

## Consultant strikes treasure in trash costs

*Business First of Columbus* - January 19, 2007 by [JEFF BELL](#) Business First

George Frecker loves to talk trash, but it has nothing to do with intimidating a business foe.

Instead, the owner of Waste Cost Recovery likes to help companies save money on trash removal and recycling, and do something good for the environment in the process.

"It fits my passion," said Frecker, whose commitment to the environment includes piloting gliders instead of fuel-burning aircraft and foregoing herbicides on his yard in Upper Arlington.

"When people ask where I live, I say it's easy to pick out because it's the one with all the dandelions," he said.

Frecker's three-year-old company took a step forward in December when he was awarded a contract to help businesses in downtown Columbus' Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District get a better grip on their trash and recycling costs. The district covers a 25-square-block area and includes more than 150 property owners.

Under a 13-month, \$24,500 contract with the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio, Frecker will help businesses in the district streamline trash removal and create a comprehensive recycling program.

The effort may include helping them consolidate contracts and pickup routes with trash haulers and finding ways to reduce the amount of trash going to landfills.

Frecker helps his clients by tracking their trash invoices and doing spot checks of their trash bins - he calls it Dumpster surfing - to see what can be recycled.

Such attention to detail can yield sizable savings. Two of his clients, Upper Arlington Schools and Hamilton Local Schools, have reported saving thousands of dollars a year, and he said some of his business clients have slashed their trash costs by more than 50 percent.

"There's money to be saved all the way around," Frecker said.  
Low-hanging fruit

The idea to launch Waste Cost Recovery grew from an experience Frecker had when he operated his family's business, Frecker's Ice Cream Co. He found he could save \$850 a month by keeping a closer eye on trash-hauling and recycling expenses.

"That kind of surprised me," he said. "It was low-hanging fruit."

Frecker said soaring workers' compensation costs were behind his family's decision to close the Columbus ice cream production business and sell its equipment and real estate in 2003.

But Frecker had spent most of his working life with the company, so he saw the sale as the chance for a fresh start in a business with fewer hassles and a focus on one of his passions - the environment.

Waste Cost Recovery got its first break in April 2004, when Frecker landed Columbus Paper Box Co. as a customer. His proposal that the box manufacturer pay him half of whatever he saved it on trash and recycling costs, rather than a standard consulting fee, helped clinch the deal.



*George Frecker, who's watchful of the environment in his personal life, will help downtown Columbus businesses cut their trash costs.*

"I don't get paid unless I save them money," Frecker said.

Upper Arlington Schools paid Waste Cost Recovery \$14,994 - half the documented savings - in fiscal 2005 to 2006, said Paul Craft, the district's executive director of business services. Frecker nearly cut in half the district's trash and recycling bill, which ended up totaling \$33,155.

"George has definitely worked hard to reduce our waste stream, encourage recycling and educate the entire district on waste management issues," Craft said in an e-mail response to questions from Business First.

Hamilton Local has saved about \$6,000 a year on trash costs since it started working with Waste Cost Recovery, said Robert Stant, the district's assistant superintendent.

Frecker oversees all of Hamilton Local's trash needs, evaluating its hauling contracts, tracking Dumpster activity and calling the hauler when pickups are late.

"It has been a very positive experience for us," Stant said. "Trash is the last thing you think about where a school district can save a few thousand dollars, but trash is his business."

Frecker looking at ways to expand Waste Cost Recovery, possibly through sales via independent contractors, without sacrificing the freedom he enjoys as a sole proprietor.

"I can go any direction anytime I want," he said. "I like being a one-man show and meeting people."

George Frecker

**Title:** Owner, Waste Cost Recovery

**Job duties:** Provides consulting services to businesses and school districts on ways to reduce their trash and recycling expenses.

**Age:** 56

**Resides:** Upper Arlington

**Education:** Upper Arlington High School, 1969

**Experience:** Owner, Waste Cost Recovery, 2004 to present; various management positions in family business, Frecker's Ice Cream Co., 1978 to 2003.

**Family:** Married, two children