



A Publication of the National Environment and Planning Agency

Helping Jamaicans Achieve a More Sustainable Lifestyle

In order to protect Jamaica's environment, one of its most precious resources, it is imperative that all of us learn about how we affect it.

The National Environment and Planning Agency, in partnership with key stakeholders, launched a public education initiative to encourage the use of re-usable plastic bags as opposed to single-use ones.

The initiative was launched on July 1 at NEPA's Caledonia Avenue offices and coincided with



Peter Knight, CEO at NEPA welcomes stakeholders at the launch of International Plastic Bag Free Day

the celebration of International Plastic Bag Free Day, July 3.

Dr. Kerrine Senior, Manager in the Pollution Prevention Branch at NEPA said that the time was right for Jamaica to develop and pursue a strategic plan of action to tackle this negative environmental impact.

"This should be a central feature of the country's sustainable development path", she pointed out.

Some plastic bags are non-biodegradable and are estimated to make up 80 per cent of marine litter as well as causing the deaths of over 100,000 marine animals.

THE NEPSETTER

The Sustainability Issue

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NEPA Working to Improve Air Quality

The National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) in collaboration with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) hosted a week-long data validation and air quality index training workshop in Kingston, Jamaica in June 2016.

During the launch at the Eden Gardens Restaurant, Anthony McKenzie, Director of Environmental Management and Conservation Division said that, "over the last seven years NEPA has worked with industries to achieve compliance with air quality standards and significant strides have been made. "

He also informed that the Agency has increased the number of air quality monitoring sites across the island to 79, including publicly and privately owned operated facilities. NEPA will be revising the ambient air quality standards and is currently working on a five-year air quality programme.

Colonel Oral Khan, Chief Technical Director in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation explained that "the air quality index will reduce the burden on the healthcare sector and spiral behavioural change amongst Jamaicans.

The training will allow NEPA to develop an Air Quality Index. The index is a daily forecast which seeks to disseminate useful information to the public about the quality of the ambient air and the possible health effects, which may be experienced as a result of being exposed to the ambient air," Mr. Khan further elaborated.

The information that will be provided by the Air Quality Index is meant to help citizens, especially high risk groups such as those with pre-existing heart and respiratory illnesses to make informed decisions, so as to reduce their exposure to poor air quality.



Participants from the private and public sector who participated in the recent Data Validation and Air Quality Index Workshop takes a group photo.

National Environmental and Awareness Week Commences With an Open Day

The National Environment and Planning Agency started off National Environment Awareness Week in 2016 with a bang- hosting an Open Day to commemorate the event.

The event, which was held at the Agency's 11 Caledonia Avenue offices, had more than 10 schools participating, multiple exhibitions from stakeholders and talks from various luminaries, including the legendary former CEO of NEPA, Mr. Franklin McDonald.



Former NEPA's CEO, Franklin McDonald speaks at the Open Day



Students from Alpha Infant School performing at the Open Day



NEPA's CEO, Peter Knight at the Open Day



Students from Alpha Infant School enjoying the festivities

NEPA REINSTATES MOU WITH WRA AND MOH FOR WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT



Peter Knight (left), Chief Executive Officer of the National Environment and Planning Agency shakes hands with Herbert Thomas (centre), Acting Managing Director of the Water Resources Authority and Everton Baker, Director of Environmental Health Unit in the Ministry of Health after signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

The National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) and collaborating partners signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as part of the overall efforts to improve Jamaica's ambient water quality.

The collaborating partners with NEPA are the Water Resources Authority (WRA) and the Ministry of Health – Environmental Health Unit. The MoU was signed on June 3 by the heads of collaborating agencies and departments at the NEPA's Open Day & Environmental Fair.

"The aim of the Memorandum of Understanding is to secure and ensure a harmonized approach to water resource management" said Anthony McKenzie, Director of the Environmental Management and Conservation Division.

Mr. Herbert Thomas, Acting Managing Director of the Water Resources Authority said the memorandum enables key agencies to play their role in water resource management.

The Memorandum of Understanding was first signed in 2002 and was reviewed for re-instatement in 2015. The Agreement seeks to co-ordinate duties, functions and the exchange of information as it pertains to water quality management.

NEPA Helps Brighten Up Children's Home



NEPA's members of staff taking a photo with residents of the NEST Children's Home

It's not usually the big gestures that are the most heart-felt; small acts of kindness are exceptionally heart-warming

In Jamaica, May is celebrated as Child's Month. Although children are to be loved and appreciated, every single second of every single day, this period usually sees a spike in the discussions surrounding the issues affecting children, as well as highlighting factors, which contribute to their general wellbeing.

The NEPA Sports and Social Club (NSSC) has been playing an active role in this celebration for the past few years and May 2016 was no different.

On May 31, 13 members of staff of the National Environment and Planning Agency visited the NEST Children's Home, which is situated at 57 Manning's Hill Road in St. Andrew. The Home is operated by the Salvation Army.

Jodiel Ebanks, Public Relations Officer of the NSSC said "when the team arrived, the children were waiting excitedly. Just then and there, our hearts were touched as the excitement associated with our visit was almost palpable from the very beginning. We played some board games with them and also sensitized them on NEPA's work."

The children were also provided with small "after-school" treats, which consisted of sandwiches, juice and pastries. The NEST Children's Home was also presented with toiletries, canned food and a pressure cooker.



NEPA members of staff interacting with residents of the NEST Children's Home

NEPA Creates E-Learning Toolkit for Jamaica Customs Agency

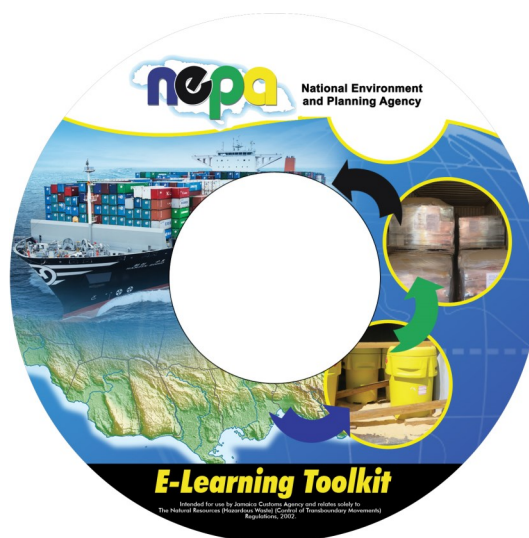
As part of its ongoing commitment to regulating hazardous waste, the Agency has created an E-learning Toolkit to help sensitize customs officers on regulating the movement of hazardous waste materials.

The Toolkit contains information on regulatory tools such as the Basel Convention, guidelines on the packaging and labeling of hazardous waste and protocol to deal with illegal transportation of hazardous waste.

Dr. Kerrine Senior, Manager of the Pollution Prevention and Control Branch said that this initiative will be helpful to improving how Customs agents handle cases involving hazardous waste.

“The E-learning toolkit will play a valuable role in helping Customs agents deal with issues how to enforce the laws and regulations regarding the transportation of hazardous waste” she said.

The import, export and transportation of hazardous waste materials through Jamaica are regulated by the Natural Resources (Hazardous Wastes) (Control of Transboundary Movements) Regulations, which were enacted in 2002.



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