

**North Carolina Association of County Commissioners
2005-06 Ralph W. Ketner Employee Productivity Awards Application**

County: Cumberland **Employee:** Jan Albert **Email:** jalbert@co.cumberland.nc.us

County Department: Solid Waste Dept. **Employee Title:** Recycling Coordinator

County Phone: 910-321-6914 **County Mailing Address:** Solid Waste Department, 698 Ann St., Fayetteville NC 28311

Is this project being submitted on behalf of two or more employees? NO YES

If yes, please provide below a listing of all project employees in Number 6. Employee & title as listed above should be for lead team member.

Fair Labors Standards Act Designation: In order for your project to be eligible, you MUST indicate one of the following. If you do not know, please contact your personnel director.

EXEMPT: **NON-EXEMPT:** **BOTH (if applicable to a team):**

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| 1. | Productivity Improvement Title: | <i>Turning Mulch Into Money</i> |
| 2. | Implementation Date (must be between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2005) | Initiated November, 2005 and is ongoing |
| 3. | Please describe the productivity improvement. (Please limit response to these 2 pages.) In Cumberland County's Solid Waste Department, it is the Wilkes Road Yard Waste Facility that receives all the yard waste from the entire county, delivered there by the City of Fayetteville as well as individual landscape firms and citizens. It is transformed by placement into a tub grinder and converted to a kind of mulch material. Stored on the ground, this material can be a fire hazard, as the material can spontaneously combust. Using the material for erosion control within the Solid Waste Department involved transporting it to the Ann St. landfill at a cost of \$97 a truckload. The Recycling Coordinator, through research on the Internet, learned that there is a market for this material among large industries where it is used as boiler fuel. She quickly contacted International Paper Co. in a neighboring county and learned that they would pay \$5.50 per ton for this material. They would also agree to come pick it up and load the truck with no assistance required from Solid Waste personnel. International Paper Co. now sends as many as four tractor trailers daily to Wilkes Road Yard Waste Facility to pick up the mulched boiler fuel. Each truck carries a 24-ton load, times four trucks a day, times Five days a week. This arrangement, if the pace is maintained as it is expected to be, could result in an annual revenue of more than \$100,000 for Cumberland County, thanks to the initiative of the Solid Waste Department. This revenue will be enough to pay for some of the large specialized equipment needed by the Solid Waste Department to even <i>more</i> efficiently accomplish their mission. In one productive project, the Solid Waste Department has reduced the hazard of fire at the Wilkes Road Yard Waste Facility, found a market for the material they generate, and produced revenue from the sale of it. All this was achieved with no extra personnel, merely the smart action taken by dedicated Solid Waste Department employees. Ms. Albert, who negotiated the arrangement with International Paper, and Mr. Matthews, who produces the material that International Paper buys, have served their county well in this endeavor. | |

4. Please describe why this project was initiated or what problem it addressed:

The accumulation of yard waste delivered to the Wilkes Road Landfill in Cumberland County was a challenge to the Solid Waste personnel. The waste, when processed through the tub grinder, would rapidly become a mountain of mulch that was susceptible to spontaneous combustion, thus becoming a fire hazard. Even when used by the Solid Waste Department internally, to control erosion at the Ann Street Landfill, there was a cost to transport the mulch to where it was needed. Through research on the Internet and by phone, the Recycling Coordinator became aware of a market for the material as boiler fuel, a commodity much in demand by certain industries. Ultimately, the International Paper Company entered into an agreement with Cumberland County Solid Waste Department to purchase the material at \$5.50 per ton. Today, the IPC buys four 24-ton trailer truck loads daily from the Cumberland County Solid Waste Department, five days a week. That's weekly revenue of more than \$2500, translating to potential annual revenue of well over \$100,000.

5. Please quantify the improvement's results in terms of cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of services provided. (Please indicate what resources were used to achieve your results, and what was done with the time savings, if any accrued).

This project results in a higher level of service provided to the citizens of Cumberland County in that it transforms "thrown away" material into a revenue-producing, salable commodity. This transformation has been achieved with no extra personnel and no extra expenditure of county funds. The revenue produced by the sale can potentially, within a year, be enough to pay for some of the large, special equipment needed to run an efficient Solid Waste department or be used to fund positions for people who can contribute to a more efficient Solid Waste Department. What this project has achieved is a potential annual revenue to the Solid Waste Department of more than \$100,000.

6. Please provide any other descriptive information you would like to be considered by the review committee.

What may be relevant to the judges of the Ketner Award competition is that this enterprising project is typical of the "can do" attitude that permeates the Cumberland County Solid Waste Department. The people in this department are alert to opportunities to make the department more productive, to seek grants for unbudgeted needs of large and expensive equipment, and to maximize the opportunity to keep as much as possible out of the county's landfill, thus achieving a tremendous cost avoidance for the future. The team of three employees most instrumental in designing this project and implementing it are: Jan Albert, Recycling Coordinator (Exempt), David Matthews, Equipment Operator III, (Non-Exempt.) and Karen Hall, Administrative Assistant (Exempt).

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| County Manager's Name: | James E. Martin | Supervisor's Name: | Bobby Howard |
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Return by July 21, 2006 via email Rebecca.Troutman@ncacc.org.