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Boys and Girls Club teams up with St. Croix Recycling Center
St. Croix imports 27 million cans yearly
 By CRISTIAN SIMESCU
 Thursday, November 19th 2009



Daily News Photo by CRISTIAN SIMESCU V.I. Waste Management Authority environmental program manager Emmeline Simmonds, right, speaks during a check presentation to the Boys and Girls Club.

ST. CROIX - The V.I. Waste Management Authority has awarded the Boys and Girls Club a \$38,625 Community Enrichment Grant for the reopening and revitalization of the St. Croix Recycling Center.

The Boys and Girls Clubs on St. Croix have partnered with the Recycling Association of the Virgin Islands and created a new sustainable operations plan for the aluminum and steel can recycling facility.

The center, which is located in Estate Anna's Hope, is scheduled to be ready for operation in February.

The grant funds will be used to purchase a 50:1 densifier for aluminum and steel cans, a magnetic sorter, site reconstruction, site cleanup, signage and other equipment. Boys and Girls Club development director Emily Graci said funds from other sponsors will also be used for the project, which will be announced later.

Graci said V.I. Recycling Co. was contracted to operate the center and will handle the equipment, compressing, bundling and shipping of the recycled cans. Graci said V.I. Recycling Co. is a fully licensed and insured contractor that provides scrap metal, equipment and other recycling services for government, public, private and nonprofit organizations in the territory. She also said they are committed to the success of the project.

The Boys and Girls Club and the association will coordinate collection drives, community support and recycling education.

Graci said profits from the center will go into the Boys and Girls Club recycling effort by purchasing T-shirts, bins and signage.

"We're eager to find the community's needs," Graci said. "They have been eager to recycle, and we're excited to present a new partnership that will support the community's need to be good stewards of the environment."

WMA executive director May Adams Cornwall said the authority is serious about recycling. "It's part of our integrated solid waste management plan, which also includes the waste to energy," she said. "We encourage businesses and government offices to assign employees to bring their aluminum and steel cans here."

WMA director of environmental programs Mario Leonard said the agency had a long relationship with the previous recycler at the

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Island Eating

site and has great expectations for the new center. "This is just the beginning now, and I think it's going to be a great success," Leonard said.

Association project manager Colleen Sullivan said local distributors estimated that St. Croix imports about 27 million aluminum cans a year. "This is an effort to do the right thing because we are getting many of those aluminum cans off the island and getting them reused," said. Sullivan.

Graci said the former recycling center at the site was initiated years ago by the founder of the Boys and Girls Club on the island, Donald Walker. "He saw it as a business opportunity to raise funds for the Boys and Girls Club and also to have a platform to encourage young community members to be active citizen ambassadors for recycling on the island," Graci said.

Graci also said they hope to add more grant funds from outside sources to keep the program sustainable.

The center also will include on-site bins for public drop-off for aluminum cans, steel cans, aluminum scrap and steel scrap.

For more information on how to organize recycling drives and how to get involved in the revitalized recycling effort contact Sullivan at stxra@usvircd.org.

- Contact Cristian Simescu at 774-8772 ext. 459 or e-mail simescu@dailynews.vi.

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