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MAYOR DALEY HELPS CELEBRATE MILLION-POUND MILESTONE REACHED BY HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL AND COMPUTER RECYCLING FACILITY

Mayor Richard M. Daley, local and state officials and others today celebrated the surpassing of the million-pound collection mark at the Household Chemical and Computer Recycling Facility.

More than 18,320 visitors have dropped off more than 600,000 pounds household hazardous waste and more than 560,000 pounds of electronics since the facility at 1150 N. North Branch opened in November of 2006.

"This is a wonderful example of how valuable a resource the Household Chemical and Computer Recycling Facility is to the Chicago region," said Mayor Richard M. Daley. "There are residents who may be unaware that leftover household products such as paints, cleaning products, batteries, and oils – when disposed of improperly – can pollute the environment and pose a threat to people's health. So it's important for us to continue to generate awareness that residents can come here to safely dispose of their household hazardous waste every Tuesday and Thursday, and the first Saturday of every month."

Visitors can rid their homes of old light bulbs, computers, (including printers, scanners, and hard drives) computer printer cartridges, and cell phones in addition to old paint cans, solvents, cleaners, home and garden pesticides and fertilizers as well as other dangerous chemicals that can contribute to major health problems for residents.

In addition to the more than one million pounds of chemicals and electronics, the facility has collected 1,300 pounds of unused or expired pharmaceuticals at the facility and 334 pounds of pharmaceuticals at five area police stations.

The City continues to hold neighborhood collections, which have taken place for more than decade. Those collections were enhanced last year when residents were given the opportunity to purchase rain barrels and composters at a discount.

Last year, the City held four Environmental Resource Events (ERE), which drew 7,340 attendees who dropped off an estimated 210,500 pounds of household hazardous waste and about 104,000 pounds of electronics collected.

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There are also four ERE events planned for 2009, with the first two scheduled for Saturday, April 18 in the parking lot at U.S. Cellular Field and on Saturday, May 9 in the parking lot at the DeVry Institute.

“I want to thank the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for their assistance in paying for the ongoing disposal of the chemicals collected here,” Mayor Daley said. “I also want to note that through a partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and Computers for Schools, ex-offenders are gaining training and job experience at this facility through our Greencorps Chicago program.

“This program offers ex-offenders an opportunity to straighten out their lives by giving them hands-on experience in computer repair and chemicals management, with the opportunity to lead to permanent jobs once their training is completed.”

The Household Chemical and Computer Recycling Facility is a green building. In addition to its 6,000 square-foot green roof, it features the first solar wall in Illinois. This wall helps absorb heat and reduce energy consumption. The site also incorporates stormwater best management practices that include two cisterns, gravel infiltration trenches, and a bioswale.

For more information about the permanent facility or upcoming neighborhood collections please visit www.cityofchicago.org/environment or call 311.

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