



# Saint Louis County

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Director

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Waste reduction training and assessments offered free in St. Louis County**

Solid waste is a growing problem, affecting businesses, counties and communities. Minnesota generated 5.6 million tons of solid waste in 2010, including 196,000 tons of organic waste. Even though over 2.5 million tons were collected for recycling, the state of Minnesota, through a variety of action plans and goals, recognizes that solid waste remains a priority and must be reduced, reused, recycled and managed properly.

Businesses that prevent or better manage solid waste can not only save time and money, but also stay focused on the productive side of their business operation. County and city solid waste officials are also working to increase source reduction, reuse, recycling and composting rates in their respective counties.

To help tackle the issue of solid waste in rural communities, the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) at the University of Minnesota is partnering with St. Louis County and other counties in northern and western Minnesota to host half-day training sessions and assessments for local government staff and the business community. These efforts are supported by a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Utilities Program.

The St. Louis County training sessions are scheduled for April 4 at 8 a.m. for local governments and at 2 p.m. for area businesses. Both sessions will be held at the Mt. Iron Community Center. The events will provide resources, insights and a forum for sharing ideas and information about solid waste management and diversion in a detailed and engaging format.

MnTAP is also conducting two no-cost half-day solid waste assessments for area businesses on April 5. MnTAP will work with the businesses ahead of time to understand their waste generation and cost burden, and their priority waste issues, so that the assessments will be efficiently tailored to

the businesses' needs.

St. Louis County is one of five counties that have already scheduled trainings. The trainings are free and open to anyone who would like to attend. To register for the April trainings or assessments in Mt. Iron, call Mary McReynolds, St. Louis County Environmental Services at (218) 749-0648.

Sessions also are scheduled in Grand Marais for Cook County on February 27. Contact Tim Nelson at (218) 387-3633 to register for that session. For questions about the current training calendar or partnering with MnTAP to bring a solid waste event to your county, contact Anna Arkin, Solid Waste Specialist at MnTAP, toll-free at (800) 247-0015, or [aiarkin@umn.edu](mailto:aiarkin@umn.edu).

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