

2014 Treecycle Mulch Giveaway & LeafDrop Compost Sale Summary Report

I. Promotional Activities:

- A. **FLYERS & POSTERS:** Event flyers and posters were distributed to various City agencies including Denver Public Libraries, Council Offices, Denver Botanic Gardens and Denver Public Schools. Flyers and posters were also distributed to RNO's, private schools, retail outlets (including Whole Food stores, hardware stores, garden centers, bookstores, coffee houses, restaurants and laundromats), special events, and fairs. (Note: Flyer/poster distribution was paired with "Learn To Compost" material distribution to save on mailing costs).



Event advertisement

- B. **PAID ADVERTISEMENTS:** Color ads were placed in the *Greater Park Hill News*, *Neighborhood Life*, *Life on Capitol Hill*, *Front Porch Stapleton*, *Washington Park Profile*, *Denver Herald Dispatch*, and *CASA Magazine* (in Spanish text).
- C. **PRESS RELEASES:** Press releases were sent out to local media through the Public Works Communications office on 3/10/14 and 4/3/14.
- D. **ARTICLES:** Articles on the event were featured in the April issue of "The Recycling Roundup" and repeated in many printed and online neighborhood newsletters. Specific media hits included an article in both the April & May issues of *Life on Capitol Hill*, article in the 4/10/14 issue of the *Denver Herald-Dispatch*, and event information in the Garden Calendar section of the *Denver Post's "Grow"* publication.
- E. **WEB:** A news story on the event was created and posted on the DR and DenverGov main website pages in early April. This news story recorded 1,006 reads.
- F. **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Event information was posted on Facebook & Twitter on 3/28/14 and 4/28/14. Post-event numbers were posted/shared on Facebook & Twitter on 5/16/14.
- G. **RECYCLING E-MAIL REMINDERS:** Event information was added to the recycling email reminder messages starting six weeks prior to the event date.
- H. **PHONE MESSAGE:** Voice recorded event information was placed on the SWM phone information line (x6810) starting two months prior to the event date.

II. Preparation:

- A. **SITE PERMITS:** DR staff obtained permits and a co-sponsorship from Parks Department for use of the four designated parks as satellite sites for free mulch.
- B. **COMPOST SALES LINE:** In collaboration with A1, DR staff produced and printed a compost sale line "order ticket."
- C. **GRINDING SERVICES:** In addition to grinding up trees collected from the Treecycle program, Solid Waste Management had piles of limb debris on-site ground up as well. This was the third and final extension of the existing grinding service contract with A1 Organics. A1 was onsite grinding on April 16 & 17 and created approximately 9,000 cubic yards of mulch.
- D. **PILE AND SITE PREP:** Contamination of the trash within the Christmas tree piles was significantly reduced from the previous year; however, tree netting from the vendor "unsold" tree piles remains an issue. Only a limited amount of site preparation was required this year, but Solid Waste

Management did require a loader operator on site for approximated two days to mix and move mulch piles. Parks staff also assisted with site preparations on the Friday before the event day.

- E. **HANDOUTS:** DR staff prepared information to hand out to event participants, including a compost pricing sheet, “Learn to Compost” flyers, and Garden Centers of Colorado flyers.
- F. **MULCH DELIVERIES:** On 5/2/14, the City’s Streets Department provided vehicles and drivers to deliver mulch from the Havana site to the four satellite sites. All deliveries were completed by 1 PM on this date.
- G. **ONSITE COORDINATION:** The traffic flow pattern within the Havana site to maximize the expected long line for the mulch service. DR staff was onsite at the Havana Nursery on 5/1/14 & 5/2/14 to coordinate mulch deliveries to the satellite sites, place up signs in preparation for the main event day and accept delivery loads of compost.
- H. **URBAN FARMS:** A month prior to the event, DR staff contacted the Director of Denver Urban Farms and obtained permission for the use of their entry gate as the primary entry gate for the event. The Urban Farm raises funds through a bake sale at the entry gate.

III. Results:

- A. **MULCH SITES:** Free mulch was provided to residents at the main site (Havana Nursery) and four “Dig-your-own” satellite sites (Fred Thomas Park, Veterans’ Park, Sloan’s Lake Park and Bear Creek Park) on 5/3/2014.
- B. **COMPOST SOLD:** Approximately **5,145 ft³** of compost was sold by A1 Organics at the Havana Nursery site on 5/3/2014. This represents a **16% increase in compost sold from the year before**. The pre-bagged compost sold out at approximately 11:15 AM. A small quantity of the bulk compost was made available for residents to “dig-their-own” compost and A1 adjusted pricing to the size of residents’ individual containers. All compost (bulk and dig-your-own) was sold out by 1 PM.

Compost	Amount Sold	Cubic Feet (ft ³)
Pre-bagged (1.25 ft ³ each)	1,200 bags	1,500 ft ³
Bulk	135 yd ³	3,6450 ft ³
TOTAL:		5,145 ft³

- C. **VEHICLES AT HAVANA:** A total of **659 vehicles** were recorded entering the Havana site on 5/3/2014. This represents a **22% increase in total vehicles from the year before**.
- D. **MULCH AT HAVANA:** An estimated total of **4,000 yd³** of mulch was given away at the Havana site on 5/3/14. This represents a **200% increase in mulch given away at Havana from the year before**. (However, that may be a factor of under estimating 2013 numbers)



- E. **MULCH LOADS TO SATELLITE SITES:** Approximately **606 yd³** of mulch was given away at the four satellite sites. This represents a 3% increase from the satellite sites from the year before.

Satellite Site	Estimated Amount Delivered Mulch (cubic yards, yd ³)
Fred Thomas Park	155 yd ³
Veterans Park	142 yd ³
Sloan's Lake Park	149 yd ³
Bear Creek Park	160 yd ³
TOTAL:	606 yd³

- F. **MULCH TOTALS:** An estimated **4,606 yd³** of mulch was given away as part of the 2014 event.

- G. **TRAFFIC CONTROL:** The North "Denver Urban Farms" entry gate was used again this year, thus avoiding any traffic problems along Havana Street.

- H. **OPERATIONS:** Operationally the event ran very smoothly. The Havana site opened 15 minutes early at 7:45 AM and closed down at exactly 2:00 PM. No crew injuries were reported. There were two claims of vehicle damage from the mulch loader service line (mirror on one truck and dent on roof of another truck). Rich Villa followed up with each resident on filing a claim.

- I. **STAFFING:** The event was staff by DR employees (Tom, Juri, Brad), SWM employees (Rich Villa, Juan Trujillo, Adam Lopez, Thomas Moreno and Theresa Cisneros), and Parks' Forestry employees (Leo Darras, Travis Ireland & 3 other crew members).

- J. **FLOWER POT RECYCLING:** Flower pots and trays were collected for recycling at the Havana site on 5/3/2014. Only a minimum number of flower pots were brought in by residents for recycling.



- K. **POST-EVENT:** On the Monday following the event, the satellite sites were checked by various crew supervisors and Denver Recycles staff. Bear Creek Park had approximately 25 yd³ of mulch remaining onsite and the Park District supervisor was made aware of this leftover mulch. However, by Friday of the same week all the mulch leftover at Bear Creek was removed by residents and Park staff to use at Bear Creek. DR staff added info online that mulch was still available at Havana.

IV. Expenses:

- A. The grinding of the tress and limbs was the proportionally the greatest event expense coming in at \$10,923. Event promotion (flyers, posters, ads, design, postage, etc.) totaled approximately \$6,730.20.
- B. There were no expenses for unsold compost as it was all sold. The 20% credit back from the gross sales from A1 totaled \$426.38. This credit will go towards LeafDrop disposal fees in the fall of 2014.
- C. Staffing costs for event day, including an extra person (Theresa) and the intern (Brad), came in at \$2101.00. That is just slightly under 2013 staffing costs of \$2,200.

D. Expense Summary:

Item	Amount
Grinding of Christmas trees	- \$10,923.00
Printing of flyers & posters	-\$1,686.00
Graphic design	-\$910.00
Advertisements	-\$3,884.20
Postage*	-\$ 250.00
Event Day Staffing	-\$ 2,101.00
Equipment (lost 2 shovels)*	-\$30.00
LeafDrop credit (compost sold)	+\$426.38
TOTAL:	-\$19,357.82

*Estimated

V. Notes, Reminders and Recommendations:

- A. GRINDING CONTRACT/BID – No more grinding contract extensions remain, so a new bid will need to go out in the fall. **Stick with “cubic yards per dollar” calculation for best pricing rate.**
- B. The walk-through with the operations supervisor (Rich Villa) prior to the event day proved to be extremely valuable in reducing any event day issues. **Recommend repeating in 2014.**
- C. The “compost sales ticket” system worked well again this year, keeping traffic flowing at a steady pace. **Recommend repeating in 2014.** Sales tickets supply low, likely need to reorder for 2015.
- D. Having all of Parks/Forestry staff remain on-site for the first hour of the event, proved successful. **Recommend repeating in 2014.**
- E. The “Flower Pot Recycling” promotion continues to be a very minor part of this event. Less than half a cart full was collected this year. Recommend dropping info from flyers and posters and just share information on Flower Pot Recycling on website.
- F. Borrowing a large loader from the Streets Department proved very useful for site preparations, but the large loader may have been too large for the mulch loading on the event day. Also, the availability of borrowing loader equipment from the Streets is always tentative depending on Street’s projects.

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