



CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

**TO: Mayor Prussing and Members of the Urbana City Council**  
**FROM: Bart Hagston, Environmental Sustainability Manager**  
**DATE: April 21, 2011**  
**RE: Recent Sale of Compost Bins and Rain Barrels**

On April 9, 2011, the Environmental Management Division coordinated a truckload sale of compost bins and rain barrels to the general public. The stated objective of the event was to support the goals of the Urbana Mayor and City Council relating to water conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable landscaping and gardening. It was hoped that the event would also: a) get large numbers of residents to purchase and utilize compost bins and rain barrels much more quickly than they might of their own accord; b) allow residents to purchase these items at a discounted price; and c) increase community awareness through promotion surrounding the event.

The event was held at Lincoln Square Village and was open to any area resident. The selected vendor, Enviro World Corporation, was responsible for delivery of the products, event marketing and coordination of the sale. Compost bins were available for purchase for \$45/each and ran barrels were available for \$55/each. Both products featured recycled-content plastic and lengthy manufacturer warranties.

To promote the event, Enviro World supplied color fliers which were distributed in the News-Gazette and ran a banner ad on the News-Gazette's website. Environmental Management staff distributed copies of the color flier at various locations, posted information on the City's website, sent e-mails to various groups, and displayed sample products at the Home and Garden Show at Assembly Hall the weekend before the sale. Display units were also set up at the Anita Purves Nature Center. In addition, the event was featured on an "In The Garden" segment on WCIA TV's Morning Show.

From all indications, the event was a big success. There was a great turnout resulting in a steady line of customers for the first three hours of the sale. University of Illinois Extension Master gardeners were on-hand to provide education on use of compost bins and rain barrels. Total sales were 507 rain barrels (sold out), 293 compost bins, over 100 compost bin aeration tools, and over 100 kitchen compost collection pails. Numerous individuals expressed their appreciation to the City for coordinating the event.

Other than staff time, the event had no cost to the City. Based upon all of the positive feedback received, Environmental Management recommends another event be held next spring. In the meantime, the City's \$25 rebate on rain barrels purchased at two Urbana retailers continues. Callers interested in rain barrels are directed toward those establishments.