

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department
828-250-5460
Winter 2006



County's bio-diesel tank goes online

Billionth gallon of bio-diesel pumped at grand opening

In October, Buncombe County Government joined the Clean Cities Coalition's "Billionth Gallon Celebration" by pumping the nation's billionth gallon of bio-diesel and helping to conserve more than a billion gallons of petroleum. This is enough to fuel 2 million cars for a year! The celebration was held at the County's bio-diesel tank, which is located at the County Transfer Station.

In January of 2005, the Solid Waste Department of Buncombe County began working on the implementation of bio-diesel fuel for County vehicles that use diesel. The County received a \$29,688 grant from the NC Solar Center and NC Department of Energy to build the fueling center. Since January, all County-run ambulances, landfill machinery, and other diesel-run vehicles have been converted to run on B-20, a form of bio-diesel fuel. The result is a 20 percent reduction in County government's dependence on fossil fuels with every gallon pumped. It also means that

all County vehicles that are bio-diesel ready will have an adequate supply of fuel in times of emergency.

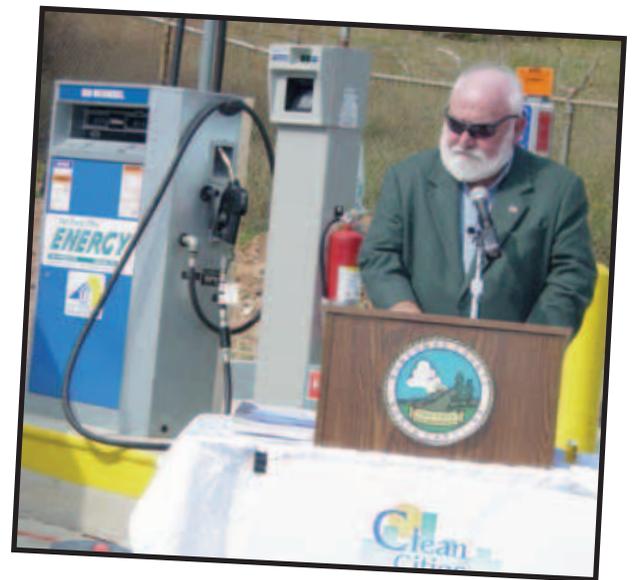
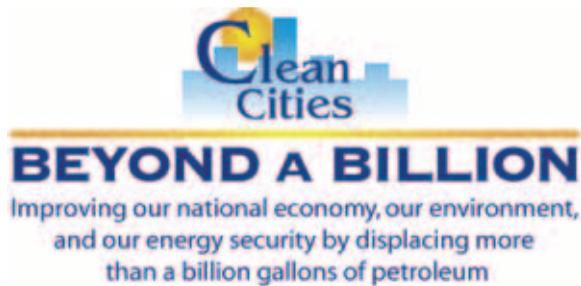
Bio-diesel is a cleaner burning diesel replacement fuel made from natural, renewable sources, such as new and used vegetable oils and animal fats. B-20 is 20 percent bio-diesel and 80 percent petroleum-based diesel. It reduces vehicle emissions of hydrocarbons and carbon

monoxide by up to 20 percent. Bio-diesel is domestically produced, thereby helping reduce the nation's dependence on imported oil while helping to boost the agricultural sector of the economy.

"We are so proud to be part of this effort and are working on other ways to save for our taxpayers," said Bill Stanley, County Commissioner.

This effort, in conjunction with the purchase of four Honda Civic Hybrids, means that 12 percent of the County's Fleet has been converted to cleaner-emissions vehicles.

For more information on this and other cost-saving measures currently in use in Buncombe County's General Services Department, contact Denese Ballew, Environmental Manager, at 250-5425.



On Friday, October 14, Commissioner Bill Stanley announced the opening of Buncombe County's bio-diesel pumping station.



Four Honda Civic Hybrids, with their superior fuel efficiency, are part of the County's fleet.



Commissioner Bill Stanley pumps the nation's billionth gallon of bio-diesel into a County EMS vehicle.



Buncombe County's bio-diesel pumping area is located at the Transfer Station.

Pick it up!

Litter and improperly dumped trash are not a tourist attraction. Nor do they increase property values or raise residents' pride in our community. So if litter isn't improving our quality of life, why do we see so much of it?

The answer is far too simple. Litter results when waste is handled carelessly, such as failing to cover trash containers or choosing not to pick up something that falls from a parked car. However, other litter results when waste is intentionally mishandled, such as when bagged trash or old furniture is dumped on vacant properties or placed in alleyways or ditches.

Unfortunately, the first piece of poorly handled waste can act as an invitation. Even one piece of litter, a single bag of trash, or one large item might make the next person who comes by think that it is OK to drop or dump more. And from there, the problem grows.

Help clean up our county. Pick up after yourself. If you drop something on the ground, stop and pick it up. Dispose of it in a trash can. Be sure that

your trash containers and recycling bins are covered or packed so that paper, plastic, and other items cannot easily fall out or blow away. And please, don't ever dump trash, bulky items, or recyclables where they don't belong.

You can also lend a hand. Participate in Buncombe County's year-round Four Corner Cleanup program. Between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, the Four Corner Cleanup resulted in cleanups in 665 areas, collecting a total of nearly 380 tons of trash and 917 illegally dumped tires.

To volunteer your help, call Environmental Control at 250-5461.



10 Tips

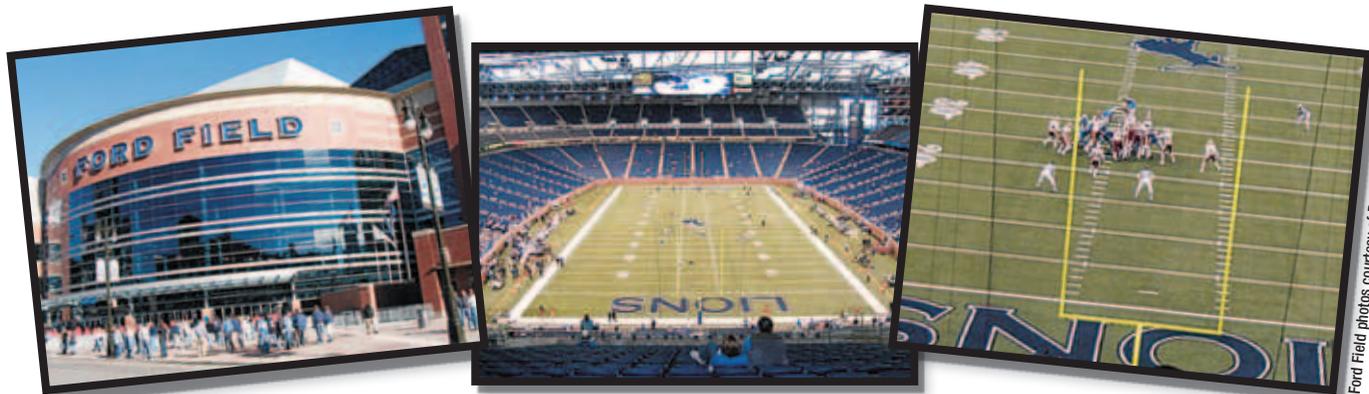
for a “New and Improved” Year

It's the time of year when we're thinking about making things better—ourselves, our families, our homes, our work. As you're making your resolutions, consider these 10 tips:

1. Before you buy, ask yourself: Do I need this? Do I already have something like this? What will I do with this when I no longer need it?
2. Spend more time with family and friends and less time shopping. And, yes, that means putting down the catalog and surfing past Internet stores, too!



3. Start your exercise or other self-improvement program on borrowed or shared equipment. If you stick with the program or hobby, you can purchase your own supplies and equipment, if you need them, later.
4. Shop used first. Whether you're buying books, DVDs, videos, CDs, toys, games, jewelry, exercise equipment, furniture, or cars, make “used” your first choice. In most cases, you'll find items that are serviceable and less expensive. In some cases, you'll find items that may have been pre-owned but are actually brand-new.
5. Take toxics off your shopping list. Start by choosing biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products and selecting only latex paints for home improvement projects.
6. Know what can be recycled locally. If you don't know what you can recycle, contact us to find out!
7. Once you know what is recyclable, shop with recycling in mind. For instance, if grape jelly is available in both a recyclable and non-recyclable container, choose the recyclable container.
8. Commit to recycled-content products. Successful recycling programs depend on having manufacturers use your recyclables. Manufacturers won't use recyclables to make what people won't buy. Look for polar fleece made from recycled soft drink bottles. Select recycled-content carpet. Buy the paper with a phrase such as “post-consumer recycled-content” printed on the wrapper.
9. Share more of yourself with others this year. Volunteer more time. Give away more old, but still usable, stuff.
10. Relax and enjoy your life. Find a book you own but haven't read; curl up on a Saturday and read it! Watch a movie in your collection that you have never had time to watch. Pull out the stationery that a friend gave you three birthday's ago and write a letter.



“ROAD TO FORTY” IS ALSO ROAD TO RECYCLING

On February 5th, football fans and curious commercial watchers will be experiencing the first Super Bowl to take place on a recycled field. Ford Field in Detroit will host the first-ever Super Bowl played on FieldTurf, a multilayered system that uses shredded rubber from used tires and old athletic shoes along with sand to create a cushiony playing field. The field, which was installed when the stadium was built in 2002, is made from 25,000 used tires. (When you see that black “spray” coming out of the field after hard contact, you're seeing the crumb rubber and sand.)

Other recycling at Ford Field that you'll see only if you're a ticket holder includes recycled glass in the terrazzo floors and toilet stall partitions made from recycled plastic soft drink bottles.

If you're enjoying Super Bowl XL at home or with friends, be sure to include recycling in your party plans. Have a recycling bin for beverage containers. Reduce waste by purchasing snack food in bulk packages. And opt for reusable and washable napkins, plates, and silverware.

Go recycling! Go team!

On the trail of trash

Did you ever think about following your trash? Probably not, and neither did journalist Elizabeth Royte—that is, until Earth Day 2002 when she joined volunteers who were picking up floating garbage in her hometown, Brooklyn, NY.

That boat ride with all of its visible trash led her to think about all of the “invisible” trash that we dispose each day. She writes: “You can't live in New York or any big city and not be aware that vast tonnages of waste are generated daily.... But most of the time that reality is virtual, because somehow our unwanted stuff keeps disappearing. It moves away from us in pieces—truck by truck, barge by barge—in a process that is as constant as it is invisible.”

After this, Royte became increasingly curious about what happened to the 1.31 tons of waste that she created each year. (*BioCycle* magazine and Columbia University's Earth Engineering Center estimate that on average each American generated 1.31 tons of waste in 2003.) Rather than simply wonder, she began to research.

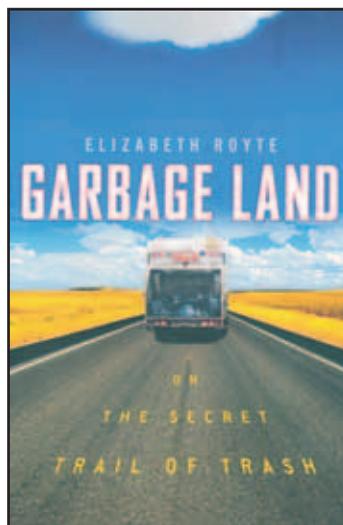
First, she began separating and weighing her own household trash. On her first day, her three-person household tossed 7 pounds, 9 ounces of mixed waste. From

there, her research took her out of her home, around the city, and across the country where she met trash collectors, rode trash trucks, visited landfills, explored recycling centers, and more. The result of her efforts is the book, *Garbage Land: On the Secret Trail of Trash*, which was published by Little, Brown and Company in 2005.

In *Garbage Land*, Royte makes visible the invisible—the trash we throw away, the packaging we recycle, and even what we flush. Her conclusion? In her last chapter, “The Ecological Citizen,” she writes: “Our trash cans, I believe, ought to make us think...about the enormous amount of material and energy that goes into the stuff we use for an instant and then discard. Garbage should worry us. It should

prod us. We don't need better ways to get rid of things. We need to *not* get rid of things, either by keeping them cycling through the system or not designing and desiring them in the first place.”

Rather than offering specific solutions, the book offers information and insights. Royte's goal is not to tell us what to do or exactly how to do it, but rather to help us to come to the conclusion that we ought to do something. What that something is, she leaves to her readers.



Seeking solutions?

Helen Spiegelman and Bill Sheehan offer several proposals for reducing the amount of waste we generate and improving the way we handle it in “Unintended Consequences: Municipal Solid Waste Management and the Throwaway Society.” This paper can be downloaded at www.solidwastemag.com/PostedDocuments/documents.asp. (Scroll down to “June/July 2005: Related Reports and Articles” and click to download the full report.)

To read even more about these issues, check out the Winter-Spring 2005 special edition of the *Journal of Industrial Ecology* at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?type=5&tid=1704>. Focused entirely on consumption and industrial ecology, this issue explores what we produce, what we buy, whether our manufacturing processes and shopping habits are sustainable, and more.

Photos courtesy of Chris Jordan Photography



Looking for beauty in unlikely pieces

Photographer Chris Jordan has also been trailing our trash, in shipping ports, industrial yards, and waste processing facilities. His photographs, which are gathered in the exhibit “Intolerable Beauty — Portraits of American Mass

Consumption,” capture what our consumer habits leave behind.

To learn more about Jordan's art and to see more of the images from his show, visit www.chrisjordan.com.

Another benefit of recycling



According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, recycling is one of the most effective ways for individuals and communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Greenhouse gases have a “heat-trapping” effect on our atmosphere. While heat-trapping may sound pretty good during the winter, the long-term and year-round effects are a concern.

Here are some of the ways that recycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions:

- When fewer materials are landfilled, total methane production decreases. Methane, which is considered a greenhouse gas, is produced when organic materials decompose in a landfill.
- When paper products are recycled, fewer trees are cleared from forests and tree farms. The trees that are left standing capture carbon dioxide,

another greenhouse gas, and hold it where it is being used by plants rather than affecting the atmosphere.

- Creating new products from recyclables requires less energy than making the same products from virgin materials. By decreasing energy use, we lower greenhouse gas emissions from power plants by burning fewer fossil fuels.

As you can imagine, *reducing* our waste by purchasing and using less and *reusing* what we already have decrease greenhouse gas emissions even more!

For more information, visit the U.S. EPA’s global warming site, <http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/content/index.html>. You can also access the site by going to www.epa.gov and clicking on “Global Warming.”

Rescuing one box at a time

Have you ever thought, “I ought to start a business doing that”? Marty Metro thought that and did—founding UsedCardboardBoxes.com. The company’s motto is “Rescue, Resell, Recycle.”

The company partners with retailers to collect and warehouse used but undamaged boxes. Customers can order boxes online and, in some locations, receive them within 24 hours. The used boxes are generally sold for about half of the original retail price of a new box. If the request cannot be filled by UsedCardboardBoxes, the customer is redirected to other sources.

For more information, visit www.UsedCardboardBoxes.com or call 1-888-BOXES-88.



QUOTES REQUOTED

“The great thing in this world is not so much where you stand, as in what direction you are moving.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1809–94
American physician, author, and poet

Money



in the bank

Whether you’re choosing supplies to use at home, to run an office, or to get you through the school day, you can reduce your waste. You’ll also reduce your costs. Here are some ideas to help keep your money in the bank:

- Use both sides of the paper. You don’t expect to read a book or magazine printed on the front side only, so why print anything else that way?
- Go without. When you have a choice between a paper form and a paperless online option, opt for the computer keyboard rather than pen and paper. If you are in charge of surveys, registrations, or order forms, create paperless forms.
- Need handouts? Before you copy, take a head count or get a good esti-

mate of the number of people who will be in attendance.

- Eliminate unneeded printing. Save paper by bookmarking websites and storing e-mails in electronic folders.
- Reuse computer disks, including old floppies, if you still use them, and rewritable CDs and DVDs.
 - Buy refillable pens and mechanical pencils to reduce waste. Refills are also cheaper than new pens and pencils.
 - Choose remanufactured (or refilled) toner cartridges, which cost less and provide the same amount of ink.
 - Check your supplies before you shop. If you keep pens, pencils, markers, paper, paper clips, toner cartridges, post-it notes, and tape refills organized, you will know what you have and what you need, avoiding unnecessary purchases.
 - Avoid the “brown bag,” and pack your lunch in a reusable bag or box. Encourage others to do the same.



FAST FACTS

- In September, the BIC corporation announced that it had sold its 100-billionth—yes, that’s 100,000,000,000—disposable ballpoint pen. According to the company, the pen has sold on average 57 times a second since 1950, when it was introduced.
- The average office worker uses 10,000 sheets of copy paper each year—that’s about five sheets every working hour!

WHAT'S UP?

Between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, we recycled:

- 29,755 tons of Blue Bag recyclables, including milk jugs; soft drink bottles; laundry detergent jugs; aluminum beverage cans; clear, green, and brown glass bottles and jars; steel cans; and newspapers
- 26,453 tons of cardboard
- 2,496 tons of yard waste
- 3,305 tons of tires
- 53.81 tons of electronics
- 23.08 tons of household hazardous waste
- 5,320 gallons of oil
- 220 gallons of antifreeze
- 1,069 batteries
- 1,090 tons of white goods (large appliances)



Attention, businesses!

Are you wondering how to reduce the amount of waste that your business generates? Do you need help conserving energy? By assisting businesses, industries, institutions, and government agencies in reducing waste, decreasing energy use, and using natural resources more wisely, the Waste Reduction Partners, a group of highly qualified volunteers, help create a sustainable economy, healthy environment, and better quality of life for Western North Carolina. For more information, visit www.landofsky.org/wrp.

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

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). Please make a note that no collection will be held on Friday, April 14 because of 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 will also be able to 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.

Did you know?

Reusable cell phones are reprogrammed and donated to "Operation Gratitude."

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

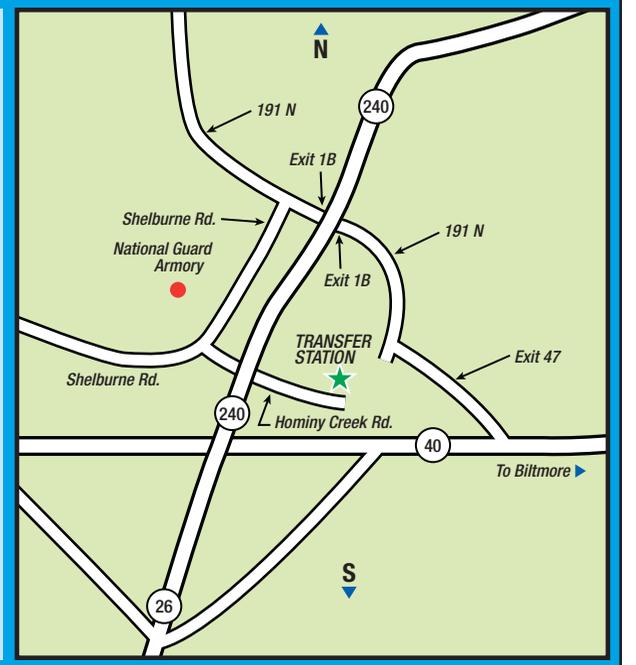
We also accept reusable corrugated cardboard moving boxes and shipping cartons. Please break down and flatten the boxes for storage.

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)

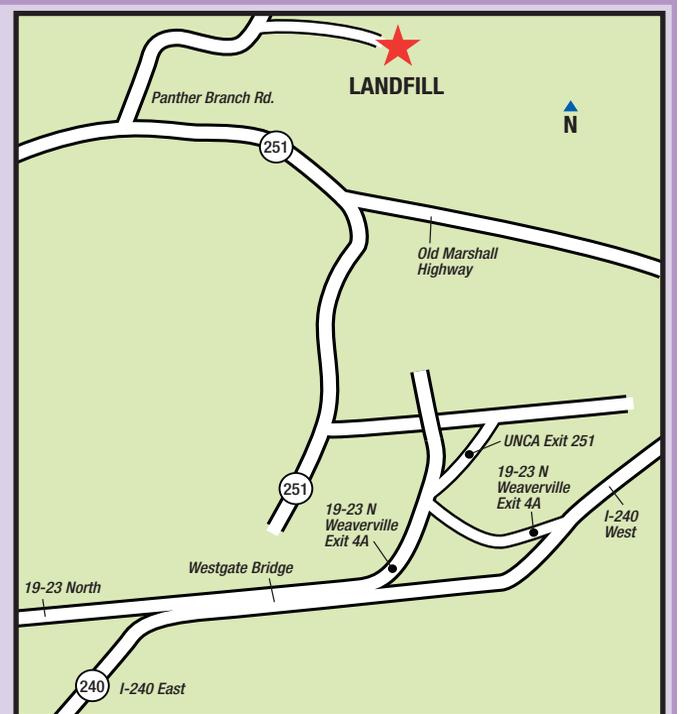
You can drop off household trash at the Landfill. There is a fee to dispose of trash.

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.



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

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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