

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department
828-250-5460
Summer 2005



Time to pull the plug on an old appliance? Tires ready for retirement? Recycle them!

Large home appliances, often called “white goods,” and tires are problem wastes, but they don’t need to be—because they are readily recyclable. Appliances and tires can be recycled at the Buncombe County Landfill, which is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (See Page 4 for map, directions, and other details.)

Appliances are accepted at no charge. Residents may drop off up to 10 tires a year for free, if the tires are off the rims. Tires on rims are \$2 each. Tires larger than automobile tires are \$2 each. Businesses will also be charged \$2 each unless they have a special disposal form (E500G Tax Disposal Form) issued by the State. (No tires are accepted from commercial haulers after 3 p.m. on weekdays, on Saturdays, or on holidays.)

Appliances

Each year, we recycle 1,000 tons of appliances in Buncombe County!

White goods, such as refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers, and dishwashers, don’t live to be very old. Most of them have useful lives of 10 to 15 years.

Appliances are made of many parts, but the largest is steel. Because this steel can be recycled and turned into everything from new appliances to new cars, about 85 percent of old appliances are recycled.



Tires

Annually, we recycle 3,345 tons of tires in Buncombe County.

Once the tire is worn out, 20 to 30 pounds of rubber, steel, and fabric become scrap. Each year, Americans discard one scrap tire for every person, just over 281 million tires. About 90 percent of these tires come from the cars, vans, pickup trucks, and sport-utility vehicles that families use to drive to work and school.

Currently, about 77 percent, or 218



million tires per year, are recovered for reuse, energy recovery, or recycling. The list of products made from recycled tires includes 110 items and is growing! One of the hottest new uses for recycled tires is playground cover. In fact, your children may already play on this super-safe surface at a school playground or favorite park.

Unfortunately, as many as 300 million scrap tires may be sitting in illegal tire piles. In these piles, tires collect water, providing an attractive home for mosquitoes and rodents. If tire piles are accidentally set on fire, the tires burn for a long time, releasing heavy black smoke and leaving an oily film behind on the soil.



Give your motor oil a second chance

If used motor oil ends up on the ground or, worse, down storm drains, it works its way into our ground and surface waters, causing serious pollution. A single gallon of used motor oil is capable of contaminating 1 million gallons of fresh drinking water. By recycling your used motor oil, you not only preserve a reusable resource, you also protect our water supplies.

Motor oil is easy to recycle. When you change your vehicle’s oil, drain the



used motor oil into a clean container, seal the container well with a lid, and bring it to the Buncombe County Landfill, which is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (See Page 4 for map, directions, and other details.)

Be sure that your used motor oil is not mixed with other substances, such as antifreeze, solvents, gasoline, or water.

Out of gas?

Some empty gas grill tanks cannot be refilled. If you have an old, empty propane tank from a gas grill, recycle it at the Buncombe County Landfill. We are ONLY accepting propane tanks from gas grills (20-pound size).



Important Phone Numbers for County Residents		
CLIP & SAVE	Junk Motor Vehicle Officer — Roger Presley	828-250-5470
	Environmental Control Officer — Rick Ramsey	828-250-5471
	Environmental Control Officer — Jane Cole	828-250-5472
	Environmental Manager — Denese Ballew	828-250-5425
	Buncombe County Landfill	828-645-5311
	Buncombe County Transfer Station	828-250-6205

10 tips for summer shopping



Whether you're getting ready for school yourself, getting someone else ready for school, or just taking care of your own end-of-summer shopping, there are ways that you can reduce your waste, improve our environment, and save money, too.

1. Before you shop, plan ahead. Evaluate what you already have on hand and make a list of what you really need.
2. Reuse. Did you know that if you washed and reused zipper plastic bags 50 times you would keep 1,500 bags from being disposed—and save at least \$150 per box of 30 bags? Look through your own closets and shelves for forgotten tote bags, backpacks, lunch boxes, and refillable containers. Need organizers? Use old shoe boxes or shipping boxes that you already have around the house. Reuse is also a lot less stressful than hitting the stores.
3. Shop reused first. Look for used items through online services such as www.freecycle.org, at garage sales, or at resale shops. You can find clothes, shoes, appliances, books, toys, games, office supplies, and household goods.
4. Select recycled-content paper. Each back-to-school season, Americans purchase about 3.4 million tons of printing and writing papers. Every ton of 100-percent, post-consumer, recycled-content paper saves 24 trees and 4,100 kilowatt hours of electricity!
5. Look for other recycled-content products, too. You should be able to find pens, pencils, scissors, rulers, file folders, binders, storage containers, and jewelry. If you don't, tell the store manager that you want them. The store may be able to order them for you now or stock them in the future.
6. Purchase refilled or remanufactured

ink jet cartridges for your printers. Or, buy a refilling kit and do it yourself.

7. Enjoy cool recycled accessories, such as folders made from old maps, clipboards made from old computer parts, and more. Look for these at department and specialty stores. Or, shop online.
8. Shop for food and flowers at Farmers Markets. Not only do these markets support local farmers, they also provide fresh food without the extra transportation or excess packaging. Wouldn't it be nice to enjoy fruits and vegetables without throwing away a lot of plastic bags and containers? For more information about Farmers Markets or to locate them here or as you travel, go to www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/.
9. Develop your own sense of style. Surround yourself with items that you find comfortable and comforting. You'll probably find that you are less tempted to replace what you have to buy something "trendy."
10. Avoid buying collectibles that are here today but "so yesterday" tomorrow. In 1999, 250 million Star Wars action figures were sold, weighing about 5,700 tons. If you aren't a collector, stay away from unneeded souvenirs.

On Earth Day, Consumer Reports, a nationwide consumer-product testing and rating organization, launched a new website aimed at "green consumers." The site features environmental evaluations of various products, making the point that often those products that are better for the environment will also protect public health and save money. To learn more about becoming a greener consumer, visit www.greenerchoices.org.

The Center for a New American Dream also offers advice to consumers. For more information, go to www.newdream.org. You'll find great information under "Buy Wisely" and "Make a Difference."

How well do you know your hauler?

During February, NBC "Today Show" co-host Matt Lauer moonlighted as one of the guys in green—a New York City Department of Sanitation crew member. After Lauer's day-long gig, he encouraged people to practice kindness toward sanitation workers, who are doing a job that needs to be done.

Another New Yorker, anthropology professor Robin Nagle, also moonlighted for the Sanitation Department. Nagle, who teaches the course "Garbage in Gotham: The Anthropology of Trash" at New York University, wanted to find out firsthand what life is like on the streets for the city's sanitation crews. She spent three weeks as part of a crew and chronicled her experiences in an online diary at Slate magazine (slate.msn.com/id/2106849/entry/2107445/) or go to www.slate.com and search for "Nagle". A book-length account, *We All Wear Green: Loading Out with Sanitation Workers in New York*, will be published in 2006.

Practice kindness toward your haulers. Follow setout guidelines. Don't zoom around slow or stopped trucks. Give them room to do their jobs. They are

doing work that we need to have done. And if you get the chance, say "thank you."



Bag, borrow or steal



A new Internet service can deliver hip and trendy handbags to your door—and take them back when you tire of them. "Bag Borrow Or Steal" is a monthly membership service for designer handbags. You select your desired level of service, depending on which designers interest you and whether you want to borrow one or two bags at a time. Then, you select the bag you want to borrow and it is shipped to you. You use it until you are tired of it and want a new one. Then you send it back and your next choice is shipped to you. It's a "Netflix" for handbags!

If you decide that one of your borrowed bags is a keeper, you can buy it by selecting the "Steal It" option and receiving a price quotation.

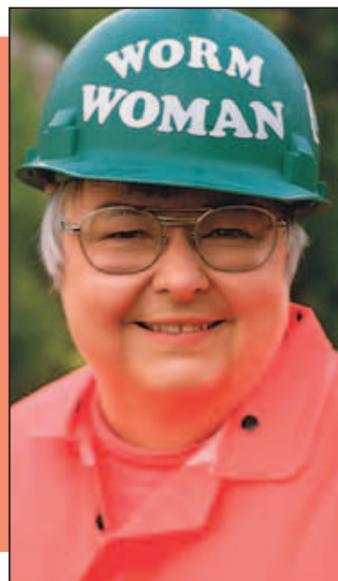
For more information, visit www.BagBorrowOrSteal.com.

QUOTES REQUOTED

I realized then and there that no matter how many worms I raised, or was responsible for other people raising, the earth could only be better off. I was going to restore and replenish rather than destroy and exploit the earth.

You, too, can vermicompost. This simple process with the funny name is a lot easier to do than you thought. After all, if worms eat my garbage, they will eat yours, too.

Mary Appelhof, the "Worm Woman" Author of *Worms Eat My Garbage* and champion of vermicomposting 1936 - 2005



Recycling aids tsunami recovery efforts

The tsunami that hit the Indian Ocean last winter left behind huge quantities of debris. In Banda Aceh, which is located in Indonesia and was one of the hardest hit cities, the tsunami left behind as much as 13 million cubic yards of debris, enough to fill three football fields to a height of three stories.

To deal with this debris, provide employment for those who were made jobless by the tsunami, and capture usable resources, the United Nations Development Programme announced in February that as many as 1,000 people in Banda Aceh, and eventually up to 30,000 in all tsunami-damaged areas, would be employed in waste recovery efforts.

The recovered materials will be sorted

to be sold for recycling (plastic and metal), used as compost for land regeneration (organic waste), turned into fill for eroded areas (dirt, crushed concrete, and stone), or utilized in the construction of temporary and permanent housing (bricks and wood). The initial sorting will be done by hand, pulling out the reusable and recyclable materials. After that, heavy equipment will be used to crush concrete and stone or chip wood.

In addition to providing a fair wage, vaccinations, appropriate clothing, and health and safety training, this recovery effort also allows residents to participate in a positive and constructive way in rebuilding their homes, businesses, communities, and lives.

Engineers give best grade to solid waste

Every few years, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) issues a "Report Card for America's Infrastructure." The 2005 report card gave America's infrastructure an overall grade of D, but Solid Waste received a C+—the best grade given in this year's report. In addition to solid waste, infrastructure evaluated by ASCE included transportation, water systems, energy, schools, and parks. ASCE



looks at a variety of factors, including condition, capacity, funding, and outlook.

Since the first report card was issued in 1988, Solid Waste has raised its grade from C- to C+, largely because the system for reducing, recycling, composting, and disposing of trash has improved, resulting in a dramatically increased national recycling rate which places less long-term demand on disposal facilities.

The Soggy Lettuce Report

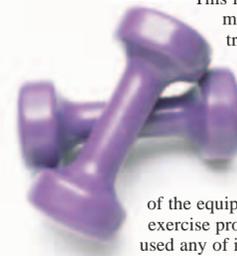
Waste professionals aren't the only people taking a good look at trash. During April 2004, Prudential (yes...the financial services giant) interviewed more than 1,000 adults in Great Britain about their trash. What did they find? The average British adult wastes the equivalent of about \$3,150 on food, luxury items, entertainment, travel, gadgets, and hobbies. This amount would pay off the annual average credit card debt and leave money left over for investment. According to the report, "In short our wastefulness prevents us from getting ahead."

This is not to suggest that all money spent on hobbies, travel, or other items that made the list is wasted or wasteful. Instead the survey focused on items that went unused or underused. For instance, many respondents had purchased all of the equipment to begin a hobby or exercise program and then never used any of it. Plus, they admitted to

owning unread books, unwatched movies, ordering drinks they didn't finish at restaurants, buying new passes to venues because previously purchased ones had been left at home, and even failing to use plane tickets. A few honest souls confessed to hiding purchases from family members and friends—and never using the items at all. While many of these items were eventually donated to be used by someone else, the money spent on them had been wasted by the original buyer.

More money is wasted on food than any other category. A third of the respondents reported throwing away food regularly, including frozen foods too old to eat and restaurant leftovers taken home but not eaten. The item most likely to be discarded each week? Lettuce.

To read the full report, go to www.pru.co.uk/include/userinclude/pdf/presscenter/soggy_lettuce_report.pdf.



Princely paper for Potter

Bloomsbury, the British publisher of J.K. Rowling's newest installment in the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, will be printing all of the United Kingdom editions on 30-percent Forest Stewardship Council Certified Paper. This certification guarantees that paper was not made from the trees of ancient forests. Last year, Bloomsbury printed the UK paperback editions of the previous book, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, on 10 and 20 percent recycled-content paper.

The Canadian publisher, Raincoast Books, printed the last book on post-consumer, recycled-content, ancient forest friendly paper. The new book will be printed on the same type of paper.

Scholastic, the U.S. publisher, is also printing on paper that is free of fiber from ancient forests.



Did you know that there are 106.5 million acres of wilderness preserved in the United States? This includes 677 National Wilderness Preservation Areas in 44 states. These areas, along with our state and national parks, provide wild places where we can be reminded of our connection to the wonders of nature.

Visiting a wild place might be a good way to finish off your summer. If you go, remember to think about your energy use and transportation emissions. For instance, a car full of people gets more miles per gallon per person. If you're traveling a long distance with a small number of people, a train or plane may be a lower-impact option. At your destination, walk, hike, and bike as much as possible.

Although the places that you'll visit are wild, they aren't wild about trash. Whatever you carry in with you should be placed in an appropriate recycling bin or trash can. In some locations, you'll be asked to carry your own recyclables and waste out of the park or wilderness area. Place trash only in properly designated bins. If you don't find recycling bins while you're traveling, bring your recyclables home—we'd love to have them!

Learn more about wilderness areas and our national parks!

www.wilderness.net
www.wildernesswatch.org
www.nps.gov
www.leaveonotrace.org

"Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed."

Wallace Stegner, 1909-1993

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Wilderness Act, 1964

Travel with reusable mugs and cups. Even if no discount is offered for the refill of your own container, you'll still be reducing your waste. Take along a canvas bag or two to carry your purchases and say "no thanks" to plastic and paper store bags. Keep an old towel in your car or bag to clean up spills.

Don't take papers that you don't need or won't read. How many times have you arrived home with a fistful of untouched brochures? Did you ever go back and read them? Take only the brochures and flyers that you will need. If you don't want to keep them, return them to the information desk for another visitor at the end of your visit.

Remember—take only photos and leave behind only footprints.

WHAT'S UP?

In April, we sponsored a Mercury Thermometer Exchange Project. During the three-week collection period, 75 people exchanged thermometers at the booth at Asheville Earth Day or Greenlife Grocery, and 357 people delivered thermometers and other items at the RiverLink offices. They dropped off all of these mercury-containing items:

- 752 thermometers
- One 10-pound bottle of mercury
- Four 1-pound bottles of mercury
- One DustBuster that had been used to clean up spilled mercury
- One barometer
- Several outdoor temperature gauges

Each resident who dropped off a thermometer or other mercury-containing device was given a free, digital thermometer.

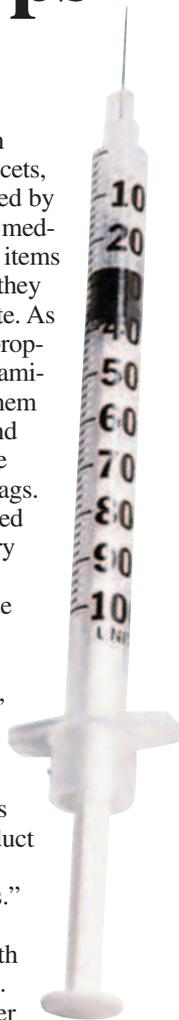
Our goal was to get mercury fever thermometers out of homes where a broken thermometer can pollute indoor air and create health risks for residents.

Be "sharps" smart

Each year, more than 2 billion syringes, pen needles, and lancets, referred to as "sharps," are used by people for their own in-home medical care. Because all of these items have had contact with blood, they are considered infectious waste. As such, if they are disposed improperly, they can potentially contaminate children who may take them from the trash or collection and landfill employees who can be stuck when sharps puncture bags. In either case, contact with used sharps creates the risk of injury and illness.

If you use sharps at home for your own medical care, place the sharps in puncture-resistant containers. (Opaque, plastic detergent containers work best, but plastic pop bottles and milk jugs with a twist cap or metal coffee cans with the lid reinforced with duct tape will also be accepted.) Label your container "Sharps." When the container is full, secure the twist cap or lid with heavy tape, such as duct tape. Then, deliver it to the Transfer Station, which is located on Brevard Road. For directions and hours, see above.

For more information about sharps, go to www.safeneedledisposal.org.



Transfer Station offers nearby recycling

The Transfer Station, which is located on Brevard Road, is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

During all open hours, residents can drop off these recyclables at no charge:

- Lead-acid batteries
- Newspaper and brown paper bags
- Corrugated cardboard
- "Blue Bag" or commingled recyclable

containers, including #1 & #2 plastic; aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass; and steel cans

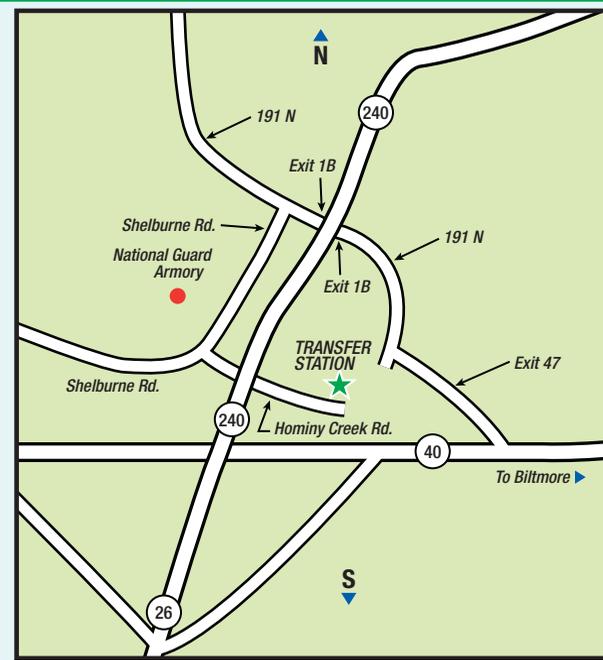
We also accept reusable corrugated cardboard moving boxes and shipping cartons. Please break down and flatten the boxes for storage.

Plus, you can drop off "sharps," such as needles and lancets, used at home for personal medical care.

Directions to the Transfer Station:

From I-240, take exit 1B (Brevard Road/Hwy. 191). At the traffic light, take Highway 191 North. Turn left onto Shelburne Road. Turn left onto Hominy Creek Road. The Transfer Station will be on the left.

From I-40, take exit 47 (Brevard Road/Hwy. 191). At the traffic light, take Highway 191 North. After crossing I-240, turn left onto Shelburne Road. Turn left onto Hominy Creek Road. The Transfer Station will be on the left.



Landfill offers drop-off for residents' trash, recyclables, and more

You can drop off all of these items for recycling at the Buncombe County Landfill at no charge:

- Lead-acid batteries
- Newspaper and brown paper bags
- Corrugated cardboard
- Commingled recyclable containers, including #1 & #2 plastic (milk jugs, soft drink bottles, laundry detergent jugs); aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass bottles and jars; and steel cans
- Motor oils

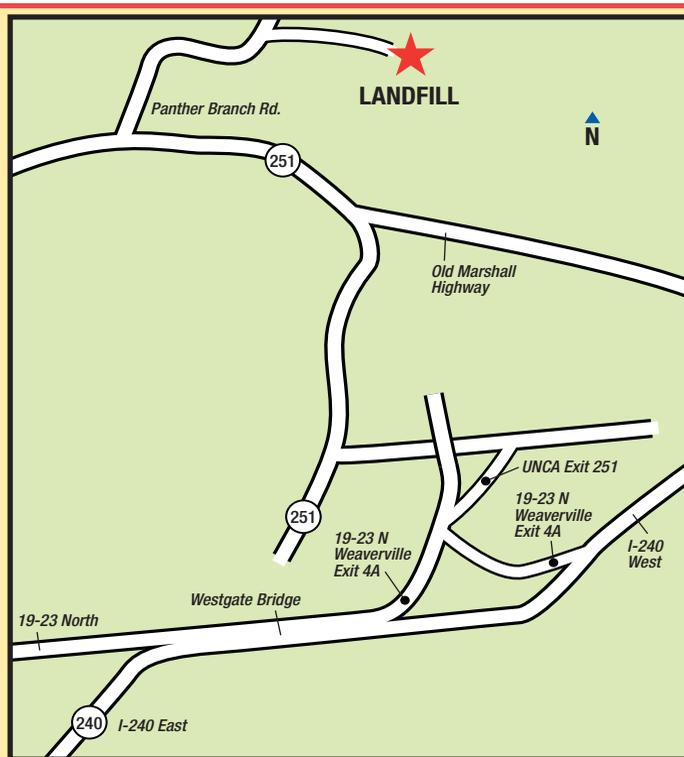
- Tires
- White goods, including stoves, refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, and all metals
- Empty, triple-rinsed pesticide containers
- Empty propane tanks (20-pound, gas grill type ONLY)

You can drop off household trash at the Landfill. There is a fee to dispose of trash.

The Landfill is open to accept trash and recyclables Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Directions to the Buncombe County Landfill:

From I-240 East or West, take Exit 4A to 19/23 North. Travel 1 mile and then take UNC-A exit. At the end of the exit, turn left. Go to traffic light and turn right onto 251 North. Continue on 251 North for 9 miles to Panther Branch Road. Turn right onto Panther Branch Road and travel 1/10 of a mile to the Buncombe County Landfill, which is located on the right. The new landfill is 6 miles north of the old landfill.



HHW and e-waste accepted weekly

Buncombe County accepts household hazardous waste (HHW) and electronics every Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at a special drop-off area at the Landfill (see map).

Each week, we accept electronics from residents at no charge. Businesses will also be able to drop off electronics, but they will be charged a fee of 60 cents per pound.

HHW is accepted for \$2 per gallon for paint-related material, such as paint thinner, kerosene, gasoline, and paint. Other materials, such as lawn and garden chemicals, are accepted at no charge.

For more information, call 250-5460 or the Landfill at 645-5311.



We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

We are also available to speak to your club or class about solid waste, waste reduction, recycling and composting.

Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

2229 Riverside Drive
Asheville, NC 28804
828-250-5460

Web: buncombecounty.org

Copyright© 2005

Buncombe County and Eco Partners, Inc. All rights reserved.



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER
70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS CONTENT, USING SOY INKS