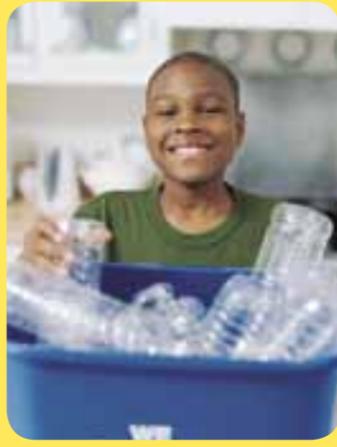


# Talkin' Trash & more



## Tips for Keeping Thurston County Healthy

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

REDUCE  REUSE  RECYCLE

Spring/Summer 2012

## Single use plastic bags

**B**ased on national averages, Thurston County residents use about 90 to 125 million plastic shopping bags each year. Bags require energy and resources to make, affect our environment and wildlife, and create a financial burden on retailers and governments. With these impacts in mind, it seems like a good time to have a community conversation about the use of plastic bags and potential alternatives.

### The trouble with plastic bags

You cannot put plastic bags in your commingled curbside cart because they tangle in the equipment at the sorting facility. Shutting down equipment and removing the bags costs the recycling facility an extra \$1,000 per day. Despite our outreach efforts, some residents still put bags in their recycling.

Public outreach about plastic bag recycling has improved over the last few years, and many more retail stores collect bags for recycling. However, published reports by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) show that the nationwide recycling rate for bags actually dropped from 6 percent in 2009 to 4.3 percent in 2010. That means more bags wind up in the trash.

Because plastic bags are light weight, they travel easily through the environment. Even when placed in a trash can, they can become airborne during the collection, hauling, and transfer station processes.



Workers remove plastic bags that have tangled in sorting equipment at SP Recycling Corp. Photo courtesy of Waste Connections, Inc.

The Marine Research Foundation estimates that 100,000 marine mammals die each year because of plastic litter in the North Pacific Ocean. Whales, dolphins, seals, turtles, and birds often mistake plastic bags for food and swallow them. Birds and other marine life routinely get tangled up in bags. Bags also affect livestock and other land animals.

### What can we do?

Thurston County Solid Waste wants to work with the citizens, cities, retailers, and community groups of Thurston County to discuss the problem of disposable bags. We hope to develop possible solutions. Our first step will be to work with the cities to host a series of community meetings.

We will also develop a web page at [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Plastics](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Plastics) with more information on the problems with bags. The web page will list studies and reports and what actions other jurisdictions are taking. Visit this page to sign up for an email newsletter with more information on the issue and a schedule of community events.

### Not all bags are created equal

It is true it takes more energy to produce a paper bag than to make a plastic bag. However, there are other factors to consider:

- Most recycled plastic bags are made into lower quality plastic products. Paper bags are easily recycled into new paper bags.
- Plastic bags must be separated from other recyclables. Paper bags can go in your curbside recycling cart.
- A paper bag holds about 50 to 400 percent more than a plastic bag.
- Plastic bags are made from oil, a non-renewable resource. Trees are renewable.
- Plastic bags do not break down like paper bags, so they create the environmental issues we are concerned about like litter, marine damage, and blocked storm drains.

Our ultimate goal is to prevent waste. Therefore, reusable bags are a better option than plastic or paper. Remembering to bring your reusable bags when you shop is like learning any new habit – you can do it with time, practice, and incentives.

We hope you will join us in the upcoming community dialogue around the use of plastic bags and potential alternatives.

## Spring events

### South Sound Green Tour April 21-22

The Northwest EcoBuilding Guild is hosting the third annual South Sound Green Tour. Come learn about sustainable design and construction. Tour a variety of green-built structures, including LEED-certified buildings, new homes, remodels, and energy retrofits.



There are also many workshops and demonstrations to choose from.

This free event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, April 21-22. To find tour locations and other information about the tour, visit [www.SouthSoundGreenTour.org](http://www.SouthSoundGreenTour.org).

### Secondhand Safari Saturday, May 5

It's time again for Secondhand Safari, the semiannual community garage sale and reuse fair! Expect to find garage sale items, educational booths, a free book and magazine table, entertainment, and food. This is a great opportunity to make a few bucks from stuff you find while spring cleaning.

Join us Saturday, May 5, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Thurston County Fairgrounds. Admission is \$2 for early birds between 8 and 9 a.m., and \$1 after 9 a.m.

Visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/fair](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/fair) or call 786-5453 for more information.

## Trash Flash

**How do you remember your reusable bags?** Do you keep them with your keys? Charge yourself a dollar each time you forget? Email your tips to [thomaste@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:thomaste@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Since you asked!



My coworker said she doesn't bother to separate her trash and recyclables. She claims there is an assembly line at the Waste and Recovery Center where they pick through the trash to find recyclables. Is this true?

No, there is no assembly line to pick through residential trash at the WARC. Staff uses equipment to pull large items like metals and clean wood from loads of construction and demolition (C&D) debris. Attendants only sort through C&D loads that appear to have a large amount of recyclable materials.

I have several electrical chargers from old cell phones and other electronics. Where can I recycle them?

Best Buy stores in West Olympia and Hawks Prairie have a kiosk where you can recycle cords and chargers, rechargeable batteries, and ink cartridges for free.

Best Buy will also recycle many types of electronics. Visit [www.bestbuy.com/recycling](http://www.bestbuy.com/recycling) for details.

I want to recycle a large TV. Do E-Cycle locations have a size limit?

There is no size limit on TVs. However, if you want to drop off your TV at an E-Cycle location, it's best to call first. The site may have limited space or staff available to accept a large or bulky TV.

► Have a question about waste prevention or recycling? Email [ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Correction

In the fall 2011 edition of Talkin' Trash, we said bucket lids could be recycled.



We apologize for this error - bucket lids **cannot** go in your recycle cart.

Please put lids in the trash.

## Easy recycling at the WARC

Foam recycling has arrived at the Waste and Recovery Center! Polystyrene (often called Styrofoam™) plates, cups, and molded blocks now have a special bin in our recycle area.



Before recycling your foam:

- Make sure it has a number six recycle symbol.
- Rinse all food containers.
- Put all items in clear plastic bags. We will provide bags at the site.



If you can't make it to the WARC, you can recycle these items at DART Container Corp., located at 600 Israel Road in Tumwater.

The WARC and DART **do not** accept packing peanuts. For peanut drop-off sites, visit [www.loosefillpackaging.com](http://www.loosefillpackaging.com) or call the peanut hotline at 1-800-828-2214.

## Trash Flash

**Storm debris tips the scales.** County residents brought 3,578 tons of storm debris to the WARC and other free drop-off sites after the snow and ice storms in January. The City of Tumwater collected another 5,625 tons of debris. County work crews continue to collect debris from over 1,200 miles of unincorporated county roads.

## Tired of junk mail?

Unwanted mail, catalogs, and phone books not only clutter up your desk, they use valuable resources. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), unsolicited mail wastes 4 million tons of paper each year, and half of it ends up in the trash. So what can you do? Recycling is a good step, but there's an even better way to deal with junk mail: opt out. Here are some easy ways to stop junk mail from filling your mailbox.

**Stop direct mail.** Catalog Choice makes it easy for you to stop unsolicited junk mail, catalogs, and phone books. Set up a free account at [www.CatalogChoice.org](http://www.CatalogChoice.org), and indicate which publications you no longer want. They also offer a pre-paid envelope service. Send up to 15 pieces of junk mail to Catalog Choice and they will remove you from those mailing lists. For a fee, they will also prevent big data brokers from selling your name and address.

Another 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. Visit [www.dmchoice.org](http://www.dmchoice.org) for instructions on how to register online or via the U.S. Postal Service.



## Trash Flash

**Stop junk mail at work.** Catalog Choice works great for businesses too! Sign up now to prevent duplicate mailings of publications and catalogs or to stop mail to former employees. You can set up an account for your office with a list of employee names, or each employee can set up an individual account. Visit [www.CatalogChoice.org](http://www.CatalogChoice.org) to sign up.

Recycling plastic at the WARC just got a bit easier, too. Instead of separating plastic containers by number, you can now recycle them all in the same bin. However, plastic bags still have their own separate bin.

Non-plastic items like cans, paper, and glass still go in separate bins. You must put all items into the bins **loose**, not in bags or boxes. Only put foam items into clear plastic bags.

When you arrive at the recycle area, ask the attendant for a tip sheet that explains what goes in each bin.

Remember, the WARC recycling area is free and available to residents only. Businesses must call their garbage hauler to arrange collection.

The recycle area is for recyclables only, **not** trash. Contamination from trash is costly and threatens to close the recycle area. If you see someone dumping trash into the recycle bins, please tell the attendant immediately.

This service is only for residential addresses and only covers national, not local, mailings.

**Stop credit card offers.** The major credit bureaus have a toll-free, 24-hour number you can call to remove your name from mailing lists. You can remove yourself for two years or permanently. Call 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688) and confirm your identity by recording your full name, address, telephone number, and social security number. Opt out online by visiting [www.OptOutPrescreen.com](http://www.OptOutPrescreen.com).

Visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/JunkMail](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/JunkMail) for more information on preventing junk mail, or visit the City of Olympia's website at [www.olympiawa.gov/optout](http://www.olympiawa.gov/optout).

## Local art gallery closes the loop

The next time you find yourself in downtown Olympia check out Matter! Art Gallery. This fun and fascinating exhibit space sits cozily on Fifth Avenue and features art from more than 135 artists mostly from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Artists create each piece from recycled or reclaimed materials.

Matter! features both fine art (art created for its own sake) and functional art. Artists use recycled and reclaimed materials including sculpture, paintings, furniture, lighting, jewelry, garden art, and metalwork for their pieces. Repurposing these discarded materials is a great way to give them a new life.

Jo Gallagher opened Matter! two and a half years ago.

The idea for the gallery grew organically out of her love and appreciation for art and input from local artists.

Gallagher always wanted to own and manage an art gallery.



"The Heron" created by Jill DrLevich of Ravensdale, WA.

When she chose Olympia as her gallery's location, the area's culture and arts community inspired her to create a space devoted to art with recycled elements.

"Olympia is a wonderful place to have an edgy art gallery like this

... we're surrounded by talented, gutsy artists. Our local community, as well as people from metro areas near and far, are taking notice and becoming strong supporters," says Gallagher.

Gallagher places and displays each art piece in the gallery herself. The more you look, the more you see. Even the displays used to hold artwork are intriguing and playful.

Visit Matter! at 113 5th Ave. SW in downtown Olympia. You can also visit [www.matteroly.com](http://www.matteroly.com).

## Trash Flash

**Get rid of medications the safe and secure way.** Folks in our county properly disposed of 5,751 pounds of medications in 2011! That's a 60 percent increase over 2010. Visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Meds](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Meds) or call 867-2491 to find a free drop-off location near you.

## Event recycling made easy

Planning a big event? Add recycling and waste prevention to your to-do list. Not only do guests and customers expect recycle bins at your event, it's an easy way to show your commitment to sustainability. In fact, vendors selling drinks in recyclable bottles and cans are required by state law to provide recycling collection.

Planning a green event doesn't have to be difficult. Thurston County Solid Waste offers free resources to help you meet your zero waste goals. We lend out free bins to collect bottles and cans, glass, food, and food-soiled paper. The bins fold to fit into your trunk and are easy to set up. The bins come with signs and a limited supply of bags. The borrower is responsible for disposing of all collected materials.

Eliminating disposable items is a great way to prevent waste at your event. Here are some simple ways to replace single-use items:

- Choose durable plates, cups, and serviceware that you can wash and reuse.
- Use cloth napkins instead of paper.
- Choose decorations that you can reuse or give away after the event. Potted plants make great centerpieces and parting gifts for your guests.

## Trash Flash

**Loaner bins make event recycling a success!** Thurston County residents and organizations that borrowed our bins for events in 2011 collected 1,802 pounds of recyclables and 1,794 pounds of compostable materials!

If you can't use durable serviceware, consider using compostable items. Silver Springs Organics has a list of products they accept for composting at their facility. Before you purchase any compostable products for your event, check the list at [www.silverspringsorganics.com/products.html](http://www.silverspringsorganics.com/products.html).



Our recycle bin loaner program is available to all residents, businesses, and organizations in Thurston County. We also provide cities with a supply of bins to loan out to residents or use at their facilities.

Visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Bins](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Bins) to request loaner bins or to learn more about event recycling. You can also contact Brian Stafki at [stafkib@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:stafkib@co.thurston.wa.us) or 709-3053.

## Build a green team

Green teams are changing the way companies and organizations impact the environment. A green team is a group of employees, students, or members of a congregation that works to improve sustainability at an organization. Green teams can tackle recycling, responsible purchasing, energy efficiency, carbon footprints, and more.

If you want to start a green team, these tips will get you started:



• Find your core green team members. They're the ones picking recyclables from the trash or going through the office turning out lights after everyone's left for the day.

• Green teams function best when they represent your entire group. Be sure to include one member from each department.

• Be sure to establish a regular meeting schedule and stick to it. Moving the meeting time or date around each month will make the meetings harder to schedule and easy to forget.

• Find out which issues are important to employees and customers. Have your green team tackle these first.

• Celebrate your successes publicly. Use your website, social media, and newsletters to let people know what your green team is doing.

Whether your green team wants to improve recycling or develop a sustainability policy, Solid Waste staff are happy to help.

Businesses and organizations can contact Emily Orme at 867-2086 or [ormee@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:ormee@co.thurston.wa.us) for assistance. Faith groups can contact Loni Hanka at 754-4580 or [hankal@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:hankal@co.thurston.wa.us).

For more information about waste prevention at work, visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Biz](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Biz).

## Free community presentations

If you belong to a service organization or club, invite Thurston County Solid Waste to your next meeting. We provide presentations to groups on a variety of waste reduction topics.

Our presenters are happy to tailor the information to audiences of all ages and large or small groups. We also answer your questions and direct your group to helpful resources for recycling, composting, and trash concerns.

We travel anywhere in Thurston County. Call us to schedule a presentation at your convenience. Contact Loni Hanka at 754-4398 or [hankal@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:hankal@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Where Do I Take My. . .

### . . . Dirt and sod?

Dirt and sod can be tricky to recycle. They can't go in your compost cart or to the yard waste area at the Waste and Recovery Center (WARC).

Take your dirt and sod to Liberty One Resources, located at 1845 93rd Ave. SW, Olympia. They also accept tree stumps and land clearing debris. Call 943-0362 for pricing information.

### . . . Propane tanks?

HazoHouse at the WARC accepts all propane tanks equal to or smaller than the standard gas grill tank. This includes compact camp stove canisters.

There is no need to remove the valve. Drop-off is free for county residents and limited to three tanks per day.

### . . . Latex paint?

HazoHouse no longer accepts latex paint. If paint cans are mostly full, see if a local school, church, or other community organization can use them.

To dispose of latex paint, completely dry it out by adding sawdust, shredded paper, or a chemical paint solidifier. Keep the lid off and put the can in your trash.

Visit [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://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.

## A word from your hauler

Remember the rules for putting your cart out on pickup day:

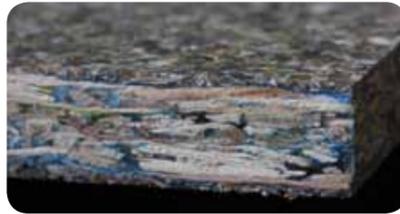
- Put cart out by 6 a.m.
- Place cart at the curb or within 5 feet from the road.
- The cart's opening should face the street or alley.
- Keep cart at least 3 feet from basketball hoops, trees, mailboxes, or other containers.
- Keep cart 5 feet away from vehicles.
- Allow 18 feet of space above cart to make room for the truck's robotic arm.
- Whenever possible, please take care not to block bike lanes, sidewalks, or mailboxes.
- Put your glass in a separate, rigid container. Pick a container between 5 and 20 gallons, and drill holes in the bottom so it does not collect rain.



## Think recycled for building projects

If you plan to build or remodel this summer, consider using recycled products. It's a great way to prevent waste and can earn you points toward LEED building certification. There are innovative products made right here in Washington that close the loop by turning our waste into new materials.

NewWood™ is a 100 percent recycled composite construction material made from post-consumer and post-industrial plastic and wood waste. NewWood™ is waterproof, highly resistant to insects, and can be nailed and cut as easily as wood.



A cross section of NewWood™ shows the recycled wood and plastic fibers.

Some of the ingredients in NewWood™ travel a short distance to NewWood Manufacturing, Inc.'s plant in Elma, WA. Construction and demolition recyclers, like Recovery 1, Inc. in Tacoma, supply some of the wood waste.

Customers can purchase NewWood™ in retail outlets throughout Washington. Visit [www.NewWood.com](http://www.NewWood.com) for more information.

Renovators can replace old countertops and other surfaces with PaperStone®. Heat and pressure fuse the waste paper and petroleum-free resins in PaperStone® into a durable, non-porous surface. This heat and stain resistant product is made by Paneltech Products, Inc. in Hoquiam, WA. For more information, visit [www.paperstoneproducts.com](http://www.paperstoneproducts.com).

For more green building resources, visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning) and click the "Climate Change" link.

## Trash Flash

**Green your commute.** According to the Department of Ecology, car owners in Washington threw out five million car tires in 2008! Nearly one-third of those tires ended up in landfills or tire piles. Car batteries are toxic - each one contains one pound of sulfuric acid and 18 pounds of lead. Yikes! Check [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org) to find places to recycle these items.

▶ Want to prevent vehicle waste? Intercity Transit ([www.intercitytransit.com](http://www.intercitytransit.com)) can help you find an alternative to your daily commute. Cyclists in Thurston County are gearing up for the annual Bicycle Commuter Contest. Find info at [www.bccblog.com](http://www.bccblog.com) or call 705-5874.

## Local partners in green building

Thurston County Solid Waste is collaborating with the Olympia chapter of the Northwest EcoBuilding Guild to promote green building efforts. Green building techniques can reduce costs, save resources, and keep waste out of the landfill. Nearly 23 percent of waste disposed of in Thurston County is from construction and demolition activity.

The Code Innovation Database project will allow building officials and builders to share information about green design, techniques, and materials. Like any construction, green building approaches require permits and must meet building codes. Not all builders have the time and resources to research these approaches and apply for approval.

When builders put information about a successful project into the database, it can ease permitting for similar projects in other jurisdictions. The Code Innovation Database is a partnership between the guild and Thurston County's Resource Stewardship, Public Works, and Central Services departments.

Another project is the Sustainability Symposium Series. These eight interactive sessions will take place quarterly to offer education and discussion about green building topics. The series is a coordinated effort between the guild, Thurston County, Thurston Climate Action Team, and The Evergreen State College.

Find more information about these projects at [www.ecobuilding.org/guild-chapters/olympia](http://www.ecobuilding.org/guild-chapters/olympia). You can also contact Chris van Daalen of the EcoBuilding Guild at 789-9669 or [Cvan@TheVerdantGroup.com](mailto:Cvan@TheVerdantGroup.com).



## Trash Flash

**Tour local green buildings.** The new LEED-certified Hands On Children's Museum and other green buildings are part of the South Sound Green Tour. This free event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, April 21-22. For more information, visit [www.SouthSoundGreenTour.org](http://www.SouthSoundGreenTour.org).

## Special needs students learn skills and help their school prevent waste

This past November, Tenino High School went from throwing everything in the trash to recycling and composting throughout the school. By joining the Food to Flowers program, Tenino became one of only four high schools in the county to compost lunch waste. When the program launched, Tenino's Leadership class did a great job promoting the program and the entire school community was supportive. But even with a lot of initial support, the program needs daily attention.

That's where Tenino's Life Skills class comes in. Life Skills is for students between the ages of 12 and 21 with significant physical and mental challenges. In this class, students learn self-care and everyday skills like telling time, counting money, cooking, and job skills. When Food to Flowers began in November, the school was looking for new vocational opportunities for Life Skills students.



Life Skills students Ashley Pitman and Andres Farrias-Courts monitor the sort line during lunch.

Tenino High School Principal Brad Ramey says the Food to Flowers program helps the school meet an important need. By federal law, high schools must provide a youth transitions program for students that helps them develop job skills. "These students need to learn critical skills to be full participants in society after they leave school," says Ramey.

Life Skills students participate in Food to Flowers by collecting recycling from classrooms and hallways each day. During lunch, they monitor the sort lines and make sure their peers put everything in the correct bins. Life Skills teacher Jill Statler says her students' reaction to the program has been overwhelmingly positive. "It's all done on a voluntary basis, and all of the kids are volunteering," says Statler. "We now have to have a schedule of who's recycling when, and they are so excited to do it."

In helping with the Food to Flowers program, Life Skills students learn responsibility, what it means to be a good employee, and how to keep track of the hours they work on the job.

"They feel they are important and participating in the school community," Statler says. "They go home and they talk to their families about it, and it's just so important for them to have something to share."

To learn more about Food to Flowers, visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/FoodtoFlowers](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/FoodtoFlowers). You can also contact Peter Guttchen at [gutthcp@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:gutthcp@co.thurston.wa.us) or 709-3013.

## Trash Flash

**Get updated on Food to Flowers news and information.** Sign up for the Food to Flowers e-newsletter! Email Carrie Ziegler at [zieglec@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:zieglec@co.thurston.wa.us) to sign up now.

## New middle school presentations

Solid Waste offers three new classroom presentations for sixth through eighth grade students in Thurston County.

The Marketing to Teens lesson helps teenagers develop an awareness of marketing tactics by creating their own mock advertising campaigns.

In the Bottled Water Taste Test presentation, students conduct a blind taste test to see if they can tell the difference between bottled water and tap water.

The Battle to Ban the Bag lesson introduces students to the controversies revolving around solid waste. By assuming different roles, students present and debate their viewpoints regarding a potential plastic bag ban in their community.

## Trash Flash

**Need a fun and educational activity for summer camps, scouts, or YMCA groups?** We offer our hands-on presentations in the summer too! To schedule your kindergarten through eighth grade group, call Colleen Minion at 786-5269 or email [minionc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:minionc@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Food to Flowers spotlight: Tenino School District

Pizza crusts, apple cores, and napkins no longer go in the garbage at any of the four schools in the Tenino School District. Today, each of Tenino's 1,167 students participates in Food to Flowers, the lunchroom composting and recycling program.

This makes the Tenino School District the first kindergarten through twelfth grade school district in Thurston County to have each of its schools participating in Food to Flowers. The district is saving money, teaching students to make a positive impact on the world, and helping the environment.

To learn more about Food to Flowers, contact Peter Guttchen at 709-3013 or [gutthcp@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:gutthcp@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Activities for scouts

Attention troop leaders! Did you know that Thurston County Solid Waste has opportunities for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to earn patches, badges, pins, and service hours?

If your troop has an idea for a waste prevention or recycling project, we are happy to provide guidance. We also offer "learning by doing" activities where a whole troop can help educate the public to recycle and compost at public events.

We can also provide information and presentations on what you can recycle in your community, how you can recycle at home, and where Thurston County's garbage goes.

Troops interested in participating in a community service activity or scheduling a presentation should call Colleen Minion at 786-5269 or email [minionc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:minionc@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Trash Talk for students

Fourth and fifth grade students in Thurston County can get their own *Trash Talk* newsletters delivered to the classroom.

The quarterly newsletter is informative and offers word searches, crossword puzzles, and other games to make learning fun.

Students will learn about recycling, reuse, household hazardous waste, yard waste, waste prevention, and more.

To receive a **free** set of newsletters for your students along with a Teacher's Guide, contact Colleen Minion at [minionc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:minionc@co.thurston.wa.us) or 786-5269. Find an online version at [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Schools](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Schools).



## Olympia news

### City of Olympia residential and multifamily customers

Visit [www.olympiawa.gov/wastewise](http://www.olympiawa.gov/wastewise) to preview the revised 2012 accepted materials lists:

- Recycle
- Organics
- Garbage

Print a copy to hang on your refrigerator as a helpful reminder.

**Got plastics?** You should ONLY recycle the following: plastic bottles, jugs, dairy tubs, buckets, and rigid flower pots.

Please do not place any other shape or kind of plastic in your recycle cart. It cannot be effectively separated and contaminates the mix.

### Recycling presentations for neighborhood groups, apartment complexes and condominiums

Are you confused about what to recycle? Do you often wonder why we can't recycle everything? Our recycling talks are fun and encouraging. We'll speak to your group's specific needs or concerns.

Contact Ron Jones at 753-8509 or [rjones@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:rjones@ci.olympia.wa.us).

## Olympia Farmers Market reduces waste!

Over the past four years, the City of Olympia and the Olympia Farmers Market have worked together to divert organics (food waste, produce, and food-soiled paper) from the downtown Farmers Market for composting. These efforts are paying off.

In 2011, the market diverted roughly 16 tons of organics for composting and reduced onsite garbage by 6 tons from the previous year. Successful waste reduction and cost savings have been a community effort.



Thanks to the many restaurants, farmers, and vendors who divert organics for composting, and to the public who use the waste centers to separate their organics, recycling, and trash.

With your help, the Olympia Farmers Market staff maintain and empty containers. Friendly volunteers play a vital role in guiding and educating people at the waste centers, too.

If you would like to volunteer at the Farmer's Market Waste Center or learn more about commercial organics collection in the City of Olympia, contact Spencer Orman at 753-8752 or [sorman@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:sorman@ci.olympia.wa.us).

## Volunteers do more than sort recycling

The first Thurston County Master Recycler Composters (MRC) volunteer class graduated this past fall. Many MRC volunteers actively contribute at work, in schools, and in the community.



You can often find volunteers staffing the Thurston Solid Waste booth at community events. They are happy to answer your questions and guide you to composting and recycling resources.

MRC volunteers also hold free composting workshops in Olympia and Lacey. Visit <http://county.wsu.edu/thurston> and click the "Master Recycler Composters" link to see the workshop schedule.

Master Recycler Composters receive 30 hours of training and education from Thurston County. In return, they pledge to give at least 20 service hours to the community annually.

### Trash Flash

**Want regular updates from Thurston County Solid Waste?** Stay informed on the latest recycling and waste prevention news by signing up for one of our e-newsletters. We offer different topics tailored to your specific interests, including general waste news, news for businesses and organizations, and information regarding discussions about plastic bags. Visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org) to sign up now!

## Proper disposal of noxious weeds

Spring has sprung and noxious weeds are sprouting up everywhere. Before you uproot these yard invaders, make sure you know the rules for proper disposal.

You can dispose of most noxious weeds at the Waste and Recovery Center. However, you must dispose of them as garbage, not yard waste. There is a short list of noxious weeds that the WARC accepts free of charge from April 15 through August 31. You will have to pay the regular garbage rate to dispose of any noxious weeds not on this list.

There are some noxious weeds, like Japanese Knotweed, that you should never transport. Plants like these easily reproduce from even a small piece of root or stem. If you still want to cut down these weeds, stack the stalks onto boards. Use tarps to make sure they stay dry and don't touch the ground. You can assume they are dead when they turn completely brown and dry. You can then chop them up or let them decompose naturally.

### Trash Flash

**Follow outdoor burning rules.** Before you burn any yard debris, make sure you know the outdoor burning rules. Check with your local fire department to see if burning is allowed in your area, and get the proper permit. You are only allowed to burn natural vegetation – burning anything else is illegal. Never burn toxic plants or any plants that are still green. Visit [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Burn](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Burn) for more information.

They also commit to five hours of continuing education each year to keep their skills and knowledge sharp.

WSU Thurston County Extension's Master Composters combined forces with the Master Recyclers of Thurston County Solid Waste last year. Fifty-five volunteers take part in the merged program.

Training for the 2012 Master Recycler Composters class starts this fall. An application will be posted online in August. For more information, contact Cori Carlton at 867-2162 or [carltoc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:carltoc@co.thurston.wa.us). You can also visit <http://county.wsu.edu/thurston> and click the "Master Recycler Composters" link.

### Other volunteers

You don't have to be a Master Recycler Composter to volunteer with Thurston County Solid Waste. We offer internships, help with senior culminating projects, and regular or one-time volunteer opportunities.

For more information about volunteering, call Brian Stafki at 709-3053 or email [stafkib@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:stafkib@co.thurston.wa.us).

### Free WARC disposal Apr. 15 - Aug. 31, 2012

- Tansy Ragwort
- Poison Hemlock
- Common Fennel
- Wild Chervil
- Butterfly Bush
- Spurge Laurel
- Gorse
- Orange Hawkweed
- Meadow, Spotted, and Diffuse Knapweeds

# Health Matters

News from Thurston County Environmental Health  
[www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm)



## New life for used cooking oil

Thurston County residents can recycle used cooking oil for **free** at HazoHouse! Please strain your oil through a coffee filter or cheese cloth to remove food solids. General Biodiesel of Seattle refines your cooking oil into biofuel and distributes the product regionally.

If you have less than two quarts of cooled oil or grease drippings, place it in a sturdy, sealable container and throw it in your trash. Please do not put used cooking oil in the used motor oil collection tanks at HazoHouse. Businesses should use a collection service for used cooking oil. Call 867-2578 for information about service providers.

## Schedule a free Healthy Home visit now!

Concerned about frequent asthma attacks? Worried about that musty smell or mold growth? You might benefit from a Healthy Home visit!

Our Healthy Homes volunteers are available for Healthy Home visits to homes and child care settings. The visits take about an hour and a half and start with a series of questions. You and the volunteers will walk through the home together to identify areas of concern. At the end of the visit, you will have identified your highest priorities for taking action.

For more information or to schedule a Healthy Home visit, call 867-2674 or email [healthyhomes@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:healthyhomes@co.thurston.wa.us).

## Thurston County drinking water

Thurston County's drinking water comes from groundwater, which begins as rain falling on our yards! This area has many shallow aquifers, as well as sandy, gravelly soils. This combination leaves our drinking water vulnerable to contamination.

Nitrates are common groundwater contaminants in Thurston County. These can come from septic systems, animal waste, and fertilizers. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause health problems called methemoglobinemia or "blue-baby syndrome" in infants. There is an increased risk for miscarriages in people who regularly drink nitrate-contaminated water.

Follow these steps to reduce the risk of nitrate contamination:

- Maintain and regularly pump septic systems.
- Keep livestock waste covered.
- Use slow-release fertilizers at or below recommended rates.

## Tips for safe spring cleaning

Before you start spring cleaning, be aware that many household cleaners require caution during use, storage, and disposal. Follow these rules for your health and safety.

**Don't mix bleach or bleach products with other cleaners.** Many of us know not to combine bleach and ammonia. But, did you know that bleach shouldn't be mixed with acids, including vinegar? Bleach also reacts with oven, drain, and toilet bowl cleaners, hydrogen peroxide, and some insecticides.

**Use products as directed.** Follow label instructions and wear the suggested protective clothing (gloves, eye protection, etc.). Don't mix similar products with different brand names or different forms of the same product – different active ingredients can react when combined. For example, don't use crystal and liquid drain openers at the same time (or follow one with another). Similarly, don't use two liquid drain openers together.

**Keep products in original, labeled containers.** Containers can deteriorate. Check them for cracks or leaks and make sure that lids are tight. Placing products in plastic tubs prevents mixing if containers leak.

**Never store acids, bases, oxidizers, or flammable liquids together.** Most households don't require strong acids or bases, although some homeowners may have some that they aren't aware of.

## Revive your spring lawn

All of that snow, rain, and yes, patchy sun have triggered hearty grass growth. It's not exactly lush green, nor is it weed-free. Follow these steps to achieve the healthy green play area of your dreams.

- 1. Start with a soil test to determine fertilizer needs.** The Thurston Conservation District offers soil tests for \$25. Test instructions can be found at [www.thurstoncd.com](http://www.thurstoncd.com).
- 2. Choose a slow-release, organic fertilizer.** Soil temperatures warm up and microbes become active in early May, so wait until then to fertilize. To tell if a fertilizer is slow-release, look at the label. The amount of water-insoluble nitrogen should be at least half the total amount of nitrogen. So, if the fertilizer contains 8 percent total nitrogen, water-insoluble nitrogen should be at least 4 percent. Slow-release fertilizers last longer, providing food for many months. They also minimize harmful runoff and leaching into lakes, rivers, Puget Sound, and our groundwater.

Many chemical drain openers contain a strong base, while others contain a very strong acid. Homes with pools or spas often have products to raise (bases) or lower (acids) pH levels, increase ozone (hydrogen peroxide), or sanitize (bromine or chlorine). Store acids, bases, and peroxides (and oxidizers) separately, away from flammable liquids and combustible materials (paper, cardboard, wood, etc.).

**Store products by hazard class.** Words like "flammable," "corrosive," "caustic," "reactive," or "explosive" indicate a product's hazards. Store flammable products together, away from corrosive products. Be sure that liquids won't spill onto incompatible chemicals (don't store acids on a shelf above bases). If a product only has the word "poison," store it securely away from children.

**Dispose of unwanted chemicals at HazoHouse.** Residents can safely dispose of household hazardous products for free at HazoHouse (hours and location on the back page). Transport materials in leak-proof tubs according to their hazard class. Questions? Call the Hazardous Waste hotline at 867-2664 for more information.



Visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg) to see our *Fertilizer Common Sense Gardening Guide*.

- 3. Choose a fertilizer without weed or bug killers.** Instead, pick something to address specific lawn problems, and apply it only where needed. *Grow Smart, Grow Safe* is a guide that helps you choose safer lawn care products. Find the guide online at [www.growSMARTgrowsafe.org](http://www.growSMARTgrowsafe.org) or call 867-2674 to have it sent to you. Thurston County's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program also provides prescriptions for common home and garden nuisances from bracken fern to yellow jackets. These are available at local gardening centers or online at [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehipm/homeowner\\_prescrp.html](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehipm/homeowner_prescrp.html).
- 4. Aerate every year or so.** This will break up compacted soil and help water, air, and nutrients get to the roots of the grass.
- 5. After aeration, add compost and over seed with a Pacific Northwest lawn blend.**
- 6. Water only 1 inch per week.** Over-watering and over-fertilizing can lead to weeds and disease.

Visit [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg) or call us at 867-2674 for more lawn care ideas!

# 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](mailto:ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us)

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

Website:  
[www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org)  
[www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://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](mailto:cust2183@wcnx.org)  
. . . . . 923-0111
- Joe's Refuse. . . . . [cust2188@wcnx.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://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

Solid and Hazardous Waste section: 867-2664

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

Hazardous waste web:  
[www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw)

Integrated Pest Management web:  
[www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehipm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehipm)

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)

Address: 412 Lilly Rd NE, Olympia, WA 98506

## Compost bin sales

The Thurston County Master Gardener Foundation sells compost bins at reduced prices. Visit [www.compostbinthurstoncounty.com](http://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.

### 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 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: <http://seattle.craigslist.org/oly>
- FreeCycle: [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

## Where Do I Take My...?

Thurston County maintains a database of locations where residents can reuse and recycle many items. Visit [www.WhereDoITakeMy.org](http://www.WhereDoITakeMy.org). Are we missing any locations? Call 867-2491 or email [ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:ThurstonSolidWaste@co.thurston.wa.us).

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## Recycle drop-off bins

### Recycling drop-off locations:

Lacey: Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center (WARC), 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.

### 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.