



Repurposing, Reutilization, Recycling NW Interagency Fire Support Cache Redmond, Oregon



The Northwest Interagency Fire Support Cache maintains supplies for ready delivery to incidents such as large wildfires or other hazardous situations. Much of the waste associated with maintenance and delivery of these supplies can be recycled. In 2008 the Support Cache recycled 34,080 pounds of cardboard, 2241 pounds of plastic, 3000 pounds of metal, 8 barrels of waste oil, and 955 pallets (some reused by vendors). The Support Cache uses the local waste management's recycling bins for administrative and employee generated waste: paper, catalogs, newsprint, cardboard, glass, tin, aluminum (drink containers and foil), plastic bottles, and food containers.

The Support Cache has a strong "Federal Excess Program" that makes available significant amounts of reusable items that would otherwise end up in the land fill. Some items are simply non-standard and can be reused for their original purpose. Inventory that no longer meets specifications is "repurposed" or recycled depending on the needs and creativity of the acquiring party. Any item considered personal protective equipment (e.g., nomex, hard hats) can only be recycled or used for other purposes.

The Support Cache works closely with local partners including the Opportunity Foundation, Swift and McCormick Metal Processing, High Country Disposal and Central Waste Oil. They are currently developing contacts with the Central Oregon Environmental Center and the Oregon Association of Recyclers.

The vendor who services both the laundry contract and the hose cleaning contract uses a best practices approach using their waste water for heat reclamation and water reutilization. Additionally, they use no phosphates.

Developing projects include the "repurposing" of nomex fire shirts and pants, recycling of batteries, and finding a solution for the "disposal" of old fire shelters that do not meet current specifications. The Cache tentatively has a vendor that will shred nomex for use as insulation.

Incident Teams in Central Oregon will be able to order a Recycling Cart from High Country Disposal that will reduce costs and increase the amount recycled. These carts each contain sixteen 55 gallon recycling bins for use in fire camp. When full, the bins would be placed back in the carts for pick-up.

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Recycling Cart