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CONTACT: Aaron Pickus, aaron@pickuscommunications.com

WA Recycling, Waste Reduction Industry Awards Hong Pham “Manager of the Year”

Hong Pham serves as General Manager of WM’s Material Recovery Facility in Tacoma – JMK Fibers.

WA recycling rate is 49%, 50% above the national average

TACOMA – Today the Washington Refuse & Recycling Association announced Hong Pham as its Manager of the Year. Pham serves as the General Manager of WM’s Material Recovery Facility in Tacoma – JMK Fibers. Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) play an integral in our state’s waste reduction and recycling system, representing hundreds of millions of dollars in investment to help sort items that have been picked up at the curb so that Washington’s 49% recycling rate can be maintained and increased.

“It can be easy to lose sight of the people who make the goals of recycling and waste management a reality,” said **Brad Lovaas, executive director of the Washington Refuse & Recycling Association**. “We are grateful for Hong’s leadership at such a critical facility in our region and applaud his contributions to a safe, regulated and effective recycling and waste management system in our state.

Hong has been the Plant Manager JMK Fibers Since 2011. Before joining JMK Fibers and WM, Hong worked at Weyerhaeuser. Hong’s leadership and communication skills have led to the retention of one of the most stable workforces at a Material Recovery Facility throughout the nation. During the 2023 upgrade of WM’s Woodinville MRF, Hong and his team in Tacoma successfully managed the material that usually went to the Woodinville MRF. Hong’s leadership at WM’s JMK Fibers MRF is representative of managers throughout the solid waste industry in Washington.

Quick Facts About Waste Reduction & Recycling in WA

- About 14,700 workers employed in solid waste and recycling industry to drive trucks, sort materials, oversee landfills and much more.
- Average household’s monthly bill for curbside recycling service is \$8-10 (or 35 cents per day), supporting an average of 8 monthly pickups for bins for trash (4), recycling (2) and organics (2), offering reliable service unique to local needs.
- 87% of WA residents have access to curbside service and those who don’t may access 108 dropbox locations in their communities

Statewide Opportunities to Increase Recycling

- Expand requirements for recycled content, building on a 2021 groundbreaking Washington law that requires certain packaging contain a minimum amount of recycled content.
- Show truth in labeling by standardizing labeling to avoid confusion and misinformation, making it easier for consumers to sort items into the right bins, reducing recycling contamination.
- Greater producer accountability so that packaging manufacturers will demonstrate a greater commitment to reducing waste and increasing the recyclability of the materials being introduced into our state.

The WRRRA strongly supports the use of data for determining the best statewide and local investments for reducing waste and increasing recycling, advocating for a statewide needs assessment to directly inform Washington's next investments to further increase the recycling rate.

About the Washington Refuse & Recycling Association

The [Washington Refuse & Recycling Association](#) (WRRRA) represents solid waste companies and professionals in Washington State. Our mission is to promote environmentally and economically sustainable solid waste and recycling services within our state's regulatory system. The WRRRA is a partnership with the public in pursuit of environmental stewardship through recycling and reducing waste.

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