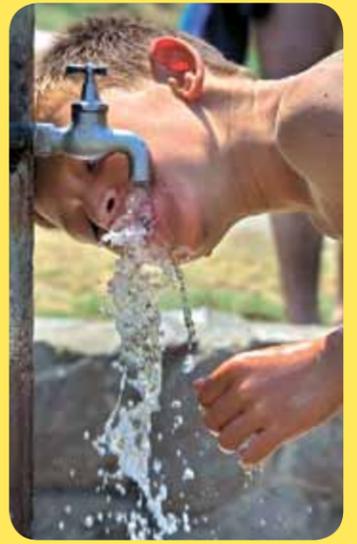


Talkin' Trash & more



Tips for Keeping Thurston County Healthy



www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org

REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE

Fall/Winter 2012

Grant helps food bank expand food collection

The Thurston County Food Bank feeds nearly 10,000 members of our community each month. Food bank customers can expect more than just canned vegetables and dried pasta – the food bank's shelves hold an impressive variety of fresh foods, too. Local grocery stores donate produce, dairy, meats, and baked goods that can no longer be sold but are still perfectly edible. The food bank also collects and redistributes food that local restaurants prepared but didn't serve.

Grant funding from the Washington State Department of Ecology and Thurston County Solid Waste will help the food bank collect even more prepared food from local eateries. The extra funds will allow them to buy a van capable of keeping food cool during transport. The food bank also plans to upgrade their kitchen to enable them to repackage and distribute the prepared food in individual servings.

Don't be fooled by food label dates

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, federal law requires expiration dates on a limited number of products, such as infant formula. These products "expire" because the nutrients and vitamins diminish after the date listed.

Make sure you understand what the labels mean below before tossing out food that is still good.

- "Sell-By." The store should sell the product by this date or remove it from the shelves. It is still safe to eat.
- "Best if Used By (or Before)." The flavor or quality of the food may decline after this date, but it is still safe to eat.
- "Use-By." The food is no longer at peak quality after this date, but it is still safe to eat.
- "Closed" or "Coded" dates. Packing numbers used by the manufacturer.

You are welcome to donate food that's passed sell-by or use-by dates. Food bank staff are skilled sorters and will make sure your donation is safe for families.

As long as restaurants follow proper food handling rules, state and federal Good Samaritan laws protect them from any potential liability. Donating extra food is a great way to keep it out of the landfill. Better yet, it helps community members in need.

Businesses in our community such as Old School Pizzeria and the Best Western Tumwater Inn are among the food bank's current donors. Best Western manager Neil Munn says the decision to participate was a simple one.

The process was easy to set up, and his staff is happy to do it. "It feels good to reach out and help," says Munn.

Old School Pizzeria owner Kenny Pugh agrees. "I feel bad about food waste. I can't ever make the perfect amount, so I love to see it go to people instead of ending up in the trash."

"Every restaurant should be doing this," adds Pugh. "There are so many people out there that would appreciate your donations."

How much food do we waste?

In these tough financial times, you might think not much food goes to waste. However, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) estimates that as much as 40 percent of the food grown in the United States ends up in the trash. While waste happens at all points in the food supply chain, consumers waste the most food.

The NRDC finds that food waste at home is often due to confusion over food product dating, preparing too much food, lack of meal planning, and impulse purchases (those two-for-one sales aren't a great deal if you can only eat half before it spoils). The cost of this waste? A typical family of four tosses out \$1,365 to \$2,275 of wasted food each year!

Is food waste preventable?

You can avoid wasting food – it just takes a change in habits.



Best Western employee Christina Walter packages unserved potatoes and eggs to donate to the Thurston County Food Bank.

Follow these tips to reduce food waste at home:

- Plan meals ahead of time, use shopping lists, and stick to both since impulse purchases are often wasted.
- Cook smaller portions if you don't like leftovers.
- Remember that "sell by" or "best if used by" dates indicate peak quality, not food safety.
- Divide and freeze products that you won't use all at once. Sauces, meats, and casseroles keep well using this method.

To donate food or for more information on donation programs, please contact the Thurston County Food Bank at 352-8597. Visit www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org for more information about waste prevention.

Trash Flash

The average American family of four throws out **\$2,275** of food each year. The average person throws out **20 pounds** of food each month. Grocery stores throw out **\$15 billion** of unsold fruits and vegetables each year. Food waste has increased by **50%** since 1970.

Information courtesy of the NRDC issue paper *Wasted*.

Since you asked!



I've heard that Washington has a recycling program for mattresses. How do I participate?

Yes, Washington State Correctional Industries runs a recycling program for mattresses. At this time, the program is only available to mattress retailers. When you buy a new mattress, ask the store if they will pick up and recycle your old one.



What happens to my trash? Is it landfilled here in Thurston County?

No, Thurston County's landfill - now the Waste and Recovery Center (WARC) - stopped landfilling trash in 2000. Your trash now makes a 240-mile journey to Roosevelt Landfill in Central Washington. Trucks transport waste to Centralia, where it is loaded on a train and shipped by rail to the landfill. About 20 train cars full of Thurston County's trash travel to the landfill each day - that's 560 tons!

Can I recycle my refrigerator at the WARC?

Yes, the WARC accepts fridges and other large appliances. The fee for appliance disposal is the regular garbage rate of \$18 for the first 300 pounds. There is an additional handling fee of \$18 per item for refrigerated appliances (refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners). To find other options for disposing of appliances, visit www.WhereDoITakeMy.org.

▶ Have a question about waste prevention or recycling? Email ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us.

We've moved!

Over the summer, Solid Waste education staff moved to the Public Works campus at 9605 Tilley Road Southwest.



New recycling law to take effect in 2013

A new law in effect January 1, 2013 gives consumers a safe way to recycle compact fluorescent lights (CFL) and other mercury-containing lights. The law requires producers selling mercury-containing lights in Washington State to fund a program to collect, transport, and recycle them.



There will be no charge to anyone returning fewer than 15 accepted lights in a 90-day period to participating locations.

Similar to Washington's E-Cycle law, this new program is an example of product stewardship. Product stewardship makes producers financially responsible for disposal or recycling, rather than ratepayers or taxpayers. Visit www.productstewardship.net to learn more about product stewardship and projects happening in Washington.

Under the new law, all persons, government, commercial, industrial, retail facilities, and office buildings in Washington State must recycle their mercury-containing lights.

The Washington State Department of Ecology is coordinating this program and is currently seeking collection locations. If your business is interested in becoming a recycling location, visit Ecology's website at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/mercurylights.

Accepted lights

- Compact fluorescent lights (CFL)
- Fluorescent tubes
- High intensity discharge (HID)
- High pressure sodium
- Low pressure sodium
- Mercury vapor
- Metal halide lamps

Trash Flash

Recycle mercury-containing lights now. HazoHouse at the Waste and Recovery Center currently accepts CFL bulbs and fluorescent tubes and some other mercury-containing lights. Call 867-2491 for more information. If HazoHouse becomes a certified collection location for all mercury-containing lights through this new program, we will post the information at www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org.

Business spotlight: reuse is (re)fabulous!

Kamuella Young Klemmer's sewing studio, (re) fabulous, has been a journey of joy that lets her share her love of teaching and sewing. Located on Black Lake Boulevard in West Olympia, (re)fabulous sits tucked away in a nondescript industrial warehouse. But once you step into the space, you're transported to a place of creativity and community. The "re" in (re)fabulous comes from the emphasis on repurposing old fabric and clothes into something new. Kamuella encourages customers to bring in salvaged fabric from home or choose from her eclectic collection of fabrics. Classes teach crafters of all ages how to make clothing, bags and purses, gnomes, whimsical animals, and more out of old clothes found at thrift stores.



(re)fabulous student Lisa Danner plans her project.

During the holidays, (re)fabulous will offer special classes for people interested in making meaningful and unique gifts. Kamuella is also creating a fabric arts boutique to sell repurposed creations by herself and other local artists.

Kamuella's idea for (re)fabulous started when she moved to Olympia from Hawaii. As a past university teacher with a Ph.D. dissertation in cultural theory and identity construction, she has always been interested in how people form their sense of identity.

As a teenager, Kamuella learned to sew with her mother and was designing and sewing most of her clothes by high school. At a time when many teenage girls struggle to find themselves, Kamuella found her identity through her sewing and became "the girl who made her own clothes." It also became a positive, artistic outlet and focus for her. She believed that others could also gain confidence and self-fulfillment if they had a place to sew.

(re)fabulous offers classes for children, teens, and adults. You can sign up for specific classes or a monthly membership. Visit www.refabulousyou.com or call 489-1852 for class details.

Visit (re)fabulous at 1025 Black Lake Boulevard Southwest in Olympia.

Trash Flash

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, only 15 percent of textiles are recycled or reused. Choose well-made clothing that will last several seasons, and mend items instead of tossing them. When you are finished with clothing and other household textiles, donate them to charity.

Plastic bag outreach project continues

Over the past several months, Solid Waste educators have been very busy working with the community to identify possible solutions to reduce our use of plastic bags. County residents use about 90 million bags each year! Our efforts include:

- Gathering input through holding community meetings in each town and city, hosting screenings of the documentary *Bag It*, and presenting to community groups.
- Having the chairman of the American Progressive Bag Alliance speak to the Thurston County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC).
- Surveying the public and giving out reusable bags and informational flyers at public events and grocery stores.
- Posting information about the issue, an events calendar, and an online survey at www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Plastics.
- Promoting the project through emails, press releases, flyers, articles, radio ads, and social media.

Thanks to everyone that participated in the community meetings or took our survey. You provided excellent comments and raised some very important questions for us to consider. Check out the survey results on the plastics project webpage, listed above.

We are currently drafting a final report to summarize this project. The report focuses on why bags are a problem, what other jurisdictions have done, and possible solutions for Thurston County based on community feedback.

SWAC, a group of elected officials from each jurisdiction and citizen and industry representatives, will review the draft and offer feedback. Solid Waste will then present the final report to each city council and ask for their recommendations. Based on this information, the Thurston County Board of Commissioners will determine what action to take.

We will post the completed report on our plastics project webpage.



Trash Flash

Remember - plastic bags DON'T go in your curbside recycle cart. Recycle them in designated bins at your local grocery store or at the Waste and Recovery Center at Hawks Prairie. You can recycle plastic bags, dry cleaning bags, bread bags, plastic newspaper sleeves, and any other type of stretchy plastic that you can easily poke your finger through. You don't need to take your bags back to the same store.

Safely dispose of sensitive documents

Securing your private information is a top priority. If you're like most people, you have a stack of old bills, credit card offers, and other mail with sensitive information.

Luckily, there are convenient places around Thurston County to shred your documents. Local banks, credit unions, and other businesses hold community shredding events throughout the year.



The website for the Washington State Attorney General's Office lists shred events in Thurston County and statewide at www.atg.wa.gov/shredathon.aspx.

Most events are free or ask for a small donation for charity. The events generally allow you to bring up to two or three grocery bags of documents.

PostNet in the Crossroads Lacey Mall offers do-it-yourself shredding for \$1.50 per pound. For \$2.00 per pound, they will shred your documents for you. Call PostNet at 459-8981 for more information.

LeMay offers shredding services at its office at 2910 Hogum Bay Rd. NE in Lacey. They charge \$7.50 per standard banker box of documents. For bigger jobs, LeMay can send a mobile shredder to your home or business. Call LeMay Mobile Shredding at 486-8605.

Let us know about other shredding opportunities and we will add them to our www.WhereDoITakeMy.org database.

Trash Flash

The best way to deal with secure information is to keep it out of your mail box in the first place. The major credit bureaus have a toll-free number you can call to remove your name from mailing lists. Call 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688) or visit www.OptOutPrescreen.com.

Reusable bag tips

Make sure to wash your reusable bags! Just like kitchen sponges, towels, and counters, your bags can hold bacteria. Find guidelines for safe reusable bag use from Thurston County Public Health at www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Plastics.

If your organization buys reusable bags as promotional giveaways, remember that not all bags are created equal. For example, using a reusable recycled content polypropylene bag just 13 times equals the environmental impact of using one single-use plastic bag. You'd have to use a cotton bag 131 times to equal that impact. If your organization needs help choosing an environmentally friendly bag, email ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us.

Solid Waste purchased over 6,000 reusable bags to give away at special events, presentations, and classes over the summer. Supplies are running low and we do not have the budget for additional bags.

If your store, bank, auto dealership, or other type of business would like us to give away your bags, contact Loni Hanka at hankal@co.thurston.wa.us or 867-2282.



WARC ID requirements

Starting September 1, 2012, everyone using the paid disposal areas at the Waste and Recovery Center (WARC) at Hawks Prairie must present valid identification. This applies to anyone going through the tollhouse to dispose of garbage or yard waste. This does not apply to visitors using HazoHouse or the recycle center.

This measure will help identify visitors that leave without paying for disposal. It will also help prevent payment fraud and ensure the safety of the WARC's staff and visitors.

Proof of identification options:

- Option A: Valid driver's license.
- Option B: Vehicle registration or current utility billing.

PLUS

Valid photo ID such as a military ID, work ID, credit card with photo, or Costco card.

Where Do I Take My...

... Molded foam blocks?

Recycle molded foam blocks from electronics and other gifts at DART Container Corp, located at 600 Israel Road South East in Tumwater.

The recycle area at the Waste and Recovery Center at Hawks Prairie also has a special bin for molded blocks.

Make sure it has a number six recycle symbol. Both locations accept clean foam food service containers as well.



... Holiday string lights?

There are no drop-off locations for string lights in Thurston County. Here are a few out-of-county drop-off locations:

Wilson Recycling, located at 2278 East Brockdale Road in Shelton, accepts string lights free. Visit www.wilsonrecycling.com for more information.

Recycle your string lights in the drop boxes outside the main entrance of Point Defiance Zoo between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Contact the zoo to inquire about dropping off lights during the rest of the year. Proceeds go to the zoo's conservation fund.

... Cell phones?

Many service providers or phone manufacturers will recycle your old cell phone free and donate the proceeds to charity. Check with your provider for details.

Electronics retailers such as Best Buy and Target have free cell phone recycling boxes right inside the store. Other retailers may recycle your phone for a fee. For a full list of locations, check www.WhereDoITakeMy.org.

If your phone is fairly new, some retailers and service providers offer electronics buyback or trade-in programs.

▶ Visit www.WhereDoITakeMy.org for information on where to take a variety of other items. Please call the organizations directly to verify fees (if any), hours of operation, and items accepted.

Are we missing a location? Email ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us.



Prevent waste this holiday season

It's no secret we overindulge during the holidays. But your waist isn't the only place collecting a few extra pounds - trash in the United States increases by 25 percent between Thanksgiving and New Years Day! Give your trash can a rest by following these tips for a less wasteful holiday.

Gifts

- Remember your reusable bags for holiday shopping. Say, "No thanks," if cashiers offer you a bag for a single item.
- Choose experience-based gifts like movie tickets, kayak rentals, or spa certificates. You can also give items that get used up like homemade soaps or specialty jams. Some families donate to charity instead of exchanging gifts.



Reuse items around the house to create festive and unique wrapping for gifts.

- Check out vintage and antique stores to find unique, gently used gifts.
- Use your creativity to find alternatives to wrapping paper like paper bags, comic pages, scarves, or old maps. A quick internet search will turn up some great ideas and examples.
- Save and reuse wrapping paper if it's still in decent condition. Cut up last year's holiday cards to use as gift tags.

Cards

- Send electronic holiday cards via email or online card shops. You can add your own photos and personal messages. Some sites even let you send basic cards free.
- If you must send paper cards, buy cards with post-consumer content recycled paper.

Entertaining

- When hosting a party, use your own durable dishes, flatware, and napkins, or rent them from a party rental store.
- Provide bins for guests to recycle cans and bottles and compost uneaten food scraps.
- Choose decorations and centerpieces you can reuse, or send them home with your guests.

Look for more waste prevention ideas at www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Holiday.

Trash Flash

During the holidays, Americans toss out:

- 2.6 billion holiday cards. That's enough to fill a football field 10 stories high.
 - 38,000 miles of ribbon - enough to tie a bow around the Earth!
 - One million extra tons of trash per week.
- Information courtesy of CalRecycle.



Think 2Good2Toss for holiday bargains

Whether you're shopping for holiday gifts or getting rid of an old TV after Santa brings you a new one, check out 2Good2Toss.

This free service lets you browse for secondhand items others no longer need. You can also set up a free account to list items you want to give away or sell for up to \$200.

There are over 20 category listings from Appliances to Toys. There's even a category for seasonal items, where you'll find holiday goodies. It's fun, easy, and a great way to reuse things you no longer need.

Visit www.2good2toss.com to get started! 2Good2Toss does not allow listings for live animals, illegal goods, hazardous materials, or new items.



Trash Flash

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 40 percent of annual battery sales happen during the holidays. Choose rechargeable batteries for devices you use often or that drain a lot of power. Properly dispose of your rechargables at HazoHouse at the Waste and Recovery Center. See the back page for operating hours.

Recycle your tree for free!

Did you know your tree is still useful after the holidays? It can be chipped and used as an energy source.

Be sure to take advantage of these recycling opportunities.

Pickup options

LeMay compost collection/ yard waste customers: Put trees in or near your compost cart (in sections 3 ft. or less). Call 923-0111 for info.

City of Olympia

garbage customers: For customers with Thurs./Fri. service, tree pickup is Sat., Jan. 5. For those with Tues./Wed. service, pickup is Sat., Jan. 12. Place tree in regular pickup spot by 6:00 a.m. on your collection day. Call 753-8368 and choose option 2 for info.

City of Lacey residents: Put trees at curb by 8 a.m. on Mon., Jan. 7. Local Boy Scout troops will offer donation based pickup service in some neighborhoods on Sat., Jan. 5. Call 491-3214 for info.

City of Tumwater residents: Place trees at the nearest street corner by 8 a.m., Jan. 7. Call 754-4150 for info.



Drop-off locations

All Thurston County residents: Take trees to the Waste and Recovery Center at 2418 Hogum Bay Road NE, Lacey from Dec. 26 to Jan. 13 (closed Jan. 1). Open Mon. through Fri., 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sat. and Sun., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Rainier residents: Take trees to the drop box at 13010 Rainier Acres Road from Dec. 26 - Jan. 12. Open Fri. & Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Rochester residents: Take trees to the drop box at 16500 Sargent Road from Dec. 26 - Jan. 13. Open Tues., Sat., and Sun., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tenino residents: Take trees to 418 S. Wichman St. S. from Dec. 25 - Jan. 15.

Yelm residents: Take trees to Yelm City Park anytime from Dec. 26 - Jan. 10.

Shelton residents: Bill McTurnal Enterprises at 721 Kamilche Lane accepts trees from Dec. 28 - Jan. 31 during daylight hours. Weekends, leave trees by closed gate. Call 866-4594 for more information.

Flocked trees are accepted. Please remove all ornaments, lights, tinsel, stands, and nails from trees prior to recycling. Multi-family complex residents should check with their property manager for tree placement locations.

Trash Flash

Thurston County residents recycled 113,160 pounds of trees after the holidays last year. This only includes trees brought to drop-off spots and trees picked up by the cities. Residents recycled additional trees by putting them in their curbside compost carts.

Compost bins make rotten gifts

Give the gift that keeps on giving! The Master Gardener Foundation sells reduced price home compost bins. The bestselling Earth Machine is only \$40. Why so cheap? Solid Waste subsidizes the cost to encourage folks to reduce waste by composting.

Order your bin by phone or online, and it's delivered right to your door for no extra charge!

You must be a Thurston County resident to purchase a bin, and there is a limit of three bins per address per year. Please allow 5-10 days for delivery.

Visit www.CompostBinsThurstonCounty.com or call 481-4204 to order your bin.

All proceeds support WSU Extension Master Gardener and Thurston County Master Recycler Composter community education and outreach efforts.



Trash Flash

According to the National Retail Federation, nearly half of Americans surveyed carve pumpkins for Halloween. If a jack-o'lantern is still grinning on your porch, be sure to cut it up and toss it into your compost bin before it rots!

Event recycling gets even easier

Solid Waste's public event recycle and compost collection loaner bins are more popular than ever. However, our new headquarters in south Thurston County is pretty far for most folks to pick up and drop off bins.

We've partnered with Celebrations, a party store in Lacey, to give you a more convenient location to borrow bins. To request loaner bins, contact Celebrations at 754-7368 or visit www.celebrationsstore.com/catalog.asp and click "Recycling Kit Rentals." Placing an order is as easy as filling out the online form. Celebrations is located at 4614 Lacey Blvd SE in Lacey.

The bins are still free to borrow and you must arrange disposal for the materials you collect.

For more information about making your next event waste-free or to see a complete list of event bin providers, visit www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org and click "Borrow Event Recycling Bins."



Electronics recycling keeps growing

Since it began in January 2009, the E-Cycle Washington program has collected 145 million pounds of electronics statewide. E-Cycle lets households, small businesses, school districts, small governments, and non-profit organizations recycle qualifying electronics free. The program accepts TVs, computers, monitors, laptops, tablet computers, and e-readers.

Value Village in Lacey is the newest and seventh designated E-Cycle drop-off location in Thurston County. Value Village is located at 604 Sleater-Kinney Rd SE. The program is still seeking a site in the south end of the county.

While not official E-Cycle collection locations, Free Geek Olympia, Staples, Best Buy, and Office Depot also accept electronics. Contact these businesses directly to see what items they accept and if any charges apply.

Washington's Electronic Product Recycling rule requires manufacturers of certain electronic products sold in Washington State to fund convenient, safe, and environmentally sound collection.

Visit www.ecyclewashington.org for more information or to find free E-Cycle drop-off locations throughout the state.

Resources for classrooms and youth

Thurston County Solid Waste has a variety of FREE programs and resources for K-8 classrooms and youth organizations like scouts, 4-H, and faith-based groups.

Classroom presentations. We offer fun presentations for K-8 classrooms about recycling, waste reduction, worms and worm bins, and household hazardous products. Find a description of each presentation at www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Schools.



Trash Talk newsletter. Like *Talkin' Trash*? We now offer a free *Trash Talk* newsletter just for 4th and 5th grade students! Solid Waste delivers *Trash Talk* to your classroom four times a year. Each edition features local information about recycling, reuse, household hazardous waste, yard waste, and waste reduction. It's activities like word searches, crossword puzzles, and other games make learning fun!

Programs and activities for youth organizations. Solid Waste can also help scouts and other youth organizations earn patches, badges, pins, medals, and service hours. We can provide information and presentations on what you can recycle in your community, how you can recycle at home, and where your garbage goes. Our "learning by doing" activities let your group help educate the public on how to sort their waste at fairs and other public events.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Patch Program. Check out the new Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (RRR) Patch for youth! Our FREE patch program teaches youth how to put "reduce, reuse, recycle" into action. Youth can earn their RRR patch by completing activities and action projects focused on reducing, reusing, and recycling. Your group can complete activities and action projects at home, at school, or in your neighborhood.



Complete the program and Solid Waste will send a free patch for each group member! Download the program instructions at www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Youth.

► For more information about these youth programs, contact Colleen Minion at 867-2280 or minionc@co.thurston.wa.us.

School milk dispensers prevent waste

Six schools in the Olympia School District now use milk dispensers and durable cups to serve milk to students. Solid Waste purchased dispensers for Washington Middle School and Olympia High School to cut down on lunchtime waste. Lincoln, Boston Harbor, and Centennial elementary schools, and the Olympia Regional Learning Academy have also made the switch to dispensers.

Together, these schools keep about 190,000 milk cartons out of the waste stream each school year. That's just one of the many benefits of using milk dispensers and durable cups instead of cartons – here are a few more:

- **Less wasted milk.** A typical elementary school that serves 450 meals a day ends up throwing away 5 to 6 gallons of milk each day. That's nearly 1,000 gallons of milk each school year! A similar school with a dispenser only generates 1 to 2 gallons of wasted milk each day, reducing milk waste by more than 700 gallons a year.
- **Cost savings.** Eliminating milk cartons from a school's waste stream can dramatically reduce the school's recycling or trash collection costs. Schools also save money on can liners.



Washington Middle School student Hailey Lasmanis serves herself milk from the school's new dispenser.

- **Less work.** Switching from cartons reduces the workload for custodians and student volunteers and diminishes odor and pest problems.
- **Energy conservation.** Milk dispensers use a lot less energy to keep milk cold than the coolers used to store milk cartons.
- **Resource conservation.** Lots of wood pulp, energy, water and other resources are used to manufacture, print, fill, ship, store, serve, and then recycle or dispose of milk cartons. Serving milk in durable cups from bulk dispensers conserves most of these resources.

To see milk dispensers in action, visit the Thurston Solid Waste YouTube page at www.youtube.com/user/ThurstonSolidWaste and click on the video "Just Use a Cup."

Is your school interested in making the switch from cartons to a dispenser? Thurston County's Food to Flowers program may be able to provide your school with a milk dispenser at no charge.

To learn more visit www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/FoodtoFlowers. You can also contact Peter Guttchen at guttchp@co.thurston.wa.us or 867-2283.

Trash Flash

K-12 schools in Thurston County generate about 5 million half-pint milk cartons each school year. That's enough cartons to fill an Olympic-size swimming pool and still have some cartons to spare! Although accepted in the recycle bin, milk cartons are plastic-lined and few paper mills can use them to make new paper. The best way to manage them is not to use them at all.

Tumwater High School goes green!

In June 2012, Tumwater High School became one of only thirteen high schools in Washington State to earn Washington Green School certification. The school received this honor based on the success of their Food to Flowers composting and recycling program including:

- 33% less garbage sent to the landfill, a decrease of more than 13 tons per year.
- 85% less cafeteria and kitchen garbage.
- \$6,300 annual savings in garbage and recycling collection costs – 30% less than the previous year.

The school also made changes to prevent waste, such as serving pizza directly on trays instead of disposable paper boats and switching from foam trays to compostable paper trays.

Librarian Roz Thompson and head custodian Rick Eberle brought together the entire school community to plan and implement this inspiring and innovative program.

Food service and custodial staff, administrators, students, and parents worked together to create what has become a model waste reduction program for high schools across the state.

Find more information about Washington Green Schools at www.wagreenschools.org. To learn how we can assist your school in waste prevention, visit www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/FoodtoFlowers. You can also contact Peter Guttchen at guttchp@co.thurston.wa.us or 867-2283.



Tumwater High Life Skills students proudly display the Washington Green Schools flag.

Health Matters

News from Thurston County Environmental Health
www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm



Resources for septic system owners

Maintaining healthy septic systems depends on their owners, but we can help! Thurston County Environmental Health provides resources to ensure that local septic systems protect water quality and public health.

To get a record drawing of the system on your property, contact the septic system record request line at 754-3355, ext. 7293, or search permit archives (under the quick tools bar) at www.co.thurston.wa.us/permitting.

Septic system information including a list of certified septic professionals and details on grants and loans to fix failing systems is available at www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehoss. Contact the septic help line to anonymously ask questions at 867-2669.

Deep-frying a turkey? Recycle your cooking oil!

With the popularity of deep-fried turkey on the rise, more and more people question what to do with gallons of used cooking oil after the holidays.

Don't dump used cooking oil down the drain; grease and oil stick to sewer and septic pipes and can cause costly backups. Recycle it instead at HazoHouse. This service is free to residential customers and is available Friday through Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Businesses should continue using their disposal service.

Tips on preparing your oil for recycling and storing small quantities for reuse can be found at www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhm/pdf/cookingoil.pdf.

Trashy neighbor?

In 2011, Thurston County Environmental Health resolved more than 200 illegal dumping and solid and hazardous waste complaints, resulting in 104 tons of waste being properly disposed of.

A growing number of complaints concern foreclosed properties, which are often vacated quickly, with garbage left behind. While we aren't able to address interior or exterior maintenance issues, we can help when garbage and rotting waste pile up outside, which can attract rodents and present a health risk.

Call 867-2664 for additional information or to make an anonymous complaint.

Rats, mice, and other rodents, oh my!

Whether it's rodents scurrying for cover, crumbs in the pantry, or droppings left behind, rodents are a common household pest. If you find evidence of rodents in your home, act quickly before the problem gets worse. Start with these prevention strategies to avoid an invasion:

Eliminate food sources. Store un-refrigerated food including pet food in sturdy containers with tight-fitting lids. Animal food left outdoors, even spill from bird feeders, commonly attracts rodents.

Secure your garbage. Make sure that inside and outside trash cans don't have holes and have tight fitting lids. If garbage cans are often knocked over by animals, elevate them on a 12 inch stand, and fasten shut with elastic cords.

Eliminate access. Cracks or gaps larger than a nickel provide entry to mice. Rats can enter anything their heads fit into. Look for gaps where plumbing leaves and enters the house and around chimneys and doors. Fill small holes with steel wool or caulk and use weatherproofing tape to fill gaps around doors.

Eliminate habitat. Wood or leaf piles, compost, and abandoned vehicles provide habitat for rodents. Keep these away from your home and other out-buildings. Keep shrubs and trees 2 to 3 feet from walls and roofs. Branches should be 6 feet from roofs, eaves, attic vents, and utility wires.

If you have a problem:

Place traps in rodents' usual paths.

Droppings and urine highlight well-traveled areas. In general, mice and Norway rats live near the ground while roof rats live in trees and rafters. Bait traps with something sticky, such as peanut butter rolled in oats, and place against the wall with the triggers towards the wall. Two traps placed side by side may be more effective. Bait traps for a few days before

setting them so that rodents get used to eating from them. Mice are attracted to traps that have moved while rats will avoid traps if they move around. Check and empty traps daily and add fresh bait as needed.

Use poisons as a last resort. Use chemical baits within a bait station to protect kids and pets from accidental poisoning. Poisoned rodents may die inside the walls, creating a terrible smell. Unwanted poisons should go to HazoHouse. See our website or call us for more information on safely taking care of rodents.

Avoid exposure to hantavirus. Deer mice can carry hantavirus, which can cause a rare but life-threatening respiratory illness if the virus is inhaled. Spray the area where droppings, nests, or dead rodents are found with a 1 part bleach to 10 parts water solution. Wear rubber gloves and wipe the area clean with paper towels or rags to remove contamination. Place contaminated materials in a plastic bag and dispose in the trash. Carpets and upholstered furniture need to be cleaned with a disinfectant and commercial-grade steam cleaner. Clothing, bedding or stuffed animals should be machine washed using hot water and dried with the hottest dryer setting. **Non-washable items should be thrown away.**

Contact a professional if you suspect rodents in the heating system or see rodents during daylight for more than three days. This suggests an infestation and may require professional help!



Healthy Homes Volunteer opportunity!

Join us for an upcoming Healthy Homes Volunteer training. The program provides free visits to homes and child care centers, looking at indoor air quality and other home health and safety issues. Volunteers will participate in 30 hours of training and complete 30 hours of community service. You don't need to be a health care provider or a building inspector; you just need to be committed to actively participating in the training sessions and working with diverse individuals. We want people who enjoy working together to improve their own and others' health.

Visits will be conducted throughout the community. Pairs of volunteers will meet with residents or child care representatives and walk with them through their home or facility to identify ways to reduce exposure to toxins, asthma triggers, mold, and other related health risks. They may also help staff at fairs and community events, do presentations, or write articles for newsletters. We encourage volunteers to be creative with their outreach ideas and we will support their efforts to become successful volunteers.

Training runs from early winter through early spring. Sessions will be held at Thurston County Public Health and Social Services located at 412 Lilly Rd. NE, Olympia, 98506.

If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about the program, or having an assessment done in your home or childcare, contact us at 867-2674 (TDD: 867-2603) or HealthyHomes@co.thurston.wa.us.



Garbage and recycling resources

The information on this page is correct through 12/31/12

Contacts

Talkin' Trash is produced by Thurston County Public Works.

Phone: 867-2491 or TDD 754-2933

Email: ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us

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

Website:
www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org
www.WhereDoITakeMy.org

Join the conversation online!



The area code for all phone numbers in this publication is 360 unless otherwise noted.

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
Eastern Grays Harbor (Summit Lake)
Pacific Disposal
Rural Refuse cust2183@wcnx.org
. 923-0111
- Joe's Refuse. cust2188@wcnx.org
. (360) 736-4769 (long distance)
. or 1-800-525-4167

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

Town of Bucoda residents, call 278-3525 to arrange for curbside trash and recycling service with LeMay Enterprises.

City of Olympia residents, call 753-8368 or visit www.olympiawa.gov. Olympia provides its own trash, recycling and organics collection service.

Public Health and Social Services, Environmental Health

Phone: 867-2674 or TDD 867-2603
Address: 412 Lilly Rd NE, Olympia, WA 98506
Web: www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm

Solid and Hazardous Waste section: 867-2664
www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw

Integrated Pest Management web:
www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehipm

Gardening guides:
www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg

Healthy home advice:
www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhm

Compost bin sales

The Thurston County Master Gardener Foundation sells compost bins at reduced prices. Visit www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com or call 481-4204 for more information.

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 12/31/2012)

One ton = 2,000 lbs.

Garbage

300 lbs or less. \$18
More than 300 lbs \$119 per ton, prorated
(The per-ton garbage rate is 6 cents per pound.)
For refrigerated appliances, add a \$18 handling fee to the rate above. Rates include 3.6 percent state refuse tax.

Computers, Monitors, Laptops, TVs, E-Readers

Free through the E-Cycle Washington program. Take these items to the Goodwill donation station located near the recycle center.

Yard Debris

300 lbs or less. \$9
More than 300 lbs:
Less than 10 yards \$45 per ton, prorated
More than 10 yards \$37 per ton, prorated
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, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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

Visit www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org for drop box garbage rates.

HazoHouse

Take household hazardous products to HazoHouse. Open Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Phone 867-2912. 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.

Reuse & recycle 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
- Craigslist: <http://seattle.craigslist.org/oly>
- FreeCycle: www.freecycle.org

Thurston County also maintains a database of locations where residents can reuse and recycle many items. Visit www.WhereDoITakeMy.org.

Are we missing any locations? Call 867-2491 or email ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us.



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Thurston County Public Works
9605 Tilley Road SW
Olympia, WA 98512-9140

ECRMSS
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER



Recycle drop-off bins

Recycling drop-off locations:

You can drop off recycling at the WARC and the Rochester and Rainier drop boxes (see addresses in the column at the left).

Items accepted at the locations

Thurston County's recycling drop-off locations accept:

- Newspaper.
- Glass bottles and jars.
- Tin and aluminum cans.
- Mixed paper.
- Plastic dairy tubs, bottles, jars, jugs, rigid plant pots and buckets.
- Corrugated cardboard.
- Plastic film/bags - must be clean and empty.
(WARC only)
- Foam (polystyrene) blocks and food containers. Must be clean and in a clear plastic bag.
(WARC only)

Please place all materials **loose** in the bin – not in a bag (except foam). Bagged materials are difficult to separate at the recycling sorting facility.

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