

## Land Services Department

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BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

## NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Crow Wing County Receives National Achievement Award

Crow Wing County's landfill has received an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The award recognizes the County Landfill's innovative and unique reuse of landfill gas (LFG) for on-site building heating and for advancing the landfill gas reuse industry. This is NACo's 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the Achievement Awards program to promote quality, efficient, and responsive management and administration.

The Crow Wing County Sanitary Landfill on-site gas recovery project takes advantage of landfill gas (LFG) generation. Landfill gas is a byproduct created by the breakdown of materials deposited at the landfill and in the past had been released into the environment. The County has voluntarily installed an active gas and control system for energy recovery and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This concept of collecting LFG for benefit through enhanced generation via leachate recirculation is referred to as Recirculation to Energy (RTE). Some of the collected LFG is sent to a heat recovery boiler. The boiler is used to heat both a maintenance shop and a heavy equipment storage building on-site.

In addition to reusing the landfill gas, the County has seen a tremendous economic benefit of reducing costs associated with hauling leachate for offsite disposal, postponed costs associated with new disposal area construction because of accelerated waste settlement. These savings have allowed the County to implement a variety of recycling and waste diversion programs.

"This is an example of turning a problem into an asset for the County" stated Paul Thiede, Chairman of the Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners. "Using landfill gas to heat our buildings has reduced operational costs at the landfill and reduced our impact on the environment at the same time. This is an example of a common sense approach to trim down costs while benefitting the environment."

Thiede also noted that taxpayers benefit as well. By capturing the landfill gas, the County is able to sell carbon credits on the commodities market. The County received \$100,000 in 2009 from selling these carbon credits.

Crow Wing County has reduced its carbon footprint by utilizing the energy re-use project. Fossil fuels that would have been used for transportation are no longer burned and natural gas that was used for building heat is no longer needed. Also, the landfill gas emissions have a global warming effect that is 21 times more than that of carbon dioxide. By collecting and utilizing the landfill gas as heat for buildings, Crow Wing County is able to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and save money.

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