

# talkin' TRASH ...and more



Visit us at [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org)

## Tips for Keeping Thurston County Healthy, Fall/Winter 2009

### Green Up The Holidays

The holiday season is right around the corner, and with it comes parties, dinners, and other festive gatherings. Events like these have the potential to consume a lot of resources and generate huge amounts of waste. By considering the environment in your party planning, you have a chance to make a real difference and introduce friends and family members to the possibilities.

This edition of Talkin' Trash offers terrific tips for reducing waste at get-togethers, many of them courtesy of our readers. Keep the following hints in mind throughout the year when planning birthday parties, weddings, barbecues, work meetings and more.

#### Invitations

Instead of printing invitations, call or e-mail friends and family with event details. You can also text or e-mail a fancy invitation to your friends through websites such as [www.evite.com](http://www.evite.com). If you really want printed invitations, deliver the information on a 100 percent recycled postcard or folded sheet of paper instead of in an envelope.

#### Dishes

Use dishes, utensils and napkins that can be washed and reused. Rent or borrow rarely used items like large punch bowls, chafing dishes or insulated beverage containers.



If you're hosting a huge party and dishwashing is not an option, consider purchasing biodegradable utensils and paper plates or vegetable-based plastics that can be tossed in your

organics recycling bin for composting. (The organics bin was formerly known as the yard waste bin.) Visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org) for details about this program.

#### Decorations

Cover tables with fabric tablecloths instead of the plastic varieties that end up in the garbage.

For that special holiday glow, use natural candles made from beeswax, soy or palm oil rather than petroleum-based versions. Eco-friendly candles burn cleaner and longer, and do not produce the fine-particle pollution caused by the petroleum-based versions.

When it comes time to hang holiday lights, choose LED lights for a beautiful sparkle. LED lights last up to 100,000 hours, so they'll survive several seasons. LEDs also use far less energy. One bulb in a traditional strand of holiday lights uses six watts, while an *entire strand* of LED lights uses only four watts. If you can't find LED lights at a local retail store, try the internet; many varieties are available at competitive prices.

#### Food and Beverages

Keep food local. Commercial agriculture has a major impact on the environment, particularly meat and poultry production. Help reduce your impact by offering organic, locally grown meat and produce. Locally produced food requires much less energy for production and transportation, and it tastes better too! Take advantage of seasonal vegetables readily available throughout Thurston County. If you host a potluck, challenge your guests to bring a dish that contains locally grown ingredients. For a map of local Thurston County farms visit [communityfarmlandtrust.org](http://communityfarmlandtrust.org).

You can also go green with the drinks. Look into locally crafted wines and beers, or those made organically. Serve tap water instead of bottled water; make it elegant with lemon or lime wedges. Use larger containers to minimize waste, and place food scraps and food-soiled paper in your organics recycling bin.



#### Go for Zero Waste

"Where would you like me to put this?" It's a common question visitors ask as they amble into the kitchen with a soda can, paper plate or glass bottle. If you're not close by, chances are the item will go in the garbage.

To steer guests in the right direction, place small containers for recyclables near the trash can and label them appropriately. Inexpensive, box-shaped storage containers work well and are available in most dollar stores – plus, you can reuse the containers for other purposes in the future. Don't forget to include a container for food and food-soiled paper. If you line the bin with a compostable bag or paper, it will be easy to take the entire contents out to your organics recycling bin. (See page 5 for details.) At the end of the party, transfer all of the recyclable materials into the correct curbside bins.

You'll be surprised how easy it is to hold a zero-waste or reduced-waste party if you get in the spirit and plan ahead.

#### Funding for Talkin' Trash and Solid Waste Education Programs

Funding for Talkin' Trash and other solid waste education efforts comes from grants and rates at county-operated garbage disposal sites. Our programs are not funded by Thurston County's general fund, and therefore they do not come at the expense of other valuable programs and departments within Thurston County.

### trash flash

**THINK IT CAN'T BE DONE?** In August, Thurston County commissioners personally hosted an annual pancake breakfast for the public at the Thurston County Fairgrounds. The amount of garbage left over from preparing more than 400 breakfasts was so minimal that it fit into one small container about the size of a microwave oven. Even more impressive, a Secondhand Safari community garage sale event hosted at the fairgrounds in May drew 3,000 people yet generated less than 10 gallons of garbage (less than two 5-gallon buckets).

## Since You Asked!



### **May I put shellfish shells (clams, mussels, oysters, shrimp) in the organics recycling bin?**

Shellfish meat and shells may go into your curbside organics bin, along with all meat and bones. To cut down on odors, wrap the items in either newspaper, a paper bag, or a compostable bag. Please do not put these items in your regular recycle bin.

### **I have many kitty litter pails that have a number five with recycle arrows. Can these be recycled?**

Unfortunately, kitty litter buckets cannot be recycled through the curbside program. The best option is to avoid purchasing these nonrecyclable buckets altogether. Some kitty litter comes in plastic jugs that can be recycled, or in paper bags that can be recycled in the organics recycling bin. The other option is to use a single plastic kitty litter bucket and refill it at one of the many pet supply stores that sell litter in bulk.

Those old plastic litter buckets may still come in handy. For example, you can remove the lid and place your recyclable glass in the container. (You may set out as many containers as needed on glass-recycling day.) The buckets may also be used to store items like camping supplies, garden tools or hobby items. Another option is to post the buckets for reuse on [www.2good2toss.com](http://www.2good2toss.com) or [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org).

### **We throw the clear plastic bags that surround our newspaper into our recycle bin. They have the recycle triangle symbol, but your newsletter states that "not everything that features a recycle symbol is truly recyclable." I don't want to contaminate our bin. Is it OK to put those bags in?**

Plastic bags such as newspaper bags, grocery bags and bread bags do not go in the recycle bin because they jam equipment at the sorting plant. Please take these to the plastic bag recycling box in a nearby grocery store, and thanks for being so conscientious!

### **We use tubs of "Wet Ones." Can we recycle the container? It has a number two on the bottom.**

No, unfortunately these types of containers are not recyclable through curbside recycling. The number on the bottom simply identifies the type of plastic used to create the container; however, other factors come into play, including whether the recycling plants will actually accept them.

## Shift How You Gift



Americans throw away more garbage between Thanksgiving and New Year's than any other time of year, and most of it comes from gifts. According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the 2.6 billion holiday cards sold each year in the United States could fill a football field 10 stories high. And then there are the mountains of gift wrap, Styrofoam peanuts, ribbon and plastic packaging. But it doesn't have to be that way. Consider these ideas:

- **Donations.** Instead of gifts, ask guests to bring wish list items or donations for a favorite charity. After the party, the guest of honor can deliver the donations and take a picture to include in thank-you notes.
- **Gift exchanges.** For gift exchanges, encourage guests to purchase from local businesses and/or purchase waste-free gifts such as certificates for experiences, services or memberships.

- **Holiday decoration or cookie swaps.** Invite guests to bring unwanted decorations to swap. Also consider creating a pool of used party/event materials that everyone can share.
- **Gift wrap / gift bags.** Make the wrap part of the gift. For instance, wrap items in a dish towel, reusable bag, scarf, tablecloth, organic cotton T-shirt or pillowcase. Tie the package with reusable ribbon or yarn. You can also place gifts inside containers like cookie tins, flower pots and baskets. Get really creative and wrap gifts in children's or your own artwork. Ribbons and bows can also be replaced with evergreens, dried flowers, hand-cut snowflakes or origami. If you do buy wrapping paper, make sure it has recycled content. Avoid shiny metallic wrapping paper because it can't be recycled.
- **Holiday cards.** If you send holiday cards, buy recycled-content cards and envelopes. Another option is to make your own cards out of last year's cards or used wrapping paper. Save cards and wrapping to use again next year.

Perhaps the best idea is to skip gifts altogether by suggesting "no gifts, please" on the party invitation. Without the hassle of gifts, partygoers can celebrate without worrying about shopping – which just might be the greatest gift of all!

*Portions of this article are courtesy of Environmental Reporter at GreenWorks.tv.*

## trash flash

**REGIONAL WASTE FREE HOLIDAYS PROGRAM:** The online regional Waste Free Holidays program has been discontinued because of budget concerns by participating counties, including Thurston County. Local businesses in Thurston County will continue to offer great waste-free gift ideas, and many will continue to offer holiday discounts on their own. Check around town and on websites for great gifts such as services, lessons, memberships and restaurant meals.

## Free E-Cycling

In case you missed the news: computers, monitors, laptops and televisions may now be recycled FREE at six locations in Thurston County, including all Goodwill stores and donation stations. These locations are part of the statewide E-Cycle program. For more details, visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org) and click on "Electronics and Technotrash." The web page also includes information on how to recycle other types of electronics that are not accepted through the E-Cycle program. (See page 7 for more electronic recycling information.)

Vendors participating in the E-Cycle program must meet strict standards set forth by the state Department of Ecology. Those standards are mentioned on the "Frequently Asked Questions" link of [www.ecyclewashington.org](http://www.ecyclewashington.org).



## trash flash

**ELECTRONICS RECYCLING:** Thurston County households, school districts, government agencies and small businesses have recycled more than 1 million pounds of electronic waste since the E-Cycle Washington program started in January 2009. Statewide, the program has collected 25.8 million pounds of televisions, laptops, computers and computer monitors.

# Education with an Impact

"Mom...(sigh)... you bought styrofoam plates again and those can't be recycled." This type of reminder from an 11-year-old is just one example of how kids make adults "walk the talk." It's also an example of the importance of environmental education.

Children who learn about garbage, recycling and waste reduction in school not only learn how to care for our planet; they also inspire the grownups in their lives to make a change. Thurston County offers a wide range of programs to bring environmental education to life in schools and home. Here are ways your local school can get involved.

## Call for a Presentation

Thurston County educators offer presentations for elementary schools using visual aids, hands-on activities, games and take-home materials. The goal is to help students enjoy and retain what they've learned. Topics include waste reduction, recycling, composting, hazardous waste and more.



## Schedule a Tour

Touring the Waste and Recovery Center at Hawks Prairie is another great learning opportunity for students of all ages and adult groups. Participants see firsthand how much trash we create here in Thurston County, and the measures needed to protect the environment. The visual impact of one day's trash can create a lasting impression. To schedule a tour, call Thurston County Solid Waste at 357-2491.

## Join "Food to Flowers"

Your school's leftover bologna sandwiches, apple cores, and dirty napkins could end up in a backyard – as compost, thanks to the Food to Flowers school organics recycling program.

Over the past year, Thurston County residents have become accustomed to placing food, food-soiled paper and yard waste in their organics recycling bins. The same program is now in many schools under the Food to Flowers program. Thurston County Solid Waste provides schools with free training, set-up assistance, signage, student activities and other related material.

The Food to Flowers organics program has already produced amazing results. Participating Thurston County schools have reduced kitchen and cafeteria waste by approximately 75 percent. Tumwater Elementary School, for example, joined the program in May 2008. Within one year, the average amount of garbage produced in the cafeteria plummeted from 112 pounds per day to less than seven pounds per day – an especially impressive number when you consider that roughly 428 students converge on the cafeteria each day.

## trash flash

**OLYMPIA HIGH SCHOOL:** Thanks to the City of Olympia's organics program, Olympia High School has saved about \$8,300 per year on garbage fees. The school places food and food-soiled paper into an organics bin instead of the trash. As a result, the school's 20-yard garbage box is collected only 35 times per year, down from 104 times per year.

## Become a Green School

All public and private K-12 schools across Washington State may sign up to participate in the Washington Green Schools program by visiting [www.wagreenschools.org](http://www.wagreenschools.org). This voluntary program provides online resources and tools to help students, teachers and staff "green up" school campuses and operations. Schools earn certification status and awards, such as a special flag and public recognition, when they accomplish goals in five areas:

- Energy efficiency
- Recycling and waste reduction
- Toxics reduction and indoor air quality
- Transportation and outdoor air quality
- Water quality and conservation

New Market Skills Center and Tumwater Middle School are among the 21 schools participating in the program statewide.

For more information about school programs, call Colleen Uereb at 786-5269 or e-mail [uerebc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:uerebc@co.thurston.wa.us).

Schools within City of Olympia limits may also contact Spencer Orman, City of Olympia Waste ReSources Senior Program Specialist, at [sorman@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:sorman@ci.olympia.wa.us) or call 753-8752 for assistance.



### "Waste-Less" Lunch Ideas

- Pack lunches in reusable lunch boxes.
- Put juice in reusable flip-top containers.
- Instead of using plastic sandwich bags or cellophane, use reusable sandwich-size plastic boxes.
- Buy juice boxes rather than juice pouches. (Juice boxes are recyclable; juice pouches are not.)
- Avoid buying packaged lunch kits.
- Avoid buying single-serve containers of products such as yogurt and applesauce.

## Sandy Conradi Greens Rochester Schools



Rochester School District is fast becoming one of the most sustainable school districts in Thurston County. Much of this is due to the hard work of one woman: Sandy Conradi, Rochester School District's Director of Dining Services.

Since joining the district in January 2006, Sandy has worked to eliminate polystyrene lunch trays and switch to durable lunch trays instead. At Rochester High School, Sandy introduced durable flatware and got the school participating in Thurston County's Food to Flowers lunchroom composting program. Sandy says she's trying to "do the right thing" for students, the school district budget, and the environment.

Many people look at Sandy's work and assume extra time and money are involved. She wants those folks to know that it's not really as hard as it may seem, and the changes have "saved a little bit of money" for the district. She also says that becoming more sustainable has "actually made staff jobs a little bit easier."

Sandy is continually looking for more opportunities to make the Rochester School District more sustainable. For example, she plans to introduce the Food to Flowers program to more Rochester schools this year. She is also connecting with local farmers to serve more local produce in the district.

Throughout all of the changes she's put into practice, Sandy has maintained a positive attitude and outlook. She encourages others to "not be afraid to implement change because it will all eventually fall into place."

## Fast Facts About Rochester School District

- During the 2008-2009 school year, the Rochester School District eliminated the use of 223,000 polystyrene (disposable) lunch trays. Although the district had to purchase durable trays, the trays cost a total of \$1,000 less than one year's worth of disposable trays.
- By participating in the Food to Flowers composting program, Rochester High School will keep more than 10 tons of food scraps and food-soiled paper out of the landfill this school year.

## Remodel, Reuse



Commissioner Sandra Romero inside her redesigned cabin.

Thurston County Commissioner Sandra Romero got a firsthand lesson in green building techniques when she remodeled a small cabin in the back yard of her property. The 240-square-foot cabin originally consisted of one large storage room with a concrete floor. Sandra enrolled in a six-month green building class at Bates Technical College and then set to work. She and her contractor scoured through used building supply stores to find just the right mix of materials to transform the unit into a charming guest house. Among her best finds:

- The floors came from old Fort Lewis barracks.
- The knotty pine walls and kitchen sink came from local used building materials stores.
- The trim is from old vinegar vats.
- An antique lantern is from a used building supply store in Kentucky, where Sandra was visiting on vacation.

All told, about 90 percent of the remodel work was accomplished with used building materials. The cabin was also equipped with extra insulation, light switch timers and an on-demand water heater to conserve energy.

Today, the cabin is a favorite hideaway for her grandchildren, and a great reminder that used building materials – even old vinegar vats – have value.

### Local Reuse Stores

If you have building materials to donate or are looking for items for a project, be sure to visit the two nonprofit building supply stores in downtown Olympia.



Olympia Salvage  
113 State Ave., Olympia  
705-1300  
www.olympiasalvage.org

South Puget Sound Habitat  
for Humanity ReStore  
415 Olympia Ave., Olympia  
956-3456  
www.sps Habitat.org

Please check the stores' websites for a list of acceptable items before making a delivery. Donations are tax-deductible.

## Plastics Pop Quiz

These plastic items feature the chasing arrow recycle symbol. But are they truly recyclable through curbside recycling? Take this quiz and find out!

**Butter tub**



**Yes.** The recycling program accepts plastic tubs that held dairy products, such as yogurt, sour cream and butter.

**Plastic jar**



**Yes.** The recycling program accepts all plastic bottles and jars that have a neck smaller than the base.

**Plastic clamshell container**



**No.** Clamshell containers are not acceptable. These containers often hold grapes and deli food.

**Pesto tub**



**No.** Surprised? This is a common mistake. Clear plastic tubs are not recyclable in the curbside program. The program accepts only tubs that held dairy products.

So how did you score on the quiz? If you missed a few answers, you're not alone. There's a common misconception that all containers with the "chasing arrow" recycle symbol are recyclable. In fact, not everything that features a recycle symbol is truly recyclable. It all depends on whether recycling plants will actually accept the materials, regardless of whether the manufacturers imprint the familiar symbol on the bottom.

The only plastics that belong in the curbside recycle bin are plastic bottles, jugs and jars that have necks narrower than the base of the container; and plastic tubs that held dairy products like yogurt or margarine.

If you're ever confused about what goes into your recycle bin, just visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org) and click on "Recycle" for a printable Yes/No sheet. Also please feel free to give us a call at 357-2491. Be sure to check the Yes/No list on your curbside recycle bin and on the back of the calendar that is mailed with your December or January garbage/recycling bill.

When deciding which items to place in the recycle bin, remember the rule, "When In Doubt, Leave It Out." Putting the wrong items in your recycle bin increases sorting costs and contaminates the recyclables, making them less valuable.

## trash flash

**GOOD NEWS:** Recycling is one of the most successful environmental initiatives in our country's history. Twenty years ago, only one curbside recycling program existed in the United States. Today, about half of all the people in the United States are served by curbside collection programs. (Source: EPA)

## Don't Leave Us Shattered

When you place glass out at the curb for recycling, please remember to use a rigid container that is between 5 and 20 gallons in size. A plastic bin or small trash can will work just fine. Those old plastic kitty litter and detergent buckets will also work well, provided they're at least 5 gallons and the lids are removed. You might want to drill a few holes in the bottom of your container to drain rain water.



## trash flash

**AMERICA RECYCLES DAY:** November 15 is America Recycles Day, the only nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging Americans to recycle and to buy recycled products. This year's pledge calls for Americans to: Find out which materials can and cannot be recycled; lead by example; recycle electronic waste; encourage elected officials to support recycling efforts; and tell friends recycling is the easiest way to slow global warming.

## Extra Services from Haulers

Hearing the recycling truck rumble up to the curb is as common as hearing an alarm clock ring. But did you know that your local hauling company also provides other types of services that just might help you out in a pinch?

- **Bulky items.** If you're worried about cramming that old mattress into your tiny compact car, have no fear! Both the City of Olympia and LeMay Enterprises collect bulky items for an extra fee.
- **Curbside assistance.** Some residents have difficulty getting bins to the curb or down long driveways. LeMay Enterprises offers both carry-out and drive-in services for an additional charge.
- **Bin sizes:** Your trash bin might be looking rather empty these days, now that you're doing such a great job placing materials into the recycling and organics bins. LeMay Enterprises and the City of Olympia have several cost-effective options for trash service. Both service providers offer small, medium and large garbage cans.

The City of Olympia collects trash every other week, and LeMay Enterprises offers a variety of pickup schedules and bin sizes, depending on where you live. Right-size your trash service today and save!

- **Shredding service.** Pacific Disposal provides drop-in shredding service at the company's main facility, 2910 Hogum Bay Road N.E. in the Hawks Prairie area. Pacific Disposal is located near the Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center – just follow the signs. The cost is \$5.50 per file box. A staff person will help you put the items in a locked box, and the contents will be shredded the same day. For more information about shredding, call 486-8605.

See page 8 to find out how to contact the hauling company that serves your home.



## trash flash

**VEHICLE TOW MOUNT:** Getting bins to a public roadside collection point can be a challenge for some rural residents. Products such as the *Cansporter* mount onto a conventional vehicle tow-receiver and bins are lifted and latched in place for easy transport. For more information, visit [cansporter.com](http://cansporter.com). Please note: Thurston County does not endorse this product, but is providing this news for informational purposes only.

## Recycling Required at Events

Attention event planners! If you're using a vendor to sell beverages at a car show, football game, festival or other public event, you may need to arrange for recycling containers along with the fun. Washington law requires beverage vendors at official gatherings and events to provide recycling for single-serve plastic, glass and aluminum containers.

The law applies to every official gathering and sports facility in communities where recycling services are available to businesses. The term "official" refers to any event that is recognized, approved, or held by a government, public body or authority (including schools). Since business recycling is available in most of Thurston County, beverage vendors are required to provide recycling options at virtually all the public events they serve.

The challenge, or course, is that most organizations do not own their own recycling containers. That's where Thurston County comes in! We loan sturdy, collapsible ClearStream containers for collecting aluminum cans and plastic bottles.

Your organization may empty the ClearStream bags at one of our recycling blue bin sites or arrange for a private hauler to take them away. The recyclables may also be self-hauled to Pacific Disposal on Hogum Bay Road near Hawks Prairie. We even supply bags for you to collect your recycling. It's that easy!

To borrow ClearStream containers from Thurston County, e-mail Colleen Uureb at [uurebc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:uurebc@co.thurston.wa.us) or call 786-5269. If you are interested in having a zero-waste event within the City of Olympia, visit [www.olympiawa.gov](http://www.olympiawa.gov) or call 753-8588.



Call us today and check one more thing off your "to do" list – you'll leave a big impression with visitors and a smaller impact on the environment.

## trash flash

**THE LIFE OF ALUMINUM:** The aluminum can is the most valuable container to recycle and is the most recycled consumer product in the U.S. today. Aluminum cans are unique because it takes only about 60 days to create a new can and get it back on the store shelf. According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board, one recycled aluminum can saves enough energy to power a television or computer for three hours.

## Less Mess With Compostable Bags



Gathering food scraps and food-soiled paper for your organics bin doesn't have to be a messy job. Simply place the items in a compostable bag and place the bag in the curbside organics bin. The compostable bag will turn into compost along with the rest of the materials. Here are a few hints:

- The composting facility accepts only bags that are certified "ASTM D 6400-99." Examples include: BioBags, Al-Pack, Nature Friendly and EcoSafe.
- Do not use bags that are labeled "biodegradable" or "made from recycled materials." These types of bags are not necessarily compostable.
- The 3-gallon size generally fits kitchen countertop bins. Compostable bags are thinner than regular plastic trash bags, so be sure to support the bottom of the bag when you carry it.

Local stores that carry compostable bags include:

Ace Hardware  
400 Cooper Point Road, Olympia  
236-0093

Bayview Thriftway  
516 West 4th Ave., Olympia  
352-4897

Bed Bath & Beyond  
2405 4th Ave. W., Olympia  
236-0020

Olympia Food Co-op (Eastside)  
3111 Pacific Ave. S.W., Olympia  
956-1086

Olympia Food Co-op (Westside)  
921 Rogers Street N.W., Olympia  
754-7666

Olympia Supply  
625 Columbia Street S.W., Olympia  
357-6659

QFC  
4775 Whitman Lane S.E., Lacey  
438-3392

Ralph's Thriftway  
1908 4th Ave. E., Olympia  
357-8011

Safeway  
3215 Harrison Ave. N.W., Olympia  
956-3782

TOP Food & Drug  
1313 Cooper Point Road, Olympia  
754-1428

Walgreens has announced that it will also sell compostable bags in the near future.



## No Recycle Days

Please note that Thurston County has discontinued Community Recycle Days, which are very expensive to promote and staff. This was a very difficult decision due to the popularity of the events. Thurston County launched the program years ago to accept items that would otherwise be hard to recycle. Today, those items – such as computers, TVs and scrap metal – can be recycled easily here within our own community year-round. Locations are listed on [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org). (Please see the related article on this page.)

## HazoHouse News

HazoHouse is going through some changes, but don't worry – HazoHouse still offers friendly, free collection of toxic household products. The changes affect latex paint and batteries.

### Latex Paint

Latex paint now belongs in the garbage, provided the paint is dry and the lid is off the can. Spilled paint can cause a mess on the road, so haulers will not accept any liquid or runny paint. To dry the paint, use one of the following methods.



- If your can is 1/4 full or less: Simply remove the lid and place the can in a safe, well-ventilated area. The paint will dry in a few days and then you can place the container in the trash. Check the paint's dryness with a stick.
- If your can is more than 1/4 full: Mix kitty litter, mulch, sawdust or shredded paper into the can to solidify the paint. Some hardware and paint stores carry packets of paint solidifier that cost just a few dollars. Follow the directions on the packet. Once paint is a tacky, oatmeal-like consistency and will not spill, it is ready for disposal.

Continue to take all oil-based paint to HazoHouse. Oil-based paint, stains, varnishes and thinners are toxic and flammable and do not belong in the trash. Latex paint manufactured before 1989 should still go to HazoHouse because it might contain lead or mercury.

### Alkaline Batteries

HazoHouse no longer accepts alkaline batteries. Residents may place alkaline batteries in the trash or take them to a battery recycler. Businesses are still required to take alkaline batteries to a recycler due to state and federal law.



Other types of batteries – such as lead acid (car), rechargeable, lithium metal and silver oxide button batteries – still need to go to HazoHouse or a battery recycler for proper disposal.

For more information on locations that accept batteries, visit [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org) and click on "batteries." The hours of operation and address for HazoHouse are featured on page 8.

## Where Do I Take My?...

What should you do with those old eyeglasses and grungy athletic shoes? Find the answer on [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org). Our easy-to-use website provides a list of local reuse and recycling locations throughout Thurston County. Below are just a few local examples. If we've missed a location, please call us at 357-2491. Some of these locations may charge fees. Please call them before delivering your items.

### Broken Electronics

#### Best Buy

625 Black Lake Blvd. S.W., Olympia  
596-9702  
[www.bestbuy.com/recycling](http://www.bestbuy.com/recycling)

Best Buy stores now accept consumer electronics of nearly every type and brand, regardless of where they were purchased. You can bring in up to two items a day per household, and most items are free. There is a \$10 charge for CRTs, monitors, laptops and TVs 32" and smaller. In return, Best Buy will provide a \$10 Best Buy gift card to offset the cost. (TVs larger than 32" are not accepted at the stores; however, Best Buy will collect larger TVs from homes for a fee. Call for details.)



Please note: Computer hard drives must be removed before the units are recycled. You can do this yourself or pay a Best Buy technician to do it for you. (The Best Buy website features a video tutorial.)

Best Buy also accepts inkjet cartridges, batteries, cell phones, CDs/DVDs, PDAs, smartphones and gift cards.

#### Staples

1200 Cooper Point Road S.W., Olympia  
570-0800  
[www.staples.com/sbd/content/about/soul/recycling.html](http://www.staples.com/sbd/content/about/soul/recycling.html)

Staples accepts used computers, monitors, laptops, desktop printers, faxes and all-in-ones for a \$10 fee per piece of equipment. Dell products and smaller computer peripherals such as keyboards, mice and speakers are recycled free of charge. Staples also accepts rechargeable batteries, cell phones, and ink and toner cartridges. Rewards Card members receive \$3 on their cards for every recycled ink or toner cartridge.

#### Office Depot

602 Sleater-Kinney Road S.E., Lacey  
923-1099  
[www.officedepot.com](http://www.officedepot.com)

To recycle electronics through Office Depot, purchase a "tech recycling box" and fill it with items. (Make sure the lid closes.) Leave the box at Office Depot. Fees are either \$5, \$10 or \$15 depending on the size of the box. Office Depot offers free recycling of PDAs, rechargeable batteries, and ink and toner cartridges.

### Scrap Metal

Scrap metal such as old gas grills, propane tanks and hot water tanks may be recycled at several scrap metal locations. For a complete list, check the yellow pages or visit [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org).

The City of Olympia also accepts non-appliance/clean scrap metal at the city's drop-off site, 1401 Eastside Street, S.E. The site is open on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. through Nov. 21. Scrap metal recycling is free for residents through Nov. 21, 2009. For more information, call 753-8715 or visit [www.olympiawa.gov](http://www.olympiawa.gov).



### Broken Appliances

The following locations accept appliances for recycling. Call for fee information. Best Buy, Mud Bay Appliance and Jaco Environmental also offer collection service for a fee. (Many retail stores offer free collection service if you purchase a new appliance; check with the specific location.)

#### Best Buy

625 Black Lake Blvd S.W., Olympia  
596-9702  
[www.bestbuy.com/recycling](http://www.bestbuy.com/recycling)  
Collection service only. Do not take appliances to the store.

#### Mud Bay Appliance

6644 Sexton Drive N.W., Olympia  
866-1616  
Drop-off or collection service

#### Jaco Environmental

800-414-5072 (headquartered in Mill Creek)  
[www.jacoinc.net](http://www.jacoinc.net)  
Collection service only

#### Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center

2418 Hogum Bay Road, Olympia  
357-2491  
[www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org)  
Drop-off service only

The 2009 rate is \$15 for loads weighing 380 pounds or less, plus an extra \$15 handling fee for each refrigerated appliance.

#### Welch's Bargain Center

2701 Martin Way E., Olympia  
352-7552  
Drop-off service only. Appliances are accepted free with an in-store donation to the Thurston County Food Bank.

### Tires

Most tire stores recycle tires free-of-charge for customers and charge a small fee for noncustomers. Call your neighborhood tire center for information or visit [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org).



## trash flash

**LITTER HOTLINE:** If you witness illegal dumping or littering, call the Washington State Department of Ecology at 866-LITTER-1 or visit [www.litter.wa.gov](http://www.litter.wa.gov). The fines for illegal dumping and littering are steep. The fine for food and beverage containers is \$103. The fine for unsecured loads is \$194 and the fine for a lit cigarette is \$1,025. Illegal dumping will result in the highest fine: up to \$5,000 plus jail time.

# Health Matters



## News from Thurston County Environmental Health

### Join an EcoTeam

Are you ready to go on a “Low Carbon Diet” to reduce your impact on climate change? By joining an EcoTeam with friends, colleagues or neighbors, you can make individual changes that add up to big changes and big savings on your energy bill. Learn how EcoTeams work and get involved at the “Cool Thurston Café: Taking Action on Climate Change” event on Tuesday, Oct. 27. The event will take place from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Olympia Center, 222 Columbia Street N.W. in downtown Olympia. This free event includes a workshop, information booths, and refreshments. Find out more and register by contacting either Barb Scavezze (878-9901 or [barb@scavezze.com](mailto:barb@scavezze.com)) or Jennifer Kenny ([jennifermkenny@gmail.com](mailto:jennifermkenny@gmail.com)). Visit [www.coolthurstoncampaign.ning.com](http://www.coolthurstoncampaign.ning.com).

### Prepare for Floods

Heavy rains and floods can corrode or wash away containers that hold paint, oil, gas, and other dangerous household chemicals. Prepare now for the winter’s worst by storing hazardous products in a dry, closeable cupboard with a child safety latch. Put products in a secondary waterproof container, such as an old wastebasket, bucket, dishtub, or even a plastic bag. This will provide an extra layer of protection against leaks and spills. To avoid a hazardous mix of chemicals, follow storage recommendations on the label. For example, never store bleach with ammonia or toilet bowl cleaner with oven cleaner. Finally, be sure to check containers for leaks or corrosion.

If you own a well, keep chemicals out of the wellhouse. During a flood, submerged chemicals can wash down the well casing and contaminate your drinking water.

### Keep Mice Outside

Mice or other rodents may try to move indoors as the weather gets cooler. The first line of defense is plugging mouse-sized entrances to your buildings. Mice can fit into a ¼-inch crack or hole. Check for cracks or other openings around the foundation, attic, vents, and where pipes or cables enter the building. Use wire mesh, ¼-inch hardware cloth, concrete, sheet metal, brick, or mortar to seal openings. Add a sheet metal collar around pipes to seal off space between the pipe and wall. Also add a sweep to the bottom of outside doors.

If mice have already moved in, the best solution is trapping rather than poisons. Mice and rat poisons or bait are slow acting. Rodents often crawl into a wall cavity to die, leaving a smelly, difficult cleanup problem. The poisons are hazardous to humans, pets, and other wildlife that may eat the bait or poisoned mouse. For more tips, visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehvec](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehvec).

## It’s Back-to-Flu Season

Now that fall is underway, more people are spending time indoors together, making it easier for the flu virus to spread. Students and their families should take the following precautions:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water. If soap and water aren’t available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Stay home if you’re sick with a fever or a cough. Please stay away from pregnant women, young children, and others at high risk of severe illness.
- If anyone in your home is ill, avoid gatherings, parties, and get-togethers.
- If someone from your home is sick, protect yourself. Watch for symptoms; if none appear after seven days, you most likely avoided catching the flu.
- Do not share food, drinks, or cigarettes.
- Cover your cough. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or into your sleeve if you don’t have a tissue.
- Get vaccinated against the flu.

Most people with influenza do not need to see a doctor and will recover with home care, fluids, and a fever reliever such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. (Do not use aspirin.) Signs of severe illness include chest pain, difficulty breathing, dehydration, and a fever lasting more than four days. Call your health care provider to determine if you need medical care. For more information, visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health) or call the recorded information line, (360) 709-3080.



### Trash Those Tissues

We hate to recommend placing items in the trash, but that’s where used tissues belong. Tissues can spread germs so they should never be placed in the recycle bin or organics bin.

When you put tissues in the trash, please don’t lob them through the air like a basketball player; place them straight in the can so that somebody else doesn’t have to pick them up. People who handle tissues should wash their hands afterward.

The flu virus does not jump off surfaces and attack someone, but it does get transmitted if you touch a contaminated surface, then touch your eyes, nose, or mouth without washing your hands. Keep surfaces (especially toys, bedside tables, and bathroom and kitchen surfaces) clean by washing with soap and water. You can follow by applying a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.

## Conquering Mold & Mildew

Mold and mildew love wet weather, so now is a great time to take a few precautions around the house.



The best way to battle mold is to reduce moisture and increase air flow. Use a ventilating fan in the bathroom while you shower and for 30 minutes afterward. Be sure your clothes dryer vents outside, and avoid air-drying most clothes indoors. Move large objects away from the walls to increase air flow and circulation. Regularly check for mold growth in places where moisture collects, such as bathrooms, windows and window sills, potted plants, or under the sink.

Mold can also grow in areas where water condenses on cold surfaces, such as unheated rooms or closets.

Fumes are another common issue during the cold months. Be sure the stove, furnace, and fireplace or woodstove are properly vented. A carbon monoxide detector is a good safety addition. Choose cleaning products with no solvents and limited or no odor. Although air “fresheners” might smell like mom’s pumpkin pie, resist the urge to use them; sprays and plug-ins continuously release fumes into the air.

Great information is available in the “Breathe Easier Home Assessment” booklet originally developed by the American Lung Association. For a free copy, call Thurston County Public Health and Social Services at 754-4111 or visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhm).

This edition of Talkin' Trash does not have a calendar because no fall/winter events are scheduled.

# Garbage and Recycling Resources

► The information on this page is correct through 12/31/09.

## Contacts

Talkin' Trash is produced by Thurston County Public Works. Phone 357-2491 or e-mail [wwm-webmaster@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:wwm-webmaster@co.thurston.wa.us). TDD: 754-2933.

## Thurston County Public Works

Thurston County Solid Waste Administration: 357-2491. TDD: 754-2933

WasteLine: 786-5494  
(24-hour recorded information)

Food Recycling Hotline:  
754-2953 (24-hour recorded message)

Webs: [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org)  
[www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org)

## Curbside Collection (Haulers)

Thurston County does not own or operate garbage and recycling trucks. Call your service provider for information about collection schedules.

- Butler's Cove Refuse..... 923-0111
- Eastern Grays Harbor (Summit Lake) ..... 923-0111
- Joe's Refuse ..... 736-4769 .....or 1-800-525-4167
- Pacific Disposal ..... 923-0111
- Rural Refuse ..... 923-0111

The above companies are owned by Harold LeMay Enterprises, which has been purchased by Waste Connections. Yard waste collection service is also available in many of the service areas. Call for more information or visit [www.lemayinc.com](http://www.lemayinc.com).

- City of Olympia residents, call 753-8368 or visit [www.olympiawa.gov](http://www.olympiawa.gov). Olympia provides its own trash, recycling and organics collection service.
- Town of Bucoda residents, call 278-3525 to arrange for curbside trash and recycling service with LeMay Enterprises.

## Public Health and Social Services, Environmental Health

Phone: 754-4111 or TDD: 754-2933

Web: [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm)

Gardening guides: [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg)

Healthy home advice: [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhm)

Note new address: 412 Lilly Rd N.E., Olympia WA 98506

## Exchange Websites

The following websites provide an excellent way to sell or give away useable items. While you're there, you might just find some good deals on items you need.

- Thurston County's free online exchange program: [www.2good2toss.com](http://www.2good2toss.com)
- craigslist: [seattle.craigslist.org/oly](http://seattle.craigslist.org/oly)
- FreeCycle: [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)
- Used Olympia: [www.usedolympia.com](http://www.usedolympia.com)

## Facilities

### Waste and Recovery Center

Located at 2418 Hogum Bay Road. From I-5: take the Marvin Road exit (Exit 111) and head north. Turn right onto Hogum Bay Road. The center will be on your right.

### Rates (through 12/31/09)

one ton = 2,000 lbs

#### Garbage

380 lbs or less.....\$15  
more than 380 lbs ..... \$80 per ton, prorated (One ton is 2,000 pounds, so the per-ton garbage rate is 4 cents per pound.) For refrigerated appliances, add a \$15 handling fee to the rate above. Rates include 3.6 percent state refuse tax and tollhouse fee.

#### Computers, Monitors, Laptops, TVs

Free through the E-Cycle Washington program. Take these items to the Goodwill donation station located across from the outbound scales.

#### Yard Debris

380 lbs or less..... \$8 per ton  
more than 380 lbs ..... \$40 per ton, prorated (One ton is 2,000 pounds, so the per-ton yard waste rate is 2 cents per pound.)

There is no state refuse tax on yard waste.

### Hours

#### Weekdays:

Nov. 1 to March 31 .....7 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
April 1 to Oct. 31 .....7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

#### Saturdays and Sundays

Year round.....8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### Drop Boxes

**Rainier:** 13010 Rainier Acres Road S.E. Friday and Saturday only, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (until 5 p.m. April 1 to Oct. 31)

**Rochester:** 16500 Sargent Road S.E. Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Summit Lake:** 12133 Summit Lake Drive Sunday only, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### HazoHouse

Take household hazardous products to HazoHouse. Open Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Phone 754-3354. HazoHouse is located next to the recycling area of the Waste and Recovery Center. Service is free for residents; businesses pay a small fee.

### Holidays

The Waste and Recovery Center, HazoHouse and all Drop Boxes are closed on the following holidays only: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and July Fourth.

## Where to Take...

Thurston County maintains a database of locations where residents can reuse and recycle virtually any item. Visit [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org). Are we missing any locations? Call 357-2491 or e-mail [wwm-webmaster@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:wwm-webmaster@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Compost Bin Sales

Reduced-price compost bins are available through the Thurston County Master Gardener Foundation. Visit [www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com](http://www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com) or call 481-4204.



Printed on recycled-content paper



Produced by:  
Thurston County Public Works  
2404 A Heritage Court S.W.  
Olympia, WA 98502-6045

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## Recycle Blue Bins

### Locations

Lacey: Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center, 2418 Hogum Bay Road N.E.

Rochester: Rochester Garbage Drop Box site, 16500 Sargent Road. Open Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays only.

Rainier: Rainier Garbage Drop Box site, 13010 Rainier Acres Road S.E. Open Fridays and Saturdays only.

Summit Lake: Summit Lake Garbage Drop Box site, 12133 Summit Lake Drive. Open Sundays only.

### Items Accepted at Blue Bins

Thurston County's blue recycle bins accept:

- Newspaper
- Glass bottles and jars
- Tin and aluminum cans
- Mixed paper
- Plastic dairy tubs, yogurt cups, jugs, jars, and bottles
- Milk cartons and drink boxes
- Corrugated cardboard

All materials should be placed loose in the bins – no paper or plastic bags. (The exception is shredded paper strips, which should be placed in a paper bag with the top folded closed.)