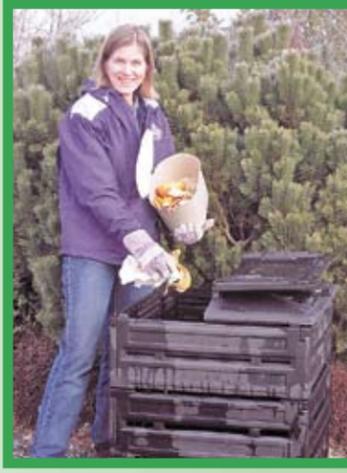


talkin' TRASH ...and more



Visit us at www.co.thurston.wa.us/www

Tips for Keeping Thurston County Healthy, Spring/Summer 2008

Curbside Food Composting for Businesses Households will be next!

We're throwing our caps in the air for South Puget Sound Community College and Saint Martin's University!

In just four months – from October 2007 to January 2008 – South Puget Sound Community College has kept approximately 8.85 tons (17,700 pounds) of compostable material from its trash bin. The college now needs trash-compactor service once per month, rather than once per week.

Meanwhile, Saint Martin's University has reduced the number of full trash cans per meal from six to one.



The two colleges are still calculating their savings, but chances are, they've saved a bundle on trash costs. How did they do it? By signing up for "Food Plus Recycling," a program designed especially for schools and businesses that generate food waste.

Participants simply toss organic wastes into a special cart provided by their hauler, who then collects the waste and delivers it to a composting facility. Food scraps, food-soiled napkins, waxed cardboard, and paper towels that would normally go to a landfill are converted into a nutrient-rich compost to grow more fruits and vegetables.

The Food Plus Recycling program is ideal for restaurants, schools, grocery stores, coffee shops and other businesses that generate large quantities of food waste, waxed cardboard and compostable paper. Participants receive "how-to" posters and container labels to make the program as easy as possible for staff.

The program is offered by LeMay Enterprises as part of the company's new "Certified Green" business recycling program, which offers a host of recycle services at a bundled rate. Businesses can sign up for Food Plus Recycling service alone, or for the entire suite of services.

Food Plus Recycling is available countywide to businesses and schools. For more information, call LeMay Enterprises at 486-8608 and ask for Julie. The City of Olympia offers a similar food recycling service for businesses located within city limits. See the notice on page 3.

South Puget Sound Community College and Saint Martin's University are just a few of the organizations enrolled in the Food Plus Recycling program. Our Web site will soon feature the names of organizations that are making the earth-conscious decision to compost food scraps. The Web address is www.co.thurston.wa.us/www.

Breaking news!

Thurston County residents who receive curbside yard waste service from LeMay Enterprises will soon be able to add food waste and compostable paper products to their yard waste bins (not the comingled recycle bins). LeMay Enterprises is the parent company of Pacific Disposal, Joe's Refuse, Rural Refuse, and Butler's Cove. Look for the May/June LeMay bill insert for more information.



trash flash

ORGANICS IN LANDFILLS: It's a myth that yard and food waste decompose quickly in landfills. Organic materials stay intact for decades in landfills because the items are sealed away from oxygen and moisture. University of Arizona Professor William Rathje and his students found hotdogs, pastries and other recognizable foods 15 years after the foods were buried in a landfill. Nearby newspapers (still readable) were used to verify when the items were buried.



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Since You Asked!



How do I dispose of a smoke detector?

Return the smoke detector to the manufacturer, along with a note indicating that the detector is intended for disposal. The reason: Most home smoke detectors contain a minute amount of radioactive material. The amount of radioactive material is too small to harm human health, however, many landfills in the country ban detectors to protect the environment. There's no such ban here in Thurston County, but returning the detector to the manufacturer is the safest and most environmentally friendly option. The manufacturer's address is usually listed on the back of the detector. A list of addresses for common manufacturers is available at www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm. Go to the recycling link, select "Where Should I Take My?" and find "smoke detectors." Smoke detectors are not accepted at HazoHouse.

Are aluminum toothpaste tubes recyclable?

Aluminum toothpaste tubes are recyclable, but they can literally "fall through the cracks" of recycling equipment. The best approach is to bunch up the empty tube with other aluminum foil. Aluminum should be at least the size of a fist before it goes in the bin. Plastic toothpaste tubes are not recyclable.

What should I do with the three recycle bins left over from the old curbside program?

The bins make great storage containers for glass recyclables, tools, office supplies and toys. Another option is to post the bins on www.2good2toss.com, Thurston County's free materials exchange Web site. You may also return the bins to the hauling company (see phone numbers on page 7).

Are used paper coffee cups recyclable?

No, used paper cups cannot be recycled. They can, however, be composted at a commercial composting facility. Businesses that subscribe to the "Food Plus Recycling" program are already composting paper cups. Soon, curbside composting will be available to homeowners who receive yard waste service from LeMay Enterprises. See our front page article.

Can I recycle hardcover books?

Yes, hardbound and paperback books are recyclable. If you plan to recycle a large quantity of hardbound books, please place a few books in the bin at a time instead of recycling them all at once. The glue in the binding can become a problem in large quantities. Better yet, donate or sell the books for others to use.

Recycling Now Available at Condos, Apartments



Amber Wells recycles at a local apartment building.

The wait is over! The countywide multifamily recycling program is now in full swing and providing convenient recycling at apartments, condominiums, and mobile home parks. Based on feedback we've received, residents are really excited about not having to schlep their recyclables to the nearest blue box site. Owners and managers have already received brochures, posters and other information to distribute to tenants.

If your trash service is provided by LeMay Enterprises and recycling is still unavailable at your complex or building, please have your manager call the hauler for assistance. If you live in the City of Olympia, your property manager should call the city to arrange for multifamily service. Phone numbers are listed on page 7.

trash flash

CHILDREN'S BOOKS: A national, nonprofit organization named "Reading Tree" is collecting used children's books for needy families in the U.S. and around the world. Look for the blue bins labeled "Books for Charity" at parking lots in Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Yelm. For a complete list of local addresses, visit www.readingtree.org.

Survey Results Are In!

It's been about a year since curbside recycling customers started placing everything but glass into a single container. Last fall, we asked customers to let us know how the new program is working. Customer-satisfaction surveys were posted on our Web site and enclosed in garbage and recycling bills. The response was far greater than we expected: About 10,200 of the current 48,000 curbside customers responded to the survey.

All in all, the results were very positive. We'll continue working with the hauling companies to fine tune the program and improve customer service, based on the data.

Complete survey results are available at www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm (see the left-hand navigation bar). We do, however, want to address two key issues raised in the results: glass collection and bin sizes.

Glass schedules: Glass is picked up every other recycle day, in other words, every four weeks. Certain glass routes were inconsistent in the first few months as haulers adjusted to the new program. If you still are not receiving glass service, please contact your hauler. Phone numbers are listed on page 7.

Glass makes up a very small percent of recyclables collected at the curb, so sending a route out every two weeks would be very expensive for hauling companies and customers alike.

Bin sizes: If the 96-gallon recycle bin is too large, you may call your hauler and request a 64-gallon container. Thurston County Ordinance 13696 requires haulers to provide this alternative size. Residents who have limited physical mobility, or have trouble accessing the curbside pickup location, can work with their haulers to find an approach that meets their needs. This may involve getting a small, 32-gallon container or carry-out service.

A few things to remember: There's no fee to switch from a large bin to a small bin the first time, but your hauler may charge a fee for subsequent requests. Monthly collection rates are the same for all recycling containers, regardless of the size. Residents who request carry-out service pay an additional fee.



trash flash

JUNK VEHICLES: Now is the perfect time to recycle junk vehicles. Several local auto wrecking companies are collecting junk vehicles free of charge and some are even paying the owners to remove and recycle them. The high value of steel has made vehicle recycling a competitive industry. Shop around! Look in the yellow pages under "Auto Wreckers" to find out details and arrange for pickup.

Recycle Right...and Early

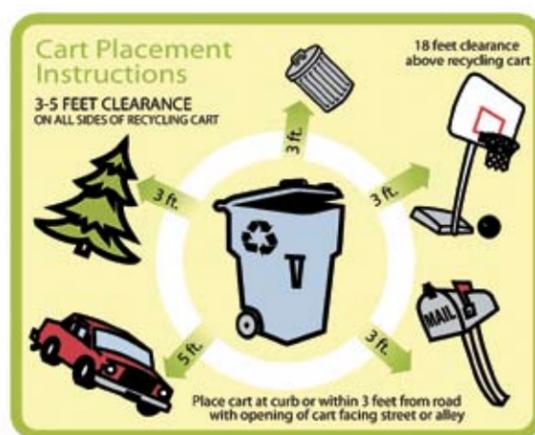
Thurston County residents are tossing recyclables into curbside bins like Kobe Bryant at an LA Lakers game. Recycling haulers collected 40 percent more recyclables in 2007 than in 2006, thanks to the new comingled recycle bins and customers' efforts.

Unfortunately, contamination is also on the rise. Haulers report the amount of contaminants in recycle bins has more than doubled since the comingled program began in 2006. Hauling companies have removed 207 tons (414,000 pounds) of window glass, wire hangers, clam-shell food containers, garbage and other contaminants since the program started. This represents only 2 percent of the materials collected, but contamination still poses a big problem. Contaminants reduce the value of the recyclables, which in turn reduces the recycling rebate residents receive on their bills.

The general rule of thumb is, "When in doubt, leave it out." If you question whether an item should go in the bin, call Thurston County Solid Waste at 357-2491 or your hauler at the phone number on page 7. Printable "yes" and "no" lists are also available under the recycling link of www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm (click on "How to Prepare Recyclables for the Curbside Program").

The old beige, blue and green recycle bins weren't the only features that changed when the new comingled recycling program took effect. Virtually all of the recycling trucks were replaced with new vehicles that use robotic arms to pick up bins. Please leave plenty of space above and around your bin for the truck's arm to maneuver. Place the bin at the curb by 6 a.m. and remove the bin promptly when it's empty.

Stacked cardboard or other items left outside the bin will not be collected unless you make special arrangements with your hauler. Another option is to take the extra recyclables to one of Thurston County's recycling blue boxes, listed on page 7.



Reduce Junk Mail



If your mail box is full of clutter, you probably walk straight from the box to your recycle bin. An even better approach is to stop junk mail at the source, before trees and energy are wasted.

Catalogs: Catalog Choice offers a quick and easy way to opt out of catalog mailings. Consumers can indicate which catalogs they no longer wish to receive, and businesses receive a list of consumers no longer wanting to receive their catalogs. Just go to www.catalogchoice.org and set up an account. Once you receive your password via e-mail, you can browse by catalog names from the huge list and start deleting. The program is offered by the Ecology Center, a California-based organization that promotes sustainable living.

Junk mail: A good way to remove your name from several national mailing lists at once is to sign up for the Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service: www.dmchoice.org/MPS/mps_consumer_description.php. Of course, you can always return address labels to the companies, along with a letter asking to be removed from their mailing lists.

Credit card offers: To reduce the number of pre-screened credit and insurance offers you receive in the mail, visit www.optoutprescreen.com or call 1-888-5OptOut (1-888-567-8688). This is a free service to consumers offered by the major credit bureaus.

Telephone solicitations: If you're tired of getting telephone solicitations, sign up for the Federal Trade Commission's "Do Not Call" registry at www.donotcall.gov or via phone at 1-888-382-1222.

trash flash

FREE PAINT FOR FLOOD VICTIMS: Thurston County residents whose homes were affected by the December 2007 flooding can get free paint through April 30, or while supplies last. The recycled latex, MetroPaint, comes from Portland Metro, the recycling plant where Thurston County sends leftover latex paint collected at HazoHouse. Reserve paint by calling ROOF Community Services at 273-6375. Proof of FEMA disaster assistance or denial will be required when picking up paint. Residents may receive up to 25 gallons of paint in 5-gallon increments. Colors are khaki, light green, dark green, dark blue, light gray and dark red.

Give Compost a Turn

Have you ever thought about starting a compost bin at home, but feared it would be too complicated, time-intensive, or smelly? Thurston County Solid Waste and the Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County are here to remove your fears and help get you started.

Composting creates a free, nutrient-rich soil amendment that helps conserve water and control weeds while reducing or eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers. Composting may also save money on your trash disposal costs.



To get started, you'll need a bin. Compost bins are subsidized by Thurston County Solid Waste and sold through the Master Gardener Foundation. The bins are delivered right to your home and the price includes tax and delivery. For details or to order, visit www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com or call 481-4204.

trash flash

REUSE ITEMS IN YOUR GARDEN: According to *Backyard Living* magazine (April/May 2007), placing Styrofoam packaging peanuts in the bottom of flower pots improves drainage and makes the pots lighter and more portable. The magazine also suggests piercing the bottom of plastic milk jugs, filling and capping the jugs, and then placing them next to plants. The water takes a couple of hours to seep out and not a drop is wasted because the plants have a chance to absorb it all.

Next, you may want a bit of education. The Master Composter program offers free workshops throughout the county from April through October. Registration is not required. The 2008 schedule is on the back page of this newsletter.

You can see composting in action at three beautiful demonstration gardens in Thurston County. The sites use a variety of bins, and volunteers are often available to answer questions. The gardens are located at Closed Loop Park at the Waste and Recovery Center on Hogum Bay Road, Dirt Works behind Yauger Park in west Olympia, and at the Olympia Farmers Market. Many of the workshops are held at these locations.

More information is available in our "Composting at Home" brochure. To view or download the brochure, visit the "free guides" link of www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm or call 357-2491 for a copy.

Olympia Composts!

Food Waste • Food-Soiled Paper • Yard Waste

Olympia Businesses!

Collection of food and other organics by City of Olympia is here!

Call Public Works Waste ReSources and ask for a waste reduction consultation:

(360) 570-5837

Available Now!

Another step toward Zero Waste



The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in the employment and the delivery of services and resources.

www.olympiawa.gov

Event Recycling



Along with cheers and excitement, outdoor sporting events usually generate garbage cans overflowing with sport-drink bottles and aluminum cans. Fortunately, the trend is starting to change in Thurston County. The Thurston County Solid Waste Program has donated 650 "ClearStream" recycling containers to local schools, universities and governments for special events. The program began in 2007 thanks to a state grant, and so far, the containers have collected 47,531 pounds of recyclables.

ClearStream containers are lightweight and fold for storage. Plus, the containers are fitted with clear plastic bags that discourage people from contaminating them with garbage. Schools use the containers at sporting events and lunches. Cities and other local governments use the containers at their own events, and make them available to groups who hold events in public facilities.

State law (RCW 70.93) actually requires recycling to be available at every official gathering and sports facility where single-use aluminum, glass, or plastic bottles are sold. The law applies to communities where curbside service and commercial recycling service are available.

For more information, contact Terri Thomas at 754-2896 or thomaste@co.thurston.wa.us.

Simplify Stuff

We've all heard the mantra "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." Reusing items is even more environmentally friendly than recycling because it doesn't require remanufacturing the materials into a new item. You may own something that you can't use anymore, but someone else out there might love to have it. Here are four free Web sites Thurston County residents can use to list or shop.

- www.2good2toss.com – all items are \$99 or less.
- seattle.craigslist.org/oly – has no price limits.
- www.usedolympia.com – has no price limits.
- www.freecycle.org – requires all items to be free.

Law May Affect TV Reception

America's 74-year love affair with television may hit rocky times around Valentine's Day next year. On Feb. 17, 2009, millions of older TV sets that are now connected to rabbit ears or roof-top antennas will go blank unless their owners purchase a special converter box. But wait! You don't need to get rid of your old TV and buy a brand new one. Here's what you need to know right now:

What's happening?

The Federal Communications Commission is requiring all full-power television stations to stop broadcasting in analog format over the air beginning Feb. 17, 2009; from then on, all broadcasting over the air will be in digital format. The key word here is "air." The law will only affect the small percentage of people who own analog TVs AND who get free signals from an antenna. If these two criteria don't apply to you, you can stop reading and watch your favorite show.

How do I know whether my TV is analog?

Since March 1, 2007, any TV shipped between states or imported into the U.S. has had to include a digital tuner by law. And by May that same year, retailers were required to post an advisory sign next to any leftover analog inventory for sale. So if you purchased your TV after March 2007, it's probably digital.

For TVs purchased before March 2007, follow this advice from the Jan. 24 edition of the *New York Times*: "Check the manual under specifications for the tuner. If it says 'ATSC,' it is digital. If it says 'NTSC,' it is analog. Some TVs have both. If you don't have a manual, sometimes 'ATSC' or 'NTSC' is marked on the back of the TV." If you bought your TV before 1998, it's probably not digital.

I have an analog TV. Do I need to get rid of it?

No, you're ok for several years if your analog TV is hooked up to a paid television service such as cable or satellite. Cable companies intend to provide analog signals at least through 2012, unless the federal government changes the law again. If your analog TV relies on an antenna for air broadcasts, all you need to do is purchase a converter box. The U.S. Department of Commerce is offering free coupons for \$40 off the purchase of a new TV converter box. Visit www.dtv2009.gov.



trash flash

CARPETING: Recovery One in Tacoma recycles carpet and carpet padding. The cost is \$56 per ton, with a \$20 minimum. By comparison, Thurston County's Waste and Recovery Center near Lacey charges \$76 per ton for loads weighing 400 pounds or more. (Lighter loads are a flat \$14.) Another benefit: Recovery One recycles the carpet and padding. At the Waste and Recovery Center, the carpet materials are mixed with trash. Call Recovery One at (800) 949-5852.

These Paper Cuts Feel Good

Today's average office worker uses about 10,000 sheets of paper each year, according to the Environmental Defense Fund. All of this paper use comes at a high price to the environment.



The Defense Fund calculates that producing one ton of copy paper (400 reams or 200,000 sheets) with no recycled content:

- uses 24 trees;
- produces 2,278 pounds of solid waste;
- creates 5,690 pounds of green house gases (the equivalent of six months of car exhaust);
- requires the same amount of energy an average household would use in 10 months (11,134 kWh).

trash flash

MONEY FOR GADGETS: Costco offers an easy way for members to trade in iPods, digital cameras and other electronic gadgets for cash. Use the Web-based calculator to determine the value of your product, send in the item (with free shipping), and once the item is received you'll be sent a Costco gift card for the trade-in value. Go to www.costco.com and type "trade in" in the search field.

To reduce paper waste, follow these tips:

- Store your documents and e-mails electronically.
- Print and copy on both sides of paper (duplexing). If you have a duplex printer, change your default setting to double-sided printing.
- Save paper that has been printed only on one side, and reuse it in copiers and fax machines to print on the other side.
- To print selected text from a long Web site or document, simply highlight the text, go to "file-print" and choose the "selection" option.
- Reduce the number of pages in a document by removing blank pages, reducing the font size, and adjusting margins and line spaces.
- Drink from reusable cups.

Try the paper calculator yourself by visiting www.edf.org/papercalculator.

Paper or Plastic? No thanks...

Paper or Plastic? That vexing grocery store question. Which answer should you give if you care about the environment?

Paper bags are recyclable and biodegradable, but come at the cost of millions of trees. Plus paper bags don't truly biodegrade in landfills because they're sealed off from oxygen.

Plastic bags are made from petroleum. Although plastic bags can be recycled, only 5.2 percent of plastic bags were actually recycled in 2005, according to an EPA estimate cited in the *New York Times* (April 1, 2007). Plus, plastic bags are non-biodegradable. They photodegrade into smaller pieces, but never completely go away.

Estimates for just how many plastic bags Americans use each year vary widely. Newspapers, university studies, government reports and Web sites cite numbers from 14 billion bags annually, to more than 300 billion bags if you count all bags, wraps and sacks. Yet regardless of the count, it's undeniable that plastic bags are littering our environment and harming wildlife.

In the manufacturing process, both paper and plastic bags cause greenhouse gas emissions.

So, both options eat up natural resources and cause pollution. What's the solution? BYOB - bring your own bag! It's common now to see customers using their own cloth or canvas totes. Many stores reward these environmentally conscious shoppers with small discounts for each reusable bag.

trash flash

FOOD BANK: The Thurston County food bank accepts clean and dry plastic and paper grocery bags at its donation bins and at the downtown Olympia location, 222 Thurston Ave. N.E. Why not drop off yours along with some non-perishable food?

Disposing of Medical Supplies

Most of us have a few unwanted medical supplies lying around the house – whether it's an outdated prescription, an inhaler, or a set of crutches. People who use needles, syringes or lancets for medical care face the extra challenge of disposing of these used "sharps" safely. Here are some options:

Sharps: Place used sharps in a sealed, well marked container. Most pharmacies sell sharps containers, and some medical facilities will provide them free of charge (ask your health care provider). If an official sharps container is not handy, a 2-liter bottle with a lid also is a good substitute. When the container is full, seal it shut with tape and write "sharps" on the bottle. The bottle can then go in the garbage. Your health care provider may also provide other options.



trash flash

EYEGLASSES: The Lions Club collects used eyeglasses and distributes them to people in developing nations. The Northwest Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center is located at 9013 Mullen Road S.E. in Olympia. Call 923-2075 for directions, or visit www.lionsnwlerc.org. The Lions Club also collects eyeglasses at more than a dozen locations throughout Thurston County.



Here are some easy ways to remember to bring your own bag:

- Always start your grocery list with "Bring Bags" and keep your bags in the car.
- Keep a collapsible bag in your purse or briefcase for those emergency runs to the stores.

Forgot your reusable bag? Don't worry – you can still reuse or recycle plastic bags. Here in Thurston County, plastic bags are not accepted in curbside recycling bins because the bags clog processing equipment; however, bags are accepted in designated bins near the front doors of most grocery stores. You may also place other stretchy plastics in the bins, such as dry cleaning wrap and bread bags. Generally speaking, if you can poke your finger through the plastic easily, it's recyclable. It doesn't matter where your bags originated, as long as you're recycling the right kind of plastic.

Visit www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23358591/ for a great video on this issue.

Free Computer Recycling April 19!

1-800-GOT-JUNK, with support from MIC Total Recycle, will collect computers and computer-related components free of charge in celebration of International Earth Day. The event will be held Saturday, April 19 from noon to 3 p.m. at Westfield Capital Mall, 625 Black Lake Blvd. S.W. in Olympia (by the former Mervyn's store).

Drop off your computers, monitors, towers, laptops, keyboards and mice at no cost.

Not accepted: TVs, DVDs, VCRs, stereos and other electronics will not be accepted; however, you can recycle these electronics at Thurston County's Community Recycle Days. See the back page for details.



Yard-Waste Drive

Get rid of brush, limbs and other yard debris at the 4th annual Brush Drive, hosted by the Tumwater Dance Team. The event will be held Saturday, April 19 and Sunday, April 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1845 93rd Ave. S.W. in Olympia. From I-5 South, take the 93rd Avenue exit, turn left and go about a half mile. The site will be on your right.

The suggested donation is \$10 per load, and team volunteers will unload the materials for you.

Yard waste will be recycled, and all donations benefit the Tumwater Dance Team. For questions or more information, call 943-0632.

Energy Fair & Race

The City of Lacey is hosting its 11th annual Alternative Energy Fair and electric car "Grand Prix" on Saturday, May 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The electric car race typically features vehicles that have three of four bicycle wheels, weigh less than 200 pounds, and are powered by conventional car batteries. Information booths will display alternative fuels and other energy choices.

A special "Miles Per Gallon" rally is also planned, where drivers of non-electric cars can drive a route to learn about gas mileage and efficiency.

The track and tech area opens at 9 a.m., with races at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Booths and activities will be ongoing from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Huntamer Park, 7th and Woodland Square Loop in Lacey. For entry rules and details, call 491-0857.

Health Matters



News from Thurston County Environmental Health

Take Mercury to HazoHouse in April

This Earth Week, gather up your mercury-containing products, such as thermostats, thermometers, fluorescent bulbs, and HID lamps and bring them to HazoHouse for free disposal. (Businesses may pay a fee.) Collection dates are April 18 through April 21, and April 25 through April 28. Be sure to pack bulbs with padding and place thermometers in two zip lock-style bags to prevent breakage.

Mercury items are always accepted at HazoHouse. This Earth Week event is part of a statewide effort to encourage people to recycle mercury safely. See page 7 for HazoHouse information.

Take the Pledge

Since 2002, nearly 200 county residents have pledged to maintain their yards without using toxic weed and bug killers. These gardeners share a commitment to protecting their family's health and our environment. You can join them! Take the pesticide-free pledge and receive a free sign expressing your commitment to healthy yards and healthy kids. Call Jennifer Johnson at 754-3355 ext. 7631 or e-mail johnsoj@co.thurston.wa.us.



Teach Teens About Toxins

As teens start to help out more around the home and yard, they may also be exposed to dangers from cleaners, pesticides, and auto products. Thurston County Environmental Health offers presentations for middle and high school students on how to protect themselves and the environment from common products. Teachers, scout leaders, and after-school programs can request a fun, 50-minute class on "Get Out of My Hair: Toxins in Personal Care" or "Hazards on the Homefront." Contact Jennifer Johnson for details (see above).

Wash Away Aphids

Aphids can be washed off plants with a blast of water. Use a spray nozzle for trees and a squirt bottle for tender plants. Most aphids will not be able to make their way back to the plant. Avoid blasting aphid predators, such as ladybugs and their spotted larvae, lacewing larvae, and tiny parasitic wasps. Look for our "Common Sense Gardening Guide to Aphids" at nurseries and garden centers, or on-line at www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg.

Chemicals in Plastics: Play it Safe

Over the past few years, scientists have warned that plastics can leach unhealthy chemicals. Although human studies are inconclusive at this point, many people choose to play it safe. Let's look at what we know about two toxins in plastic: phthalates (pronounced "THA-lates") and bisphenol-A.

Phthalates are added to polyvinyl chloride (PVC) products to make them more flexible and durable. They are used in some medical tubing, shower curtains, rain coats, food wrap, bath toys, and many other items. Phthalates are also found in personal care products. Animal studies have associated phthalates with a variety of health problems, notably reproductive abnormalities and cancer. Studies on humans are less conclusive, although they do raise concerns about reproductive abnormalities and asthma. In the February edition of Pediatrics journal, Seattle researchers conclude that many baby care products are a source of phthalate exposure for infants.



Bisphenol-A is used in polycarbonate (PC) plastics. It is used to line the inside of food cans, and to manufacture clear, rigid water bottles and jugs. Animal studies show that bisphenol-A disrupts hormone functions, leading to reproductive problems, cancer, birth defects, and obesity in test animals. Although human studies do not yet show connections to these disorders, bisphenol-A's high presence in humans has raised alarm.

- If you're concerned about using plastic products for cooking and storing food, use glass or stainless steel instead. Also follow these tips:
- ○ Choose less shiny, opaque plastic instead of clear, shiny plastic.
- ○ Check the code number on the bottom of the container, which tells you the type of plastic used, and then refer to the chart below. The plastics on the "safer choices" list are still not perfect, but they do not contain phthalates and bisphenol-A.
- ○ Do not heat baby formula or food in #3, #6, or #7 plastics, or store hot food in them. Studies show that bisphenol-A leaches out of baby bottles when heated. Older plastics that have been washed frequently are more likely to leach chemicals.
- Plastic toys may not have code numbers on them. Visit the Web site www.healthytoys.org to see test results for toys and other products that have been tested for heavy metals and chlorine (which suggests the presence of phthalates). Note this statement on the Web site: "The levels are not intended to correspond to levels known to cause health effects. Rather, they are meant to provide a relative measure of the level of the chemical on the toy's surface."
- For more information, visit the Washington Toxics Coalition Web site, www.watoxics.org and choose the "Safer Products" tab.

With your food, use 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Safer choices for foods and beverages.



PETE HDPE LDPE PP

Avoid these plastics for food and beverages.



PVC PS PC and other*

* Except new bio-based plastics labeled as such.

Graphics courtesy of Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Food and Health Program, www.iatp.org/foodandhealth.

Save on Natural Yard Care Products

Save 25 percent on natural yard care products during Northwest Natural Yard Days, April 15 to May 15. Northwest Natural Yard Days is a regional program designed to encourage environmentally-friendly yard care practices in order to reduce waste, protect water, and protect public health. Local sponsors include Thurston County, the cities of Olympia, Tumwater, and Lacey and participating retailers.

Products on sale include: electric mulch mowers, push mowers, natural organic fertilizer, compost, woody mulch, water wands, soaker hoses, insecticidal soap, weed pullers, and less-toxic moss and slug controls.



For a list of participating stores and information about natural yard care, visit www.yarddays.com or call the Thurston County Common Sense Gardening program at (360) 754-4111.

Garbage and Recycling Resources

Contacts

Talkin' Trash is produced by the Thurston County Department of Water and Waste Management. Phone 357-2491 or e-mail wmm-webmaster@co.thurston.wa.us. TDD: 754-2933.

County Department of Water and Waste Management

WasteLine: 786-5494
(24-hour recorded information about solid waste and recycling)

Alternatives to Burning Hotline:
754-2953 (24-hour recorded message)

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

Web: www.co.thurston.wa.us/wmm

Located at 929 Lakeridge Drive S.W.,
Bldg. 4, Room 100, Olympia, 98502

Other valuable Web sites:

Washington State Department of Ecology
Recycle Assistance: 1800recycle.wa.gov.

"Where Should I Take My?" at the bottom of
the page on [www.co.thurston.wa.us/wmm/
Recycling/recycling_home.htm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/wmm/Recycling/recycling_home.htm).

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. Yard waste collection
service is also available in many of the service
areas. Call for more information or visit www.lemayinc.com.

- City of Olympia residents, call 753-8368
or visit www.olympiawa.gov. Olympia
provides its own trash, recycling and yard
waste collection service.
- City of Rainier residents, call 923-0111 for
curbside trash and recycling service.
- Town of Bucoda residents, call 278-3525
to arrange for curbside trash and recycling
service.

County Public Health and Social Services, Environmental Health

Phone: 754-4111 or TDD: 754-2933

Web: 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)

Located at 929 Lakeridge Drive S.W., Room
113, Olympia, WA 98502. Send mail to 2000
Lakeridge Drive S.W., Olympia, WA 98502.

Recycle Blue Boxes

Locations

Tumwater: 3400 25th Ave. S.W. (off of
Mottman Road in Tumwater)

Lacey: College Street Safeway, 4700 Yelm
Highway S.E.

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

Steamboat Island: William's Island Market,
3403 Steamboat Island Road N.W.

Yelm: City of Yelm Public Works Building,
901 Rhoton Road

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

Bucoda: Town of Bucoda, Main Street
and E. 5th (cardboard recycling 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 Boxes

Thurston County's blue recycle boxes 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
boxes – no paper or plastic bags (with the
exception of shredded paper strips, which
should be placed in a paper bag).

Compost Bins

Reduced-price compost bins are available
through the Thurston County Master Gardener
Foundation. Bins include the Earth Machine
for \$40 each, and the Biostack bin for \$60
each. The bins are subsidized by the Thurston
County Solid Waste Program for county
residents. The price includes tax and delivery
within Thurston County.

Green Cone food digesters are available for
\$50 each but need to be picked up from the
foundation. Rubbermaid worm bins are \$28
each and are sold at workshops only (see
"Coming Soon" on page 8). Call 481-4204 or
visit: www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com.

Exchange Web Sites

The following Web sites provide an excellent
way to sell or give away items in good
condition that you no longer need or want.

- Thurston County's free online exchange
program: www.2good2toss.com
- Craig's List: seattle.craigslist.org/oly
- FreeCycle: www.freecycle.org
- Used Olympia: www.usedolympia.com

Our Facilities

Thurston County 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 12/31/08)

one ton = 2,000 lbs

Garbage

Less than 400 lbs \$14
400 lbs or more \$76 per ton, prorated
(One ton is 2,000 pounds, so the per-ton
garbage rate is 3.8 cents per pound.) For
refrigerated appliances, add a \$14 handling
fee to the rate above. For TVs and computer
monitors, add a \$15 handling fee to the rate
above. Rates include 3.6 percent state refuse
tax and tollhouse fee.

Yard Debris

Less than 400 lbs \$7 per ton
400 lbs or more: \$38 per ton, prorated
(One ton is 2,000 pounds, so the per-ton
yard waste rate is 1.9 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.

Garbage/Recycling 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.

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.

**Are you storing dangerous and
unwanted hazardous products in
your home?**

**TAKE THEM TO
HAZOHOUSE!**

Open Friday-Monday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

HazoHouse offers FREE, safe
and convenient disposal of most
household hazardous products.

Located next to the
recycling area of the
Thurston County
Waste and Recovery
Center, 2418
Hogum Bay Road
N.E. in Lacey.



Coming Soon...

Mark Your Calendar for These Events

APRIL/MAY: Free Compost Workshops

Discover how to compost at the following free workshops. No registration is required. Compost bins and bin plans will be available at the workshops. Bins are also sold at a discount through www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com (see page 7 for details). September and October workshops will be announced in the next edition of Talkin' Trash.

Unless otherwise noted, workshop times are:

- Yard waste composting
10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
- Food waste composting
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

- April 26:** Closed Loop Park
- May 17:** Dirt Works¹
- June 4:** Tumwater Farmers Market
- June 7:** Closed Loop Park
- June 14:** Olympia Farmers Market
- June 28:** Tenino Farmers Market
- July 12:** Dirt Works
- Aug. 16:** Dirt Works²
- Aug. 23:** Closed Loop Park
- Aug. 23:** Rainier Roundup

1. The May 17 workshop has the above schedule, plus afternoon classes: Yard waste composting at 1 p.m. and food waste composting at 2 p.m. This event also includes an open house and plant sale.

2. The topic of the Aug. 16 event is "Bins to Build or Buy." Hours are 10 a.m. to noon.

Locations

Closed Loop Park is located at the Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center, 2418 Hogum Bay Road N.E. near Lacey.

Dirt Works is located on Alta Drive, off Capitol Mall Drive behind Yauger Park in west Olympia.

Tumwater Farmers Market is located on Israel Road in Tumwater.

Olympia Farmers Market is located at the north end of Capitol Way in downtown Olympia.

Tenino Farmers Market is located at the corner of Garfield and Old Highway 99 next to Tenino Elementary School.

JULY: Garden Tour

The 2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour will be held **Saturday, July 26** from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are available in July at local nurseries and by contacting Jennifer Johnson at 754-3355 ext. 7631 or johnsoj@co.thurston.wa.us.

APRIL: Septic Sense Workshops

Learn tips to prolong the life of your septic system at these free workshops. Register online at: www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehoss/wkshp_sch.html or call Thurston County Environmental Health at 754-4111. TDD: 754-2933. Participants will get a \$10 discount on pumping.

Tuesday, April 8 – 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
South Bay Fire Station
3506 Shincke Road N.E., Olympia

Thursday, April 17 – 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Thurston County Courthouse, Bldg. 1
Room 152
2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W., Olympia

Wednesday, April 23 – 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Tumwater Middle School Auditorium
6335 Littlerock Road, Tumwater

Tuesday, April 29 – 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Rainier High School
308 2nd Street W., Rainier

MAY: Community Recycle Days

Thurston County's Community Recycle Days offer an easy way to recycle a variety of household items at reduced rates.

(Note: See page 5 for a free computer recycling event, April 19.)

Saturday, May 10 – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Thurston County Fairgrounds,
Event will be in the lower parking lot
3054 Carpenter Road S.E. near Lacey

Saturday, May 17 – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
South Sound Speedway
3720 183rd Ave. S.W. in Tenino

MAY/JUNE: WasteMobile in Yelm

Dispose of hazardous household products at the next WasteMobile events:

Saturday, May 31 – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, June 1 – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Both events will be held at the Yelm Middle School parking lot, 402 Yelm Ave. W.

We WILL accept: oil and latex paints; glues and adhesives; pesticides and herbicides; car and household batteries; antifreeze; motor oil and filters; cleaners and polishes; pool and hobby chemicals; thinners and solvents; and fluorescent light bulbs and tubes. These items will be accepted free for residents.

We WILL NOT accept: garbage, electronics, yard waste, appliances, computers, monitors, medical wastes, explosives, ammunition, propane tanks, empty or leaking containers, business wastes, smoke detectors or radioactive materials. (Take electronics, appliances and computers to Community Recycle Days.)

Community Recycle Days serves Thurston County residents only, not commercial vendors or businesses.

Visitors will be asked to supply the short form below to help us track inventory. To get a head start, please bring the completed form to the events.

For more information, visit our Web site at: www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm or call 357-2491 or TDD at 754-2933.

PLEASE FILL OUT THE INFORMATION BELOW FOR YOUR ITEMS AND GIVE IT TO THE STAFF WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE EVENT

ITEM	PRICE EACH	QUANTITY	ROW TOTAL
Tires - passenger vehicles - without rim	\$2		\$
Tires - passenger vehicles - with rim	\$3		\$
Tires - tractor size (prices for larger tires will be determined on site by the vendor)	\$10		\$
Refrigerators, Freezers, Air Conditioners (maximum 4 per vehicle)	\$15		\$
Stoves, Washers, Dryers, Hot Water Tanks, Microwaves (NO dishwashers accepted)	\$5		\$
Televisions, Computer Monitors, Laptops	\$15		\$
CPUs, Fax Machines, Printers, Scanners, Copiers (under 50 lbs)	\$5		\$
CD & DVD Players, VCRs, Stereo Systems, Radios, Speakers	\$2		\$
Keyboards, Computer Mice, All Types of Phones, Printed Circuit Boards	FREE		FREE
Power Tools, Push or Riding Lawn Mowers, Bicycles, Small Gas Motors (including chain saw, weed trimmer, outboard boat motor)	FREE		FREE
Goodwill Donations (small furniture, clothes, working small kitchen appliances, kitchenware)	FREE		FREE
Scrap Metal (including de-valved propane tanks)	FREE		FREE
Flower Pots (2 gal. or larger, clean & unbroken)	FREE		FREE
		GRAND TOTAL:	\$

