

Michael F. Easley, Governor



William G. Ross Jr., Secretary

## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Release: Immediate  
Date: March 4, 2004

Contact: Diana Kees, (919) 715-6515  
Distribution: Statewide

### **ASHEVILLE RETIREE ORGANIZATION RECOGNIZED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS**

RALEIGH – A team of retirees living in the North Carolina mountains was today honored for helping local business and industry become more environmentally friendly.

Citing its commitment to assisting western North Carolina in achieving a sustainable economy by reducing waste and improving efficiency, the State Energy Office recognized Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) with the Energy and Sustainability Leadership Award for Community Service during a luncheon ceremony today at the inaugural North Carolina Energy Conference.

WRP is a team of highly experienced volunteer engineers, architects and scientists that provides western North Carolina businesses with no-cost waste and energy reduction assessments to help them use natural resources more efficiently. Administered by the Land-of-Sky Regional Council, WRP works in special partnership with the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA). Other partners include the Regional Water Authority of Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the USDA's Rural Utility Services.

“Waste Reduction Partners is a truly innovative program that DENR is proud to be in partnership with,” said DENR Secretary William G. Ross Jr. “The wisdom and experience that these retirees bring to the table is an invaluable tool to both business and industry clients who want to ‘do the right thing,’ and in DENR’s efforts to ensure the protection of North Carolina’s natural resources.”

In fiscal year 2003, WRP helped companies in western North Carolina move 13,500 tons of waste materials into markets, saving these clients more than \$1.3 million in disposal avoidance costs and revenues. That year WRP also recommended 15.2 million gallons per year worth of water-savings measures, and 2.4 million kWh per year of electricity savings. During the 2002 drought, the retiree team WRP worked with many of the state’s most drought-stricken cities to provide mailings and resource information to the largest water-using customers at these municipalities. On-site water efficiency audits were offered and assessments were conducted in Statesville and various other locations.

WRP was established in 1992 through the collaborative efforts of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Land-of-Sky Regional Council, and the DPPEA.

For more information, please contact Diana Kees ([diana.kees@ncmail.net](mailto:diana.kees@ncmail.net)) with the Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance at (919) 715-6515, or Terry Albrecht or Orville McKinney with Waste Reduction Partners at (828) 251-6622.

###