

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

828-250-5460

Spring 2006



Breathing better air

In January, the Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency recognized local leaders for their outstanding efforts to improve air quality throughout the region. These nine businesses and agencies were honored for having gone well beyond the minimum that is required to meet air quality rules and regulations, significantly reducing local air pollution.

Those recognized were Alcan Packaging, Blue Ridge Biofuels, Buncombe County General Services Department, City of Asheville, Metropolitan Sewerage District of Buncombe County, Progress Energy Carolinas, Shorewood Packaging Corporation, Volvo Construction Equipment Group, and Warren Wilson College.

We here in Buncombe County government were especially pleased that the Buncombe County General Services Department was recognized. As we

reported in our last newsletter, the department recently built a biodiesel fueling center at the transfer station and began using biodiesel in all County ambulances, as well as in the transfer station fleet. The program will be expanding soon to include the landfill off-road fleet.

In addition, the General Services Department made improvements to roadways at the landfill to reduce dust emissions and has been researching ways to further reduce dust emissions from off-road equipment.

Buncombe County Government was also a partner in the project for which the City of Asheville was recognized. The City, County, and Mission Hospitals worked together to open our community's first public compressed natural gas (CNG) station. With the opening of this fueling station, people can now travel in clean-burning CNG vehicles from the Carolina coast into Tennessee with fuel available

all along the way.

The Metropolitan Sewerage District of Buncombe County, which converted its fleet to biodiesel fuel in 2003, now operates over 65 vehicles and other smaller equipment exclusively on biodiesel.

We extend our thanks and congratulations to the businesses and college that were recognized for their outstanding efforts. Working together, we are reducing air pollution in our region.

For more information about air quality and air pollution in Western North Carolina, go to www.wncair.org.



Buncombe County was recognized as an air quality leader largely as a result of this new biodiesel fueling center.

Spring cleaning for the streets!

Clean your own corner of Buncombe County on Saturday, April 8

Quality Forward, the local affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, has been working to keep Buncombe County clean and green since 1974. This year will be no different. On Saturday, April 8, Quality Forward is inviting residents to come out and enjoy the spring weather at the 2006 Great Asheville/Buncombe Cleanup.

Volunteers will meet at 9 a.m. on April 8th at any of these Bojangles locations:

- **Central/West**
974 Patton Avenue
253-7858
- **Central/North**
99 Merrimon Avenue
252-2777
- **Skyland**
2000 Hendersonville Road
687-0740



- **Weaverville**
164 Weaver Road
645-7662
- **Candler**
1507 Smoky Park Highway
670-6829
- **Oteen**
1338 Tunnel Road
298-6001

Quality Forward will provide you with bags, gloves, and safety vests and point you in the direction of an area in need of a good cleanup. Or, if you know of a spot in your neighborhood that needs work, stop by for supplies and mobilize your neighbors to pick it up.

For more information, contact Leslie Huntley at 254-1776.

Recycling is great for your grass, too!

Recycling isn't just for bottles and cans! You can also recycle your grass clippings, but you don't have to rinse them and carry them to the curb!

When you mow, just let your clippings drop back onto the lawn instead of bagging them. You can do this by using a mulching mower or by taking the bagger attachment off your regular mower. If you remove the bagger, be sure to insert the "chute cover," the safety device that covers the hole where the bagger would go.

During the spring growing season, you may have to mow a bit more often. However, each time you mow, it will take about 1/3 less time.

Grass clippings are mostly made up of water and nitrogen, so they are good for your lawn. In addition, clippings also serve as "mulch" for your grass, reducing evaporation and lowering the soil temperature.

Grasscycling reduces our need for

landfill space. During the growing season, as much as 20 percent of our household waste might be yard trimmings. Don't put your yard trimmings to waste this year! Grasscycle. You'll save bags and time—and have a healthier lawn to show for it.

Yard wastes, including grass clippings, are accepted at the Buncombe County Landfill. There is a \$20 per ton disposal fee, with a \$10 minimum charge per visit.

HHW and E-Waste accepted weekly

Buncombe County accepts household hazardous waste (HHW) and electronics (e-waste) every Friday, except holidays, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at a special drop-off area at the Landfill (see map on Page 4). Please make a note that no collection will be held on Friday, April 14, which is the Good Friday holiday.

Each week, we accept e-waste from residents at no charge. E-waste includes computers, televisions, and related equipment, as well as cell phones. Businesses may also drop off electronics, but they

will be charged a fee of 30 cents per pound.

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

Proof of residency, such as a driver's license or current utility bill, may be requested. For more information, call 250-5460 or the Landfill at 645-5311.

Important Phone Numbers for County Residents

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
Hazardous Waste Officer — Denese Ballew	828-250-5425
Buncombe County Landfill	828-645-5311
Buncombe County Transfer Station	828-250-6205

CLIP & SAVE

10 Tips for a better Earth Day and a better year for the Earth

On April 22, 1970, school children, college students, parents, business people, elected officials, and more came together in the largest demonstration ever held in America—Earth Day. The brain-child of Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, Earth Day was planned as a “teach-in” about the environment for members of the U.S. Congress.

However, word spread. By Earth Day, 20 million Americans joined together in our nation’s capitol, at city halls and county courthouses, and in their own neighborhoods to say, “Let’s do something to clean up pollution!” Some 20 years later, American Heritage Magazine referred to the first Earth Day as “one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of democracy.”

Earth Day didn’t stop on April 22, 1970. In the years that followed, government, business, and private citizens worked together to clean up our air, land, and water. What we learned on Earth Day is that one day isn’t enough—it takes a long-term commitment to make our world a more livable place.

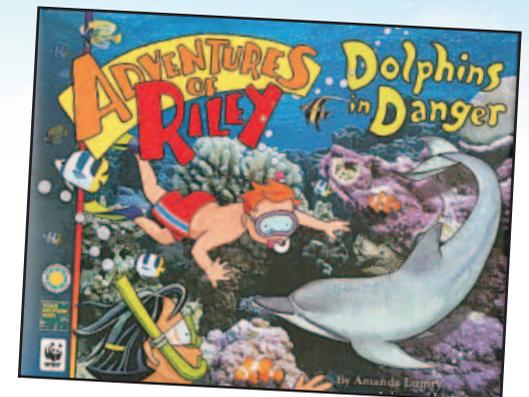
This Earth Day, recommit yourself to actions that will make our communities and our planet more pleasant places for all of us to live, work, and play. Here are some of the ways you can make it a better year:

1. Know more about what is happening in our community. Read the paper (and our newsletter, of course!). Listen to local news on the radio or TV. Use the Internet to find local events. Attend public meetings. Whenever you get the chance to vote, do it.
2. Take walks and get to know our community. While you’re out, pick up litter that you see. If your dog joins you, be sure to pick up after your canine companion. Your dog wants to be a good neighbor, too!
3. Volunteer outdoors. You might mow the lawn for an elderly neighbor. You might pick up litter at a park or playground. You could help out at a local event. Get outside and enjoy our natural world.
4. Reduce, reuse, and recycle! Eliminate waste by buying less stuff that you don’t really need. Avoid excessively packaged items. Say “no thanks” to store bags whenever possible. Carry your own refillable coffee mug. Use your stuff until it wears out.



Buy used items. Sell or donate usable stuff that you no longer need. Know what, where, and how to recycle.

5. Waste less food. Plan meals so that less moldy or spoiled food has to be thrown away. Finish the leftovers. Don’t buy ingredients that will sit unused on your kitchen shelves.
6. Electronics surround us. Keep yours in business as long as possible. Don’t purchase new items on the spur-of-the-moment. Take a good long look at your needs and evaluate your options before making your selection. Then maintain your equipment carefully. Follow instructions for cleaning and battery care. To keep your equipment in use as long as possible, update software and services, upgrade memory, or add accessories, as needed. And remember to look for energy-efficient equipment by seeking items with the “Energy Star” certification.
7. Become a greener gardener. Smaller grass lawn areas mean lower water bills, decreased maintenance, and less waste. Replace lawn by planting more trees, native or low-water-using plant materials, and ground covers. Reduce your use of chemicals by fertilizing only when your plants and soil really need the boost and by learning to use “Integrated Pest Management” to control weeds and bugs. (Reducing your purchase and use of chemicals can also reduce the amount of hazardous waste that you need to dispose.) Mulch and compost.
8. Learn more about the world in which we live. Take a close look at the non-fiction videos at the library. Read a book about science or nature, plants or animals, politics or policy. Remember *National Geographic Magazine*? It still publishes great articles about our world and the people, plants, and animals that populate it. Plus, the photography is better than ever. Pick up a copy at the library, a newsstand, or a used bookstore.



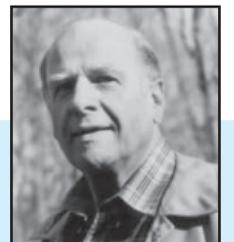
9. Touch the future—teach a child. Author Amanda Lumry is writing a series of books for children in kindergarten through third grade. This series, *The Adventures of Riley*, combines stories about Riley and his family with facts and photos about the real places featured in each story. By learning about these places, children learn about the plants, animals, and peoples who live there. So far, five *Adventures* have been published and 10 more are planned.
10. Don’t keep your Earth Day commitments a secret. Tell your friends and family about your new habits.

What is Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated pest management (IPM) starts with knowing your plants and their pests. This means regular monitoring and good record-keeping to determine if and when action is needed. When pests are present in numbers that could result in damage to plants, a variety of methods are used, beginning with those that are most benign and least expensive. With IPM, chemical pesticides are a last resort.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/ or www.epa.gov/pesticides/food/ipm.htm.

QUOTES REQUOTED



“Earth Day worked because of the spontaneous response at the grassroots level. We had neither the time nor resources to organize 20 million demonstrators and the thousands of schools and local communities that participated. That was the remarkable thing about Earth Day. It organized itself.”

Gaylord Nelson, 1916–2005
Founder of “Earth Day”

Think about it!

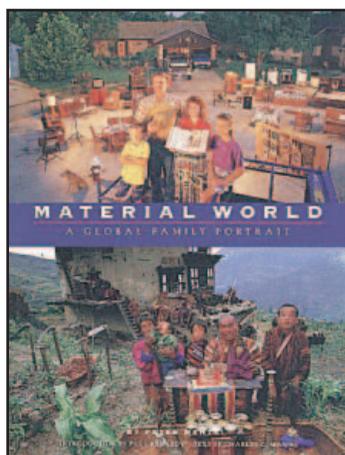
A disposable, carry-out coffee cup weighs about one ounce. If you drink two carry-out coffees every day, each week, all year long, you throw away 728 ounces of coffee cups—that’s 45.5 pounds of trash!



We're living in a material world

What if you took all of your possessions and put them into your front yard? That's the question photographer Peter Menzel asked himself. It's also the question which sent him to 30 different countries to meet and photograph one "average family." The result of this search was the book, *Material World: A Global Family Portrait* by Peter Menzel and Charles C. Mann, which was originally published in 1994.

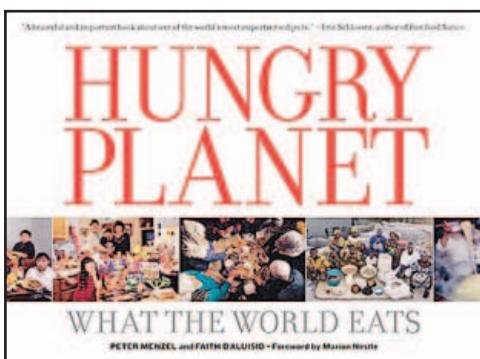
Each family portrait pictures the family outside their home with all (or almost all) of their possessions. The possessions are not stacked to the side but are displayed in such a way as to be integrally part of the portrait, as though these things are precious members of the family. The text describes the family and



their lifestyle. Sidebars offer background on the countries in which they live. The differences between countries are, of course, striking and at times surprising.

If you enjoy *Material World*, take a look at the new book, *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats* by Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio (2005). This book also profiles 30 families around the world. However, instead of their possessions, *Hungry Planet* features their diets and pictures them in the marketplaces and with their food-stuffs.

Both books make you think about what we have, what we need, what we want, what we save, what we waste, and what all of this might mean to the global family.



No Waste Like Home

clean up
clear out
save money



Rather than searching for survivors or looking for the winner of a race, reality TV viewers in Britain are watching host Penney Poyzer expose the habits of some very wasteful families in "No Waste Like Home." With a combination of shock, shame, and wit, Poyzer teaches the families to clean up, clear out, and save money in the process. Her tips focus on reducing, reusing, and recycling waste; saving energy; cleaning with non-toxic cleaners; and selecting eco-friendly products. That's our idea of a great reality show!

Read Poyzer's tips at www.bbc.co.uk/homes/tv_and_radio/nwlh_index.shtml.

Worth Noting

Preparing for Prom — On average, American teens spend \$300 to \$500 each on prom attire, accessories, and events. Renting, borrowing, or buying used or vintage outfits could significantly reduce this cost. In 2004, Nina Sysko, a high school senior from Maine, created her own low-cost prom dress—from discarded Starburst candy wrappers.

Olympian Efforts — One of the missions of the Olympic Games is the "Promotion of Sustainable Development." For the 2006 Winter Games in Torino, this resulted in eco-friendly buildings in the Olympic Village, recycling at events and facilities, and tree-planting to offset carbon dioxide emissions, as well as other efforts.

Trade-ins welcome — Readers are hooking up on the web to trade used books. Several websites are catering to readers who would like to trade used books (mostly paperbacks) rather than buying and selling them. The largest of these boasts more than 300,000 available titles. If you'd like to become a book trader, visit one of these sites: www.paperbackswap.com, www.frugalreader.com, or www.titletrader.com. You might also want to set up a swap among your friends, family members, or neighbors.

Garden Gadgets

Would you like to create better garage storage? How about some festive outdoor lighting for your garden? Want to welcome your fine, feathered friends? Get on the Internet and go to www.care2.com/channels/solutions/home/456 to find the instructions for "Five Cool Make-It-Yourself Garden Gadgets."

The web page actually offers these six project ideas with complete instructions:

- Lanterns made from glass baby food jars
- Bird feeder and sanctuary using an old birdbath
- Birdseed catcher made from an old doormat
- Tool storage chest made from an old

filing cabinet

- Dahlia tuber holder made from plastic strawberry flats
- String caddy made from a plastic detergent bottle

Do you notice what these projects have in common? That's it. They are all made from reused and found materials. Your own recycling bin or a neighborhood garage sale could become the source of the raw materials that you need for these and other projects.

All of these ideas and many more are published in the book *Great Garden Gadgets: Make-It-Yourself Gizmos and Projects*, edited by Fern Marshall Bradley and Christine Bucks (Rodale Press, 2001).

A flurry of flip-flops



Bitters Company is taking the sandal scrap from the cutting room floor of flip-flop manufacturers and turning it into colorful floating key chains, crates, barrels, and doormats.

As you know, flip-flops are basically foot-shaped. However, these shapes must be cut from rectangular sheets of colorful plastic, much as you would cut cookies from rolled-out dough. If you've ever made cut-out cookies, you know that a lot of un-cuttible scrap is left behind. Some of the plastic chunks being left behind during flip-flop fabrication are being used by Bitters Company to create these unique crates, key chains, barrels, and mats.

The Bitters Company's use of flip-flop scrap is what we call "pre-consumer recycled content." Pre-consumer waste is industrial scrap that could not be turned into the intended product. Cut ends of plastic, fabric, or paper are good examples of this waste. We refer to it as "pre-consumer" because no one like you ever purchased and used this portion of the raw material. In other words, it was discarded before it got to the consumer.

In addition to these pre-consumer flip-flop products, Bitters Company also makes several items from post-consumer waste, including bowls made from the steel in used 55-gallon drums and from old magazines. For more information, call toll-free 1-866-664-2488, e-mail info@bittersco.com, or visit the website, www.bittersco.com.

WHAT'S UP?

When electronics are discarded and smashed or crushed, toxic materials can escape. That's why discarded electronics, called "e-waste," are a concern.

You can reduce the risks of e-waste by taking these simple steps:

- Think before you buy. Manufacturing a single desktop computer and 17-inch monitor uses 1.9 tons of materials and consumes 81 percent of the energy that the product will use during its entire life cycle. Be sure that you are buying something that you need and will use.
- Reuse your own equipment for as long as possible. Reselling or upgrading computers uses five to 20 times less energy than recycling.
- When equipment is no longer up to date enough to be useful, try to reuse some of the parts, such as memory chips. Or, if you have a working printer, turn down the "free" printer when you buy a new computer.
- Recycle your outdated equipment. Not only does recycling ensure that the hazardous components will be handled properly, it also puts the usable components and chemicals back to work. E-waste can be recycled every Friday, except holidays, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at a special drop-off area at the Landfill.



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**
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Transfer Station 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
- Office paper and mail
- Corrugated cardboard
- "Blue Bag" or commingled recyclable containers, including #1 & #2

plastic; aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass; and steel cans

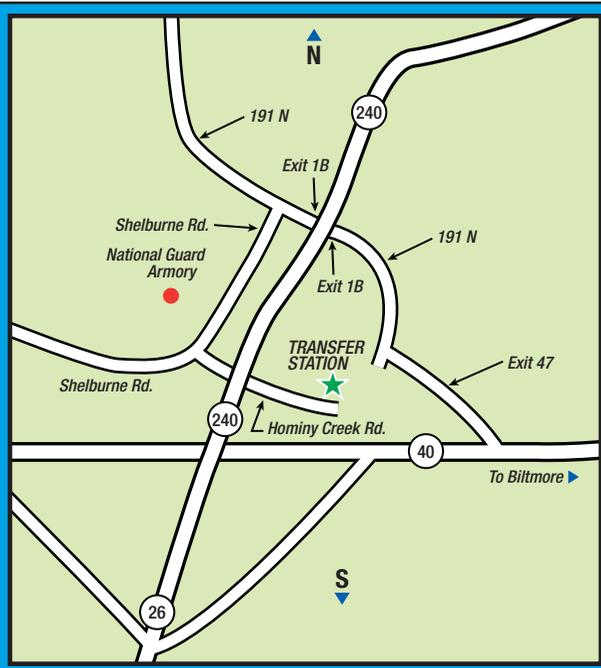
We also accept reusable corrugated cardboard moving boxes and shipping cartons. Please break down and flatten the boxes for storage.

Plus, you can drop off "sharps," such as needles and lancets, used at home for personal medical care. Place your sharps in a puncture-proof, labeled container. At the front gate, tell the attendant that you have sharps for disposal.

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
- Office paper and mail
- 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
- Yard waste, including fall leaves
- 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)
- Cut, bare real Christmas trees (remove all stands, decorations, lights, and tinsel)

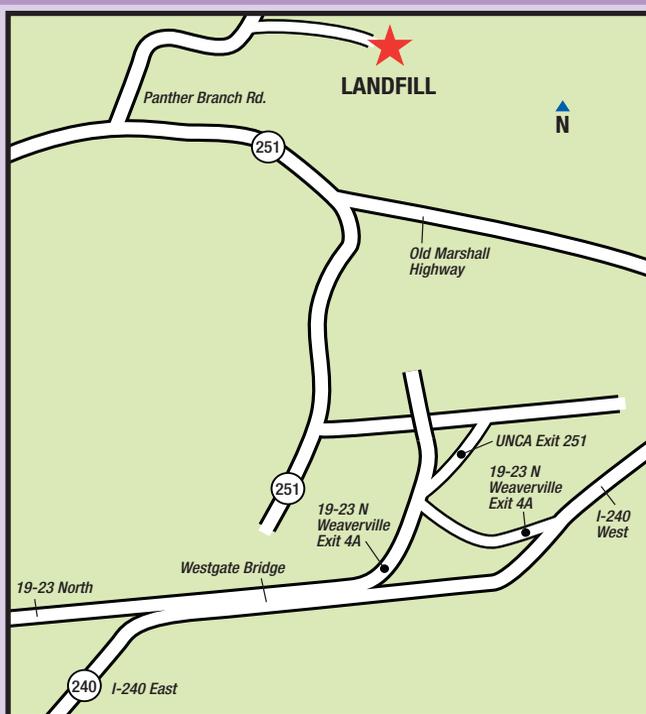
You can drop off household trash at the Landfill. There is a fee to dispose of trash.

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.

Tours of the landfill are available to interested groups, including clubs, civic organizations, scout troops, and classes. For details, call 645-5311.

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.

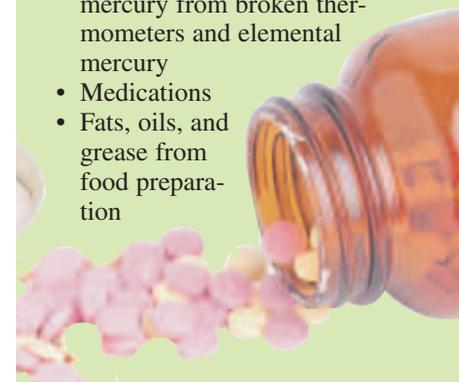


Use your brain!

As long as your household drains are working, you probably don't give them much thought. However, what you flush or pour down your drains matters. Municipal wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are designed to handle human wastes and dirty water from normal household activities, such as showering, bathing, doing laundry, or washing dishes. When other items, such as hazardous chemicals, go down the drain, they can interfere with the treatment process or pollute our ground and surface waters. That's why you need to think before you pour anything down the drain!

Don't pour these items into household drains:

- Household chemicals, such as cleaners, poisons, pesticides, automotive fluids, and paints
- Mercury, including spilled mercury from broken thermometers and elemental mercury
- Medications
- Fats, oils, and grease from food preparation



Household hazardous waste, mercury, mercury-containing products, and outdated medications are all accepted year-round every Friday, except holidays, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at a special drop-off area at the Landfill.

Fats and oils should be placed into a plastic or glass container with a screw-on lid and disposed with your household trash.

Drop-off centers accept recyclables, too

You can recycle white and colored office paper, such as copier and printer paper, and mail, including envelopes, as well as newspaper, cardboard, #1 and #2 plastic containers, aluminum cans, and steel cans, at these drop-off center locations:

- Behind Asheville Pizza Company, 675 Merrimon Avenue
- Curbside Management Facility, 116 North Woodfin Avenue in Woodfin
- Westgate Shopping Center, near EarthFare