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February 7, 2019

Board of County Commissioners
Clackamas County

Members of the Board:

Presentation on Waste Reduction in Local Schools Through Milk Dispensers

Purpose	Inform the Board and public about the positive results of implementing milk dispensers in 8 Clackamas County schools
Fiscal Impact	N/A
Funding Source	Programmatic Schools Waste Reduction Assistance – funded by Garbage & Recycling Franchise Fees
Duration	Fall 2018 - Ongoing
Previous Action	N/A
Strategic Plan Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departmental Plan: Provide education and technical assistance to residents, businesses, schools and public agencies so they can reduce waste, recover resources, and adopt sustainable practices • County Plan: Honor, utilize, promote and invest in our natural resources
Contact Person	Laurel Bates, Sustainability Analyst, 503-742-4454

BACKGROUND

This presentation summarizes a success story that is attracting attention in communities around the state, in Washington, and beyond.

For many years, milk cartons have been the primary approach to serving milk in schools throughout Oregon. With a few exceptions, schools do not recycle milk cartons due to the volume and difficulty in preparing them for recycling. As a result, milk cartons make up more than 50% of a school’s lunch waste by volume—over a year in a school of 600 students this could total 50,000 cartons that would make up around 40 cubic yards of trash. In addition, students often do not finish the milk served in cartons. Schools we work with report that up to 9 gallons of milk are disposed of each day. Eliminating this type of waste is important, as milk is an expensive and valuable product that takes a lot of energy to produce and ship.

In the fall of 2017, the Sustainability & Solid Waste Program partnered with the Canby School District to install milk dispensers in Knight and Carus Elementary schools (these are both Title I schools). As of this year all six Canby K-5 schools now have dispensers, Oregon City and Silver Falls districts are also participating, and North Clackamas has one project in planning. So far the project has eliminated milk carton waste of an estimated 250,000 cartons, and significantly reduced milk waste of around 3,700 gallons overall. Students also prefer drinking milk from cups over cartons.

Although schools may have commonly used milk dispensers in decades past, to staff's knowledge in the last year these represented the only milk dispensers in public schools in Oregon. The project has sparked significant interest in milk dispensers, both locally and nationally. DEQ used our results to assess the project's environmental lifecycle, concluding that this approach saves energy and reduces the carbon footprint of milk served in schools. DEQ is now offering funding around the state to replicate these efforts. Several local governments and school districts were inspired by this project and are planning their own.

RECOMMENDATION - N/A

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eben Polk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eben" and last name "Polk" clearly distinguishable.

Eben Polk
Sustainability Supervisor – Sustainability & Solid Waste



CLACKAMAS
C O U N T Y

**Sustainability & Solid Waste
School Milk Dispenser Project**

Laurel Bates, Sustainability Analyst





What is Left After a School Lunch?

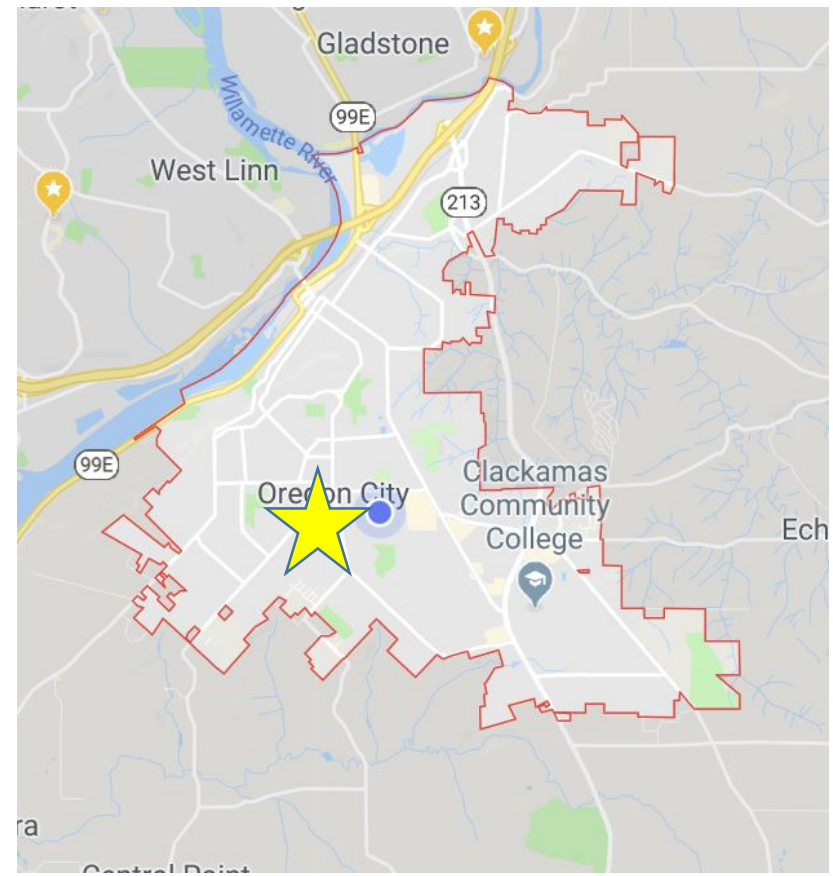
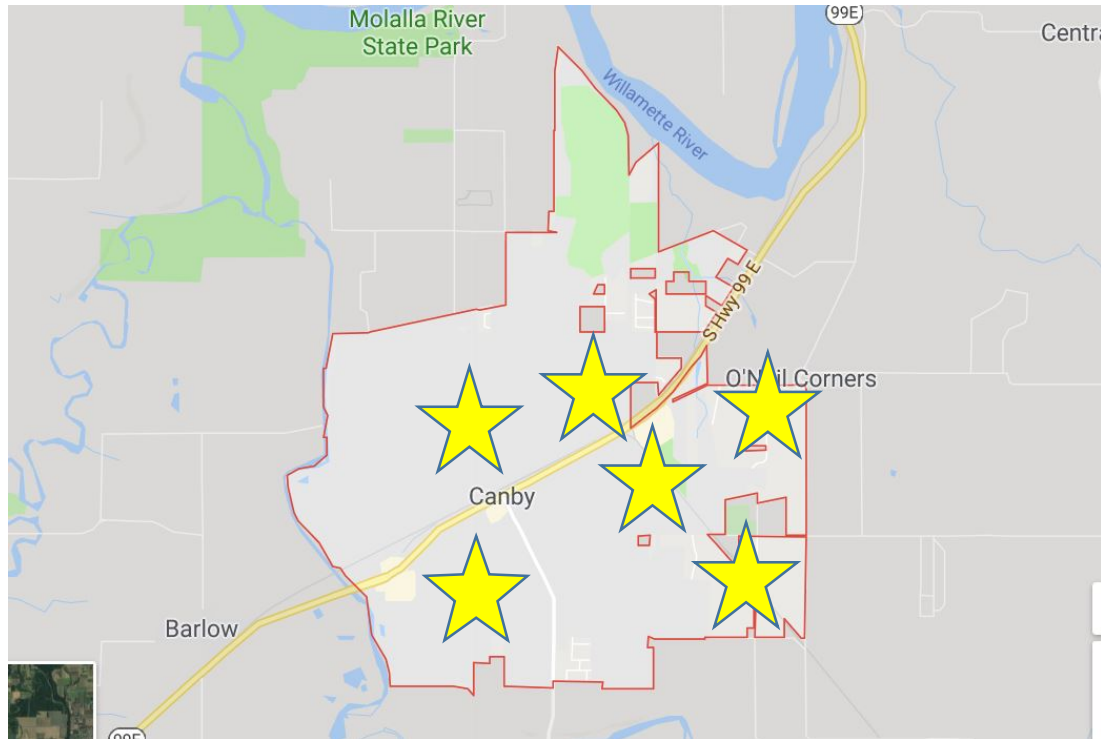
Opened,
unfinished milk

Unopened milk
cartons

Majority of trash
= empty milk
cartons



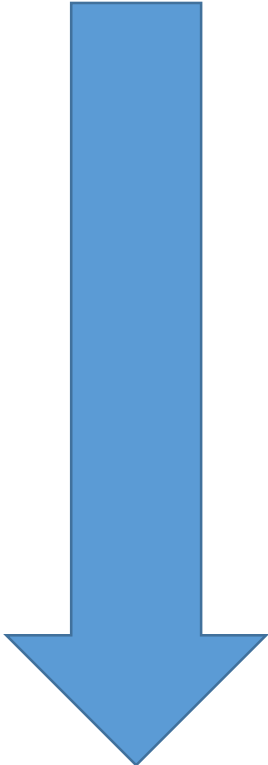
Clackamas County milk dispensers



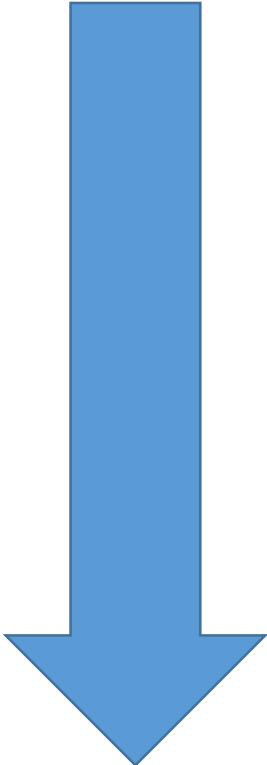
The results



250,000 cartons



3,700 gallons



Some other results...

Our school is so fancy now!

Can I get seconds? What about thirds?

Let me try some of this famous milk!



From a grandmother:

“My kindergartener is so proud that he can fill his own cup!”



Inspiration: the idea is spreading

