

### **Coming Soon: Recycling for Fluorescent Lights**

In 2010, Zero Waste Washington successfully advocated for a landmark producer responsibility law for mercury-containing lights. In January 2013, the program will be implemented and residents throughout Washington will have a no-cost way to recycle fluorescent bulbs and tubes. The recycling program will be financed by the manufacturers that make the lights.

Getting the law passed was just the beginning of the story. We provided input on the rules being developed to implement the law, encouraging strong environmental and human health protections. We looked closely at the draft plan for the collection and recycling program, and asked for improvements such as more transparency on how mercury in the fluorescent bulbs and tubes is handled. Zero Waste Washington will continue watch-dogging the process until the law is effectively implemented.

### **Grassroots Printer Campaign**

Zero Waste Washington fought hard to pass the producer responsibility law for electronics and, as a result, over 152 million pounds of computers, monitors and TVs have been recycled since 2009. However, despite E-Cycle Washington's remarkable success, the program does not take back desktop printers. In 2012, Zero Waste Washington continued our grassroots campaign for producers to take responsibility for the printers. Several hundred residents sent postcards asking HP and Canon, the two largest printer manufacturers in the U.S., for free and convenient recycling programs for printers. A few months ago, HP and Staples announced the launch of a national program to take back and recycle computers, desktop printers, and certain other peripherals from residents and small businesses. This is an excellent step forward and it's likely that many factors, including customer demand, influenced HP's decision.

### **Producer Responsibility - Keep It Coming**

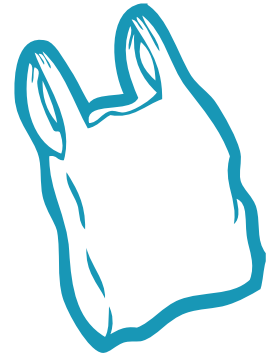
During the 2012 legislative session, Zero Waste Washington supported statewide producer responsibility policies for rechargeable batteries, paint, carpet, and unwanted medicines. On the local level, we are supporting the creation of a safe and effective take-back program for unwanted household medicines in King County. With a producer responsibility approach, manufacturers are responsible for the products they make from cradle-to-cradle, including providing and paying for responsible recycling or disposal. While none of the state producer responsibility policies passed in Washington in 2012, the work we did this year contributes to building momentum for future successes.

As part of all our policy work, we partnered with other advocates, researched issues, collaborated on policy, built grassroots support, and testified at hearings. One exciting new partnership was the launch of CRADLE2, a national collaborative effort to promote cradle-to-cradle solutions for zero waste. This effort is facilitating the exchange of ideas and strategies among non-profits in nine states, and Zero Waste Washington was a founding member.



## Paper or Plastic Bag? Neither!

By one estimate, Washingtonians use more than 2 billion plastic bags each year. Marine mammals can ingest or choke on plastic that has found its way into our oceans, and plastic bags from curbside recycling programs can be problematic because they jam recycling equipment. Paper bags also have negative environmental impacts such as contributing to climate disruption. In 2012, Zero Waste Washington supported a statewide policy to ban plastic bags and put a fee on paper bags to encourage a switch to reusables. The legislation did not pass this year, but we expect it to be considered again in 2013.



## Our 30th Anniversary & Looking Forward

Zero Waste Washington – originally known as Washington Citizens for Recycling – celebrates a milestone anniversary this year! In our 30-year history, we helped establish new recycling programs, educated decision-makers, advocated for landmark legislation, and represented the perspective of citizens. As we look to the next 30 years, we are engaging in strategic program planning to help us be as effective as possible. We've reaffirmed our commitment to big picture systems change, and we see producer responsibility, greener product design, and waste reduction as key elements in getting to zero waste. We are also interested in turning our attention to developing community models that show what zero waste looks like and to cultivate engaged, empowered communities. We'll share more details as we complete our strategic planning process and head into 2013.



In July, Zero Waste Washington made the bold move to add a new managing director position to our staff. A big thank you goes to the Bullitt Foundation for providing a \$15,000 challenge grant and to all the people who gave generously to meet that challenge. The grant provided seed money for the new position. In 2012, we also launched an internship program that boosted our ability to reach out to more people. We trained and coordinated five interns who contributed 650 hours educating residents about producer responsibility and zero waste. There's so much good work to do, and these steps will help build our capacity to make an even bigger difference.

## Your Voice for Zero Waste

Zero Waste Washington participates on the State Waste 2 Resources Advisory Committee and the King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee. We work hard to stay aware of emerging issues, develop smart responses, and participate in key meetings and forums so that we can serve as the public's voice for zero waste.