



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 23, 2008

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CALLING ALL FLORIDIANS WITH INNOVATIVE RECYCLING IDEAS

--DEP invites comments via new web forum--

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held its first public meeting on September 22 in Orlando to receive input on innovative ways the state can recycle more. More than 175 people participated in the Orlando meeting and provided useful suggestions and thoughtful comments. In addition to public meetings, DEP has set up a Web forum to enable all Floridians to submit their recycling ideas right from their computers and join on-line discussions on this important topic.

The 2008 Energy Bill signed by Governor Charlie Crist establishes a new statewide recycling goal of 75 percent to be achieved by 2020. DEP is directed to develop a program to achieve this goal and submit it to the Legislature for consideration by January 1, 2010. Public input is critical to the success in achieving this ambitious goal and any new and innovative approaches that address solid waste streams are welcome.

“As Florida continues to grow, the sheer volume of waste requires more comprehensive and innovative measures to increase the state’s recycling rate,” said Mary Jean Yon, Director of DEP’s Division of Waste Management. “We hope the DEP Web forum will make it convenient to share ideas and debate issues pertaining to recycling.”

DEP’s new Web forum is an internet bulletin board system that serves as a discussion site for citizens, interest groups, local governments and the recycling industry to share ideas, research and experiences in increasing recycling and diverting more waste from landfills. The Web forum can be accessed by visiting DEP’s 75 Percent Recycling Goal Web site at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/recyclinggoal75>. Registration to activate membership in the forum is simple and members can begin posting messages and participating in discussions. Forum topics include the 75 percent recycling goal, recyclable materials, purchasing practices, education, technical assistance, recognition programs, financial assistance, and local government programs, among others.

DEP will be hosting its second public meeting on the 75 percent recycling goal on December 2, 2008 in Tallahassee. To be added to the e-mail list for this meeting, e-mail DEP at Recycling.Goal@dep.state.fl.us. Public comment may be submitted via e-mail, the Web site, or in person at public meetings.

