



How Orange County, NC Developed Reuse Policies and Programs

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ReuseConex
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Recycling preceded Reuse

- County public programs recycling began in 1987, first focus was on newspaper, glass and aluminum cans.
 - A robust but small reuse and repair sector existed led by PTA thrift shop in Carrboro and a variety of shoe, appliance and equipment repair & rental shops
 - No public sector involvement in Reuse initially.
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Reuse began at Solid Waste Convenience Centers in “Salvage Sheds”

- County converted from 19 unstaffed waste dropoff ‘green box’ sites – where scavenging and illegal dumping were rife – to six staffed sites in 1993.
- Staffed sites were gradually equipped with salvage sheds aka swap shops modelled after the ‘In and Out House” –built by Sierra Club at an unstaffed recycling site in Asheville,
- *HISTORICAL NOTE:* Salvage sheds were preceded by ‘Free Stores’ created by the Diggers in San Francisco and New York c. 1966-67.

Salvage Sheds

- These are ~20'x20'x10'h aluminum carport type pre-fabricated structures
 - We used the three sided model from Auto Boat Ports ~ \$2,800
 - Installed over several years at 5 of the six SWCCs. (sixth site too small for one)
 - Very popular for both dropoff and pickup
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Typical Monday at the Shed



Some are bringing, some are taking

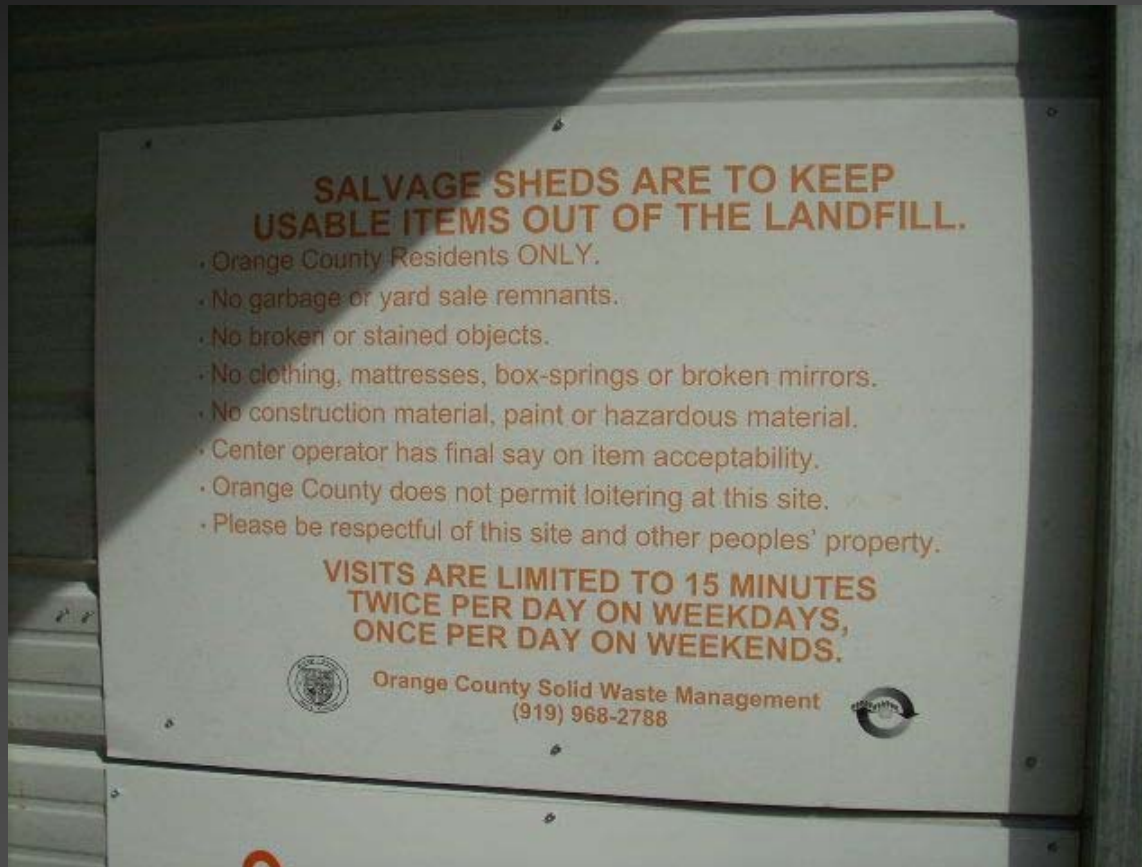


Salvage Sheds

- Formal policies evolved over time to:
 - limit time for scavengers to 15 minutes twice a day,
 - restrict scavenging by staff to end of day,
 - prohibit stuffed furniture, clothing, glasses, construction materials, and
 - allow staff discretion to disallow items they feel won't 'sell'

NOTE: Scavenging prohibited from containers at SWCCs.

Policies for Using the Shed



The disclaimer



Problems with Salvage Sheds

- Conflict between users over items,
 - Conflict between staff trying to run a site & users who are simply waiting for desirable items,
 - Conflict when users see staff taking items or are given 'gifts' by site patrons,
 - Conflict when over eager-scavengers approach donors before they unload,
 - Conflict when the item in the truck is not really being donated but scavengers are reaching in,
 - Conflict between staff & donors over where questionable items should go.....
 - SO-- WHY BOTHER?
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Salvage Sheds

- They are very popular and well used
 - One study of weights of items one weekend showed that over 60 tons a year were diverted
 - People get items they need that thrift shops may not want or can no longer accept for resale.
 - E.g. Toys are now prohibited from thrift stores due to lead paint issues stemming from Chinese made toys but now extending to all toys.....
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What Wood You Use?

- In 2004 Orange County began deconstructing buildings by subcontract and saving lumber for future use
 - Four buildings were deconstructed including a training school, a 1910 and 1940s farmhouses and 1970s brick ranch
 - Materials were inventoried, stacked and stored for future use.
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Pete Hendricks led all four deconstructions. Pete at his piles, says, “This is the only way to manage used lumber, must be sorted, sized, stacked and saved.”



Some lumber was professionally graded but that didn't help the building code officials or builders much

- County hired Timber Products Inc. to visually grade framing lumber, would not stamp.
 - 6,000 BF graded for \$1,200 = \$0.20/bf
 - Southern Pine Inspection Bureau would not participate or accept grading.
 - Building inspectors and truss makers would not accept visually graded lumber Framing – they observed grading and liked the looks of the material.
 - Truss maker said thickness varied too much and could be too hard to fasten. Needed planing.
 - NC State University wanted \$4,800 to structurally test 120 pieces - \$40/ea. or
 - \$3,000 to test 60 pieces = \$60/ea.
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Wood with grade 'mark'
BUT not *stamped*.



Lumber used on County Utility Buildings at Regional Park



Structural use had to be ‘overbuilt’ to meet code officials’ expectations and no use was allowed in occupied structures.



And then some



Wood was auctioned off too, on “GovDeals.com” A lot of effort for small return.....much was given away after auction to non-profits including Habitat for resale.



County Solid Waste Admin Bldg Entry, light structural use allowed; architect OK'd it. But note beam on left holding bigger load is [specified to be] virgin timber.



Interior uses for some structural framing



Detail of salvaged wood – patina & distressed look add some style and identity to the solid waste building



Scavenging at the C&D Landfill

- 1997 – 2000, one full time employee with skid steer,
 - Started by scavenging reusables including doors, windows, fixtures,
 - Stored in tractor trailers with custom built roof over it,
 - Conducted two yard sales that ‘broke even’ used old mobile homes for more storage,
 - Donated materials to non-profits and schools after that, Built good network. Easier to manage than sales.
 - BUT: Recycling was higher diversion and focus on scrap metal & pallets (later all solid wood) to save landfill space.
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Regulated Recyclable Materials Ordinance

- Driven by the need for C&D landfill space
 - About 30% of C&D could be recycled – wood, metal, cardboard – based on several waste sorts.
 - The RRMO drove more private sector reuse and that's what Grant will talk about next.
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