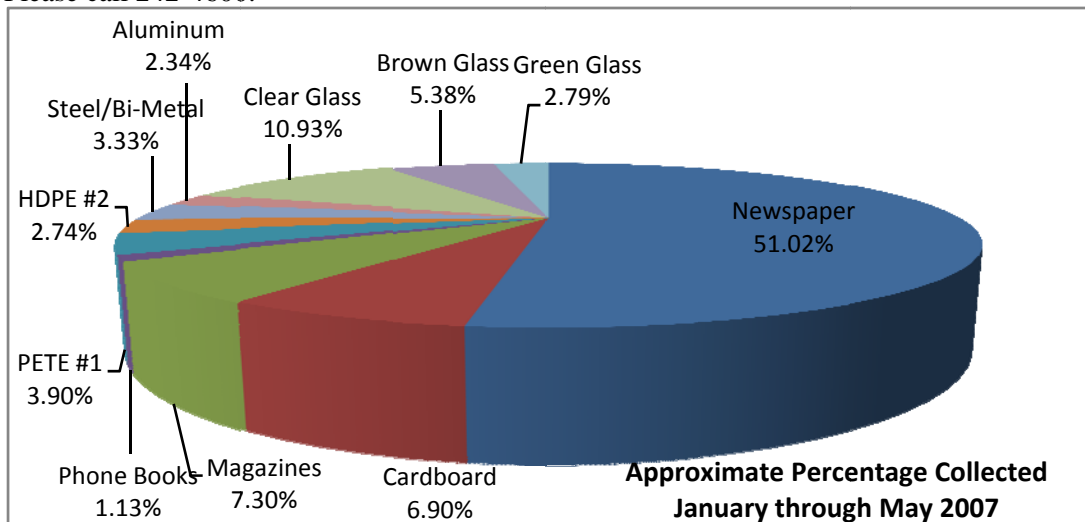
The City was awarded a CORF grant to remediate the former Kirk & Blum Manufacturing Co. and Unova Industrial Automation Systems properties for the Millworks project located in Oakley, bordered by Disney, Marburg, and Forrer Streets. The developer for the Millworks project plans to complete property acquisition by the end of the third quarter 2007. All asbestos abatement, demolition, and soil remediation activities are expected to be completed by late summer 2008. The mixed use development of the property will include residential, retail, office, and entertainment space.

For more brownfield information, contact Bonnie Phillips at 513-352-5310 or bonnie.phillips@cincinnati-oh.gov.

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Curbside Recycling Program

City of Cincinnati (City) residents proudly participate in Ohio's oldest and largest curbside recycling program. Eighteen years after its start, Cincinnati's recycling program still runs strong with approximately 39% of the population participating in curbside recycling each week and many more using one of five recycling drop-offs throughout the city. During the first five months of 2007, the City collected nearly 4,200 tons of material. The City wishes to build on this success and further increase residential recycling participation and reduce waste. The City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Services, Rumpke Recycling, Inc., Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, and Hamilton County Environmental Services will continue to work together to increase the participation in the City's recycling program. In the Fall of 2007, the City along with its partners will kick off a Recycling Marketing Campaign to celebrate the 18th anniversary of Cincinnati's Curbside Program. The primary goal of the campaign is to increase the City's recycling rate from 9.19 percent to 10 percent. Sign up to receive your free recycling bin and begin recycling. Please call 242-4600.



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Energy Management

At the direction of City Manager, Milton Dohoney, OEQ recently formed an interdepartmental Energy Management Team.



The objectives of this team will be to develop both a short and long-term energy management plan that focuses on reducing utility and fuel usage, promoting conservation and saving costs. This team will also draft a city-wide policy on energy efficiency.

“We’ll be looking at energy reduction opportunities that have already been identified in several departments to see if there is an opportunity to duplicate their successes elsewhere. In addition, the team will determine what other cities similar to Cincinnati are doing to see what we can learn from them and look at all available energy assistance programs.” says Bonnie Phillips, Environmental Compliance Manager, OEQ.

The City of Cincinnati will partner with entities such as the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Energy Efficiency to determine what resources and technical assistance they can bring to the table.

“We’ll also assess city buildings and facilities to determine the baseline energy usage and look at ways to reduce our energy use”, said Ms. Phillips.

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Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Hamilton County Environmental Services is once again providing household hazardous waste collection for Hamilton County residents.

For further information, locations, times and acceptable items, go to Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services website at www.hamiltoncountyrecycles.org/home.html - click on “2007 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program”.

Questions? Call 513-946-7700 or email susan.schumacher@hamilton-co.org. For a list of organizations and businesses that will accept household hazardous waste throughout the year, [click here](#).

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Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Grants

Lead-based paint hazard control activities are an integral and necessary part of the residential rehabilitation projects undertaken by the City. Over 90% of the City's housing stock was built prior to 1978 when the use of lead-based paint was banned. Various programs give outright lead grants to applicants to encourage their participation such as the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program (through the Home Ownership Center of Greater Cincinnati) for low/moderate-income single-family owner occupied homes and for multi-family structures through the Rental Rehab Program using Housing and Urban Development Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Grants.

Market rate residential rehabilitation projects moved forward without a grant and the lead remediation cost was absorbed under the regular construction project budget.

Over the past five years (2002-2006), the Department of Community Development and Planning has assisted in residential rehabilitation where 809 dwelling units were made lead safe. In the same time period another 755 dwelling units were tested for lead-based paint and found to have no hazards. The properties having no lead hazards were built after 1950.

The City of Cincinnati has received two grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for lead hazard reduction activities in housing. The first grant was completed in 2001 and 278 dwelling units were made lead safe using lead abatement treatments. The most recent grant ended in 2006 and 222 dwelling units were made lead safe through a combination of abatement and interim control techniques. The City of Cincinnati, earlier in the month, applied for two grants to address elevated blood lead level cases in the neighborhoods where most of the cases are originating. Seventy percent of the City's elevated blood lead levels originate in 15 neighborhoods.

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"LEED" Tax Abatement Program

In October of 2006, City Council passed an [ordinance \(No. 274-06\)](#) which provides an automatic tax exemption for newly constructed or rehabilitated commercial or residential properties if the property is constructed or rehabilitated to [Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design \(LEED\)](#) certifications. This tax abatement incentive is designed to stimulate revitalization, retain residents and attract new homeowners and is part of the City's continuing efforts to increase homeownership and leverage neighborhood investment.

On June 12, 2007, as part of the National Homeownership Month, the City of Cincinnati and Sky Lofts LLC announced the first residential participant in the new LEED tax abatement program.

The [Edge Condominiums](#), which will be located at 310 Culvert Street in Downtown Cincinnati,

"Ohio Lead Awareness Week" July 15 through July 22, 2007

Cincinnati Health Department risk assessors will be testing paint chips and toys on:

- Saturday, July 14, 2007
[Building Value](#)
2901 Gilbert Avenue
(Walnut Hills, just north of Eden Park)

Please bring crockery, jewelry, toys and paint chips from your home for free testing of lead sources in your environment.

CHD will also be offering free blood lead tests for children below the age of 6 years at the following location:

- Saturday, July 21, 2007
from 9am to 2 pm
[Price Hill Recreation Center](#)
959 Hawthorne Avenue
(off Grand Avenue)

is a 77 unit residential project that will start construction this fall. The Edge Condominiums will be lofts ranging in size from 1700 to 4000 square feet, with prices from \$165,000 to \$650,000 plus 3 penthouses over \$1 million each.

What is LEED?

The LEED Green Building Rating System is the national benchmark for high performance green buildings. [Learn More.](#)

For additional information regarding the City's LEED tax abatement program, contact Eric Denson at (513) 352-4981 or eric.denson@cincinnati-oh.gov.

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Mayor's Green Leaf Summer Jobs in Parks

From June 18 through August 10, 2007 the Cincinnati Parks Department is sponsoring the "Mayor's Green Leaf Jobs" program which provides education and job training for the students, and benefits our community with enhancements to the City's award-winning park system.



The Mayor and City Council funded a summer youth jobs program for 2007 that will enable Parks to hire 50 students to work in parks across the city. These young workers, age 14-17, will learn basic job skills, as well as conservation and green space maintenance techniques.

For more information on the Mayor's Green Leaf Summer Jobs program contact Sylvonna Bedford at 861-8970 (Sylvonna.bedford@cincinnati-oh.gov) or Ruthann Spears at 861-8970 (ruthann.spears@cincinnati-oh.gov)

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Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) – Consent Decree

The Wet Weather Improvement Plan

In the late 1980's and 1990's, the federal government, through the Clean Water Act, called for the reduction and/or elimination of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and combined sewer overflows (CSOs). To address local overflows the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County entered into two Consent Decrees: an Interim Partial Consent Decree in 2002 and a Global Consent Decree in 2004. Neighboring municipalities under similar consent decrees include Toledo, Louisville, Columbus and Northern Kentucky.

As required by the consent decrees, the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSD), the County-owned sewer agency managed by the City, developed and submitted to state and federal regulators for review and approval, a Wet Weather Improvement Program (Program). The proposed Program is a multi-volume document that presents MSD's comprehensive plan to address SSOs and CSOs in Hamilton County. Although the proposed Program is currently under review by the regulators, MSD has moved forward with several components, such as the Water-In-Basement (WIB) Response Program, which specifically addresses sewage backups into basements due to sewers being over capacity during wet weather events.

MSD's approach to the development of the proposed Program was to balance potential costs with benefits and environmental impacts. MSD established the following three goals:

- Meeting state and federal regulations by complying with the Clean Water Act and the Consent Decrees;
- Improving local water quality; and
- Keeping efforts affordable for ratepayers.

The proposed Program consists of approximately 380 individual projects in the MSD service area throughout Hamilton County. The proposed Program's estimated cost is approximately \$1.99 billion (in 2006 dollars).

Additional information is available at MSD's 24-hour Customer Service telephone number at (513) 352-4900, and on MSD's website at: <http://www.msdbg.org/>.

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Parks Department Hosting Emerging Green Builders (EGB) Green Building Competition

On June 8, 2007, a jury convened to judge the entries to the Green Building Competition sponsored by the Emerging Green Builders and the Cincinnati Park Board. The entrant chosen for first place won \$1,000 and moves on to the national competition which is judged in Chicago in November at the Greenbuilder Conference. The jury was composed of architects from a number of local architectural firms as well as Steven Schuckman, the Superintendent of Design and Planning for Cincinnati Parks. Other jurors included Bob Garlock with Bayer, Becker, Greg Hutzel with BHDP, Shaun Morris with KZF, Alan Warner with GBBN, and Steve Haber, Principal at Glazerworks. The winning scheme proposed a series of small and free-standing "comfort station" structures, with solar panels for heat and composting toilets.

A number of "green" building ideas were proposed within the submitted schemes and these included introducing natural light into the interiors to reduce the amount of artificial light needed, openings for natural ventilation, capturing and reusing rainwater for irrigation, cleaning and flushing, solar cell panels to provide electricity, use of recycled and salvaged materials for some of the building fabric, the use of motion sensors for lighting and flushing to save energy, the application of a landscaped, green roof, and using explicit displays or elements of the designs themselves to teach environmental lessons.

The Park Board will explore using some of the ideas which emerged from the competition in order to build and renovate in an even more environmentally responsible manner in the future. This competition was one more initiative of the Park Board in its continual seeking of innovative and green design methods, construction practices and operational practices. In comments by Mayor Mallory at the event, he stressed the importance of building green and applauded the on-going green initiatives of the Cincinnati Park Board.

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