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**Waste Management Recycle America recycling facility in Grayslake, IL  
qualifies for prestigious OSHA Voluntary Protection Program**

**First material recovery facility in VPP program**

**Grayslake, IL, November 6, 2008** – Waste Management Recycle America (WM Recycle America) announced that its facility here today has qualified for participation in the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). It is the first material recovery facility for recyclables in the nation to qualify for the program, company officials said.

The plant achieved "Merit" status in the exclusive VPP program, which OSHA launched in 1982 to recognize health and safety excellence in worksites whose personnel develop and implement employee protections that go beyond required federal standards.

In earning the recognition, the plant committed to continuous health and safety improvement, to be an industry leader in occupational safety and health, and to achieve the VPP's "Star" status, the agency's highest designation for workplace safety. Companies qualifying for Star distinction have injury and illness rates significantly below the national average for their industry.

OSHA officials presented the VPP "Merit" designation to company officials during ceremonies at the facility at 30869 N. Route 83, Grayslake, that included raising the OSHA VPP flag. They pointed to the facility's safety record and employee involvement in qualifying the plant for the program. Officials from the Village of Grayslake and the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County also attended.

"Waste Management Recycle America is committed to protecting its people and, in so doing, their families," said Robert VanTholen, District Manager for WM Recycle America. "We are pleased to achieve 'Merit' status in the VPP program and we welcome the distinction, but we see it as only a first step in providing an even healthier and safer workplace for our people. Our goal is to join the elite companies that achieve a 'star' rating, the highest honor for health and safety excellence."

Van Tholen indicated that the company, the nation's largest recycler, intends over time to enter all of its 80-plus material recovery facilities in the VPP program.

In qualifying, the Grayslake plant passed a rigorous OSHA review that assessed management and employee involvement in safety programs, prevention and control programs, and comprehensive safety and health training for all employees. The facility was selected based on its written safety and health

management system and ongoing performance. An OSHA team conducted a rigorous on-site evaluation to measure how well the plant's protective system is working, including a review of the site's injury and illness rates.

The plant, called a material recovery facility, processes recyclable items collected from homes and businesses in the northern and western suburbs of Chicago and prepares them for shipment to end markets, where the materials are transformed into new products. The plant has approximately 85 employees and processes approximately 140,000 tons of material a year. The plant has had only two lost time recordable injuries in the past ten years of operation.

Waste Management Recycle America processes approximately 8 million tons of recyclables annually in the United States and Canada. Its parent company, Waste Management, Inc., a year ago introduced sustainability goals, including a target to triple its recycling volume to nearly 20 million tons by the year 2020.

Participation in the VPP program offers companies a number of benefits. The average VPP worksite has workplace injury and illness rates at least 50 percent below its industry average. Annual self-evaluation identifies areas needing improvement, and participating companies are exempt from programmed OSHA inspections.

#### **About Waste Management and WM Recycle America, L.L.C.**

Waste Management, based in Houston, Texas, is the leading provider of comprehensive waste management services in North America. Our subsidiaries provide collection, transfer, recycling and resource recovery, and disposal services. We are also a leading developer, operator and owner of waste-to-energy and landfill gas-to-energy facilities in the United States. Our customers include residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal customers throughout North America. To learn more information about Waste Management and WM Recycle America visit [www.wm.com](http://www.wm.com) or [www.thinkgreen.com](http://www.thinkgreen.com).

WM Recycle America is a subsidiary of Waste Management and is the largest residential recycler in North America. WM Recycle America's business lines include processing many types of consumer-generated recyclables and finding the best markets for the recyclable commodities produced. In its capacity of providing processing and marketing services, WM Recycle America offers a wide variety of recycling options for municipal, manufacturing, commercial and residential customers.

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