



**Office of the Metro Auditor**

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## **Audit recommends shift in waste reduction strategy**

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The Office of the Metro Auditor released an audit today of the Waste Reduction and Outreach Division. The purpose of the audit was to determine if the Division used its resources strategically. Although plans and state statute place a higher priority on preventing waste, the audit found that Metro spent more on recycling.

Recent events suggest that Metro should realign resources strategically to better support waste prevention activities. The Region has been very successful in increasing residents' participation and understanding of recycling programs. However, it is struggling to meet its recycling goal and the Metro region is generating more waste than ever. The amount of waste produced per person from 1992 to 2006 increased from 6.4 to 9.4 pounds per day.

Based upon its review, the Metro Auditor's Office found that the Program could benefit from a clear statement of its priorities and objectives. The Program also needs to develop measures that reflect the full range of its activities. The audit recommended that the Division carefully evaluate the risks and benefits of less proven programs to avoid inefficiency and ineffectiveness if it begins to emphasize waste prevention activities. Best practices recommend a strategy that focuses on a limited number of materials or producers.

"Realigning activities and resources to waste prevention won't be easy," Metro Auditor Suzanne Flynn said. "Waste prevention activities are less proven and may cost more." Auditor Flynn noted that the Program had experience in educating residents in more environmentally sound practices that could assist in taking on new strategies. She was pleased with Metro's response to the audit and stated it addressed audit findings and recommendations in a comprehensive way.

For more information, contact Suzanne Flynn, Metro Auditor, at 503-797-1891.

The audit is available on the Metro website at <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/auditor>. Copies of the audit can also be obtained by calling the Office of the Metro Auditor at 503-797-1892. The Metro Auditor will brief the Metro Council on November 13, 2008.