



# CONNECTICUT RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Hands-On Exhibit at Garbage Museum in Stratford Offers Fun Illustration of Waste-to-Energy Process Oxford Artist Shows Museum Goers That Trash Becomes Electricity**

STRATFORD, Conn. – A new exhibit at the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority Children’s Garbage Museum offers an interactive illustration of what happens to Connecticut’s garbage after being picked up at curbside.

Oxford artist Mike Blasavage created a hands-on exhibit that uses a handful of marbles, a toy truck and a lot of the artist’s ingenuity to teach museum-goers that when their trash goes to one of CRRA’s four waste-to-energy plants it comes back to them in the form of electricity rather than being buried in a landfill.

To use the exhibit, set against the backdrop of a city, a museum-goer drops trash – actually, a handful of marbles – into a series of trash cans. The “trash” winds up in a large trash container, which the museum-goer dumps into a toy garbage truck. The museum-goer then dumps the “trash” into the “trash-to-energy plant,” which causes the exhibit’s lights to light up, its drawbridge to open and close and an illuminated ferris wheel to turn.

The exhibit illustrates the waste-to-energy process without the scientific details that might complicate the explanation for youngsters. That was important to Blasavage, an art teacher at Wallace Middle School in Waterbury.

“That’s my teaching coming through,” Blasavage says of the exhibit’s simplicity. “You want to make sure the objective comes through and pare away anything extraneous.”

“Each year, CRRA’s Garbage Museum in Stratford and Trash Museum in Hartford teach more than 50,000 children and adults about trash and its impact on our world, and we do so in a fun and interactive way,” said Sotoria Montanari, CRRA education director. “Mike Blasavage’s new exhibit is a perfect addition to our Stratford education center. It’s already generating a terrific response.”

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Thanks to a gift from Wheelabrator, which operates CRRA's Bridgeport Project waste-to-energy facility, CRRA commissioned Blasavage to create an interactive mural illustrating the waste-to-energy idea in 2002. Over several months, he considered a number of ideas until he hit upon the use of marbles to serve as "trash" which would activate the city's trash-to-energy plant. Once he formulated the concept, he estimates it took 200 to 250 hours to paint and build the four-by-eight-foot exhibit.

The Children's Garbage Museum is located at 1410 Honeyspot Road Extension off Lordship Boulevard. The museum is open to the public Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in July and August, and Wednesday through Friday, noon to 4 p.m., September through June. The museum's telephone number is (203) 381-9571.

The Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority is a quasi-public agency whose mission is to work for – and in – the best interests of the municipalities of the state of Connecticut. CRRA's new board of directors and new management team develop and implement environmentally sound solutions and best practices for solid waste disposal and recycling management on behalf of municipalities. CRRA also runs environmental and recycling educational programs through its Visitors Center in Hartford and Garbage Museum in Stratford. For more information about CRRA and its activities, visit <http://www.crra.org>.