



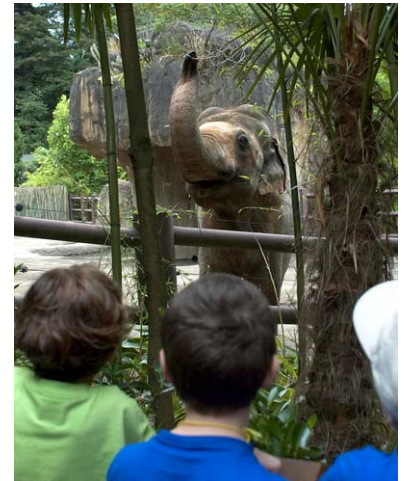
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- Tony Vecchio  
Director, Oregon Zoo

## Case Study: Oregon Zoo

Portland, Oregon has always been known for its lush parks and flower gardens, but these days, the city’s green reputation stems from its innovative urban planning and citywide commitment to sustainable living.

The Metro agency – responsible for transportation planning, facilities, and solid waste – exemplifies Portland’s commitment to sustainability. In 2006, Metro’s solid waste director, Mike Hoglund, learned about a new innovation – the *BigBelly*® solar-powered trash compactor – that promised to reduce trash collection costs and environmental impacts by reducing the number of trips made to high frequency or remote locations. Hoglund selected the Oregon Zoo for the agency’s first *BigBelly* installation.



### Improved Customer Service

The Zoo was collecting trash three to five times a day from 50 garbage cans. In addition, there was tremendous variability in the amount and timing of waste generation, making it difficult to plan ahead. Not surprisingly, trash piled up when the zoo was at its busiest and staff members were the most pressed. The Zoo’s attempt to solve the problem – dispatching available workers to slowly weave through the crowds in small collection vehicles throughout the day – wasn’t working. The operation was time consuming and ineffective, leaving patrons to sit among overflowing trash cans until a staff member was alerted to service them.

### Time Savings for Staff

In 2007, the Zoo installed five *BigBelly* solar trash compactors in high-traffic locations. Garbage collections at these sites were instantly reduced from 3-5 times a day to just one. Collections could now be planned for times when the Zoo had its least number of visitors.

“I’ve been doing waste services at the Oregon Zoo for 12 years, and the *BigBelly* machines have changed my life for the better,” says Mark Newberg, Zoo Custodian. “I have to make less frequent trips, it’s easier on my back, and it even makes me take more pride in keeping the area clean. They’ve been great.”

Michael Weatherman, Custodial Supervisor for the Zoo, expects the *BigBelly* solar compactors to pay for themselves in just a few years, “from the reduction in labor and also the fuel it takes for a vehicle to come and empty the containers.”

### Environmental Education

*BigBelly* also offers an opportunity for the Zoo to augment its environmental educational efforts, which include an animal manure composting facility and discounts for visitors taking mass transit.

“This is a great example of ways the Oregon Zoo is using alternative-energy technology to lower costs and help improve the environment,” says Tony Vecchio, Zoo director.