

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department
828-250-5460
Spring 2007



Recycle at the curb with ease

Do you have curbside trash collection? If so, you have curbside recycling service, too! With curbside recycling service, your nearest "drop-off center" is as convenient as the end of your own driveway on trash day.

Each week, a single GDS truck comes through your neighborhood to pick up recyclables and trash. The rear compartment of the truck is divided into two sections—the front for recyclables and the back for trash. All you need to do is



set your Blue Bags next to your trash containers. The GDS staff does the rest!

To make sure that your recyclables end up in the recycling portion of the truck, follow these simple instructions:

- Place all of your recyclables into a translucent blue recycling bag. This makes it clear that these materials are meant for recycling—and won't head to the landfill!
- Recycle all of these items in your Blue Bag: glass food jars and beverage bottles; metal food and beverage cans; all white and yellow milk jugs and all plastic drink bottles with a #1 or #2 inside the recycling symbol (shown), including soft drink, liquor, juice, mineral water, and sports drink bottles; newspaper with inserts; magazines; catalogs; phone books; and mixed paper.
- Before you put recyclables into your Blue Bags, always remove and throw away all caps and lids from containers; empty, rinse, and drain all con-



tainers; and flatten all plastic bottles and jugs.

- Set your Blue Bags next to, NOT inside, your trash container. The GDS staff will put everything that is inside the trash container into the back portion of the truck with trash. Only Blue Bags that are set on the ground next to your trash container will go into the front, recycling portion of the truck

If you have questions about the curbside recycling program or your regular garbage service, call GDS, Inc. at 828-253-3929.

If you don't have curbside recycling service, you can recycle at the Transfer Station or Landfill. For more information about those recycling opportunities, see Page 4.

Items NOT accepted for recycling

- NO plastic bags
- NO margarine or yogurt tubs
- NO plastic toys
- NO shampoo or detergent bottles
- NO glass dishes
- NO light bulbs
- NO cookware
- NO mirrors
- NO window panes
- NO broken glass of any kind
- NO aluminum foil
- NO aluminum pans or pie plates
- NO egg cartons
- NO fast food cartons
- NO meat trays
- NO motor oil jugs
- NO hazardous waste containers
- NO yard debris
- NO hazardous materials (paint, antifreeze, motor oil or their empty containers)

Where do your Blue Bags go?

Blue Bags full of recyclables are delivered to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) operated by Curbside Management, Inc. This MRF is located just north of Asheville in Woodfin.

A MRF is a facility that receives, sorts, processes, and markets recyclable materials. When trucks arrive at the MRF, they dump Blue Bags, which include cans, bottles, mixed paper, and newspaper, as well as broken down corrugated cardboard, onto a platform. Machinery scoops up the bags, ripping them open, and loads the material onto a conveyor belt. This conveyor belt sends the recyclables up an 18-foot incline where several workers sort materials.

After being sorted by type, most of the recyclables are baled into giant cubes. These bales are stacked to await shipment to a manufacturer. Glass containers go into gaylords, which are open-top bins, for shipment to manufacturers.

Curbside Management, Inc. has been processing area recy-

clables since 1991. In 2003, the company moved into the new state-of-the-art MRF, which includes an observation deck and educational resource center. School groups, businesses, residents, and interested citizens are welcome to visit the MRF and see recycling in action.

To schedule a tour or for more information, call Dave Johnson at 252-2532.



Did you know?

- Americans make up only 5 percent of the world's population, but we produce 50 percent of the world's trash.
- Americans throw away enough aluminum every three months to rebuild the entire U.S. commercial air fleet.
- Americans toss out 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour.
- Americans throw away the equivalent of almost half a million trees every week just by disposing of the Sunday newspaper.
- The North Carolina Senate and House have made recycling an integral part of the state's solid waste management plan by passing legislation encouraging communities to recycle.
- Recycling saves energy and reduces

air and water pollution. Making new products from recyclables uses less energy, requires fewer toxins, and creates less air and water pollution than creating the same products from newly mined or harvested materials.

- Recycling reduces the demand for landfills. If we didn't recycle, we would need much more landfill space than we are currently using.
- Recycling creates jobs for people in the United States and around the world.

By reducing, reusing, and recycling material today, we will most certainly leave a more manageable world for our children and grandchildren!

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
Environmental Manager — Denese Ballew	828-250-5425
Buncombe County Landfill	828-645-5311
Buncombe County Transfer Station	828-250-6205

The new address for the Buncombe County Solid Waste Administrative Offices and Environmental Control is:

81 Panther Branch Road, Alexander, NC 28701



CLIP & SAVE

10 Tips for Creating Compost

You can make your own backyard compost. The ingredients you'll need are readily available—"green" and "brown" organic waste, water, and air. After you've mixed these ingredients and given them some time to cook, you'll have a finished compost that will make a nutritious amendment for your soil.

Follow these steps to create your own compost:

1. Choose a level area in your yard. You don't want your compost bin or pile to be in the way, but you don't want it too far away from your source of organic material either. You'll need at least a 3 by 5 foot area to give your pile or bin room to

2. Select a spot that is out of direct sunlight most of the day.
3. Make sure that you have access to water nearby and a hose that will reach the spot.
4. Use a heap, build your own bin, or purchase a commercial compost bin. The size and type will depend on how much organic material you have available and how fast you want your compost to cook.
5. Layer "brown" yard waste, such as dry leaves and dead plants, with "green" organic waste, such as grass clippings and fruit and vegetable scraps. You'll want about 2 parts

"green" for every one part "brown." If you are grasscycling most of your lawn clippings, coffee grounds are a good "green" organic material (even though they are colored brown); coffee grounds are a source of nitrogen, as are other "greens." Mix the material as you fill your compost bin or build your heap. Be sure that food scraps are at least 10 inches below the surface of the pile—this will keep unwanted visitors away.



6. Chop larger waste, such as twigs, into smaller pieces. You can chop this material manually using trimmers or loppers, or you can run twigs and branches through a chipper/shredder. (You could share a chipper/shredder with your neighbors or rent one.) Chopping this woody waste will help it rot more quickly.
7. Turn the pile at least every other week. Use a pitchfork, a shovel, or a compost turner. Be sure that the material is thoroughly mixed each time you turn it. The more often you turn your pile, the more quickly your material will decompose.
8. Add water if your pile becomes dry. Mix the water evenly through the material. During most weather conditions, your pile should be moist but not soaking wet. If your pile becomes soggy during wet weather, turn and mix the material to add air and help dry it out. A tarp can help keep your composting materials from getting too wet during heavy rains.
9. Give your compost up to six months to cook and cure. For faster compost, turn the pile more often. When the

- waste has become dark and crumbly, you have compost!
10. Spread the compost as mulch around trees or under bushes, mix it into your garden soil, or combine it with soil or sand to make a great potting soil.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/composting/by_compost.htm or contact the Cooperative Extension Service.

DO compost these:

- Grass clippings
- Twigs and leaves
- Coffee grounds, filters, and tea bags
- Egg shells (ground into tiny pieces)
- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Shredded newspaper
- Dryer lint

DON'T put these in the pile:

- Diseased plants
- Weeds that have gone to seed
- Plants that are spread by runners, such as Morning Glory or Buttercup
- Cat, dog, hog, or human waste
- Chemically treated wood products
- Glossy or coated papers
- Ashes
- Meat and fish scraps and bones
- Oils and other fatty food products
- Milk products



A composter's diary

Do worms have lungs? Can corks go in compost piles? These are just two of the questions handled by compost hotline operator Spring Gillard at City Farmer, Vancouver, British Columbia's non-profit

urban agriculture group that has been thriving for 25 years. Gillard began her diary with online posts in 1996. Through humorous stories, silly scenes, and even a compost "rap," the posts touched on the essentials of composting, alternatives to pesticides, organic and edible landscapes, compost teas, drug-free lawns, rainwater harvesting, and urban agriculture in big cities. Laugh and learn as you read *Diary of a Compost Hotline Operator: Edible Essays on City Farming* by Spring Gillard (New Society Publishers, 2003).

The Possibilities Are Endless... Compost!

International Compost Awareness Week is May 6-12, 2007. Compost Awareness Week would be a great time to show off your compost pile to the neighbors, start a new pile, buy compost to use in your garden, or plant a tree using compost to prepare the soil. For more information, visit www.CompostingCouncil.org and click on "Compost Week."

How green is your party?

We're fast approaching the season of graduation parties and weddings. Each year in the United States, more than 2.7 million youth graduate from high school, nearly 1.2 million adults graduate from college, and 2.27 million couples marry. That's over 6 million pieces of paper—just for the diplomas and marriage certificates. When you add to it the invitations, announcements, greeting cards, and thank-you notes, as well as the special clothes, the decorations, the food, and the gifts, you have a huge pile of stuff, some of which almost immediately becomes waste.

For instance, if you purchase a "Congratulations, Graduate!" banner, what happens to it after the party? What becomes of the wedding reception centerpieces? How about the envelopes that held the invitations, cards, and other correspondence? If you use paper plates and cups for the party, where are they at the end of the day? As you can see, these celebrations have the potential to leave behind a lot of waste.

You can make your festive occasions

less wasteful. Whether you are hosting a graduation party, a wedding reception, a family reunion, a retirement celebration, or a business or school meeting, you can plan ahead and create less waste. Here are some ideas to help you get started:

- Avoid a lot of extra paper in invitations, such as double envelopes and reply card envelopes. If you need replies, request a phone call, an e-mail, or include a stamped, self-addressed postcard.
- For less formal events, e-mail your invitations. Remember to call to invite people who don't have e-mail addresses!
- Print everything, from invitations to programs, on recycled-content paper.
- Look for used clothing for the occasion. If you need formal wear, costumes, and or just a different summer dress, shop at secondhand or vintage stores. Accept hand-me-downs with thanks!
- Rent or borrow apparel that you won't use again. For the men, rent tuxes or

suits or borrow a friend's jacket for the event. Women can also rent many items or borrow from a friend or relative. If you often attend semi-formal events, create a "swap shop" with your friends so that you can trade clothes and have something new-to-you to wear.

- Decorate with what you already have. For instance, if you're toasting a graduate, decorate with childhood photos.
- Use washable and reusable plates, cups, napkins, and tablecloths. If you are hosting an event and don't have enough for the number of guests who will be attending, rent or borrow extras. Minimize your use of disposables, and you'll minimize your waste.
- Whatever kind of party you're hosting, recycle! Be sure that beverage container recycling bins are located near each trash bin. For multi-day events, such as family reunions or meetings, be sure to provide newspaper recycling, too.

- Send leftovers home with guests. Donate unopened and non-perishable leftover food to a food pantry.
- Avoid party favors. Your guests are there to share your special event—not to take a goodie bag home! If you think you must give some kind of party favors, give things that are consumable, such as candy, cookies, teas, or coffees.
- If you register for gifts, be sure to register for things you really need and will use.
- Instead of gifts, ask guests to donate to a cause or charitable organization or to bring canned or boxed goods to donate to a food pantry.
- When you buy gifts, look for durable and reusable products. Or, consider giving future events that the recipient will enjoy, such as a museum membership, theater tickets, movie passes, or restaurant gift certificates.
- Donate or re-gift items that you can't use rather than storing what you don't need and won't use.



Share the good news about Earth Day

In the early 1960s, Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, proposed a nationwide conservation tour to President John F. Kennedy. The tour, which took place in September 1963, was overshadowed by other events. However, six years later, in the summer of 1969, Nelson got the idea for a national “teach-in” about the environment. Planning began for this teach-in, which was dubbed Earth Day and set for April 22, 1970. A call went out. And Americans responded.

Going into that first Earth Day, no one could have predicted what was about to occur. School children, college students, community leaders, public officials, and citizens mobilized a huge, grassroots effort. By April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans, or 10 percent of our nation’s population in that year, took part.

This demonstration for the environment brought about sweeping changes at the federal and state levels. Later that same year, President Richard Nixon established the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by Executive Order. In the years that followed, dozens of environmental laws were passed, protecting our coastlines, clearing our air, and cleaning up our water supplies.

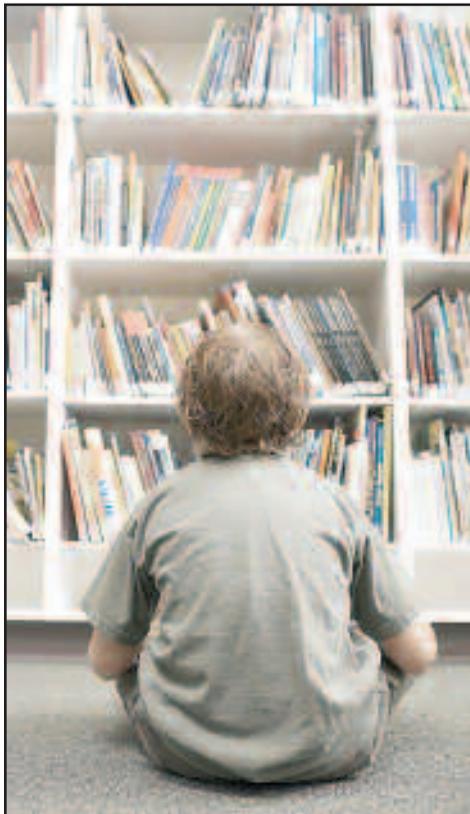
Today, nearly 40 years later, the successes of Earth Day are readily apparent. The worst of our day-to-day environmental problems have been addressed. In most places and by most standards, we have cleaner air and safer water than we did four decades ago.

However, this year and every year, Earth Day reminds us that there is still work to be done. We’ve cleaned up many of our old messes, but we aren’t finished. Plus, we need to continue to monitor our progress, making adjustments and improvements as testing and technology change. And, of course, along the way, we’ve created some new problems, such as the huge pile of electronics that we discard each year.

The good news is that Earth Day—then and now—is about individuals acting to make a difference. Today, you can make that difference. Get involved. Reduce the amount of waste in your life—conserve energy, save water, and create less trash. Recycle all that you can, providing useful materials to the manufacturing process. And, spread the word, especially to children and youth. Someday soon this will be their environment. Show them how and why to take care of it now.



A checklist for the planet



It’s almost Earth Day. Are you ready? Use this checklist to help you evaluate your actions. This will also give you some ideas for improving your planet-friendly habits.

- I turn off the lights when I leave the room.
- I have replaced at least some of my incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents.
- I turn off TVs, games, music players, and computers when I’m not using them.
- When I purchase new electrical appliances and electronics, I look for the “Energy Star” certification.
- I keep my showers short.
- I turn off the water while brushing my teeth.
- I walk or bike for short trips instead of hopping in the car.
- I plan my errands and trips so that I drive the fewest possible miles and spend the least possible amount of time stuck in traffic or sitting at stop-lights.
- I turn off my engine and walk inside rather than idling in drive-through lanes.
- I buy secondhand and used goods whenever possible.
- I am creative in reusing what I have by finding new uses for old stuff.
- I’m a regular at the local library, borrowing books, movies, CDs, and more.
- I use both sides of paper.
- I recycle all of the materials accepted in my local program.
- When I travel, I look for and use recycling bins for beverage containers and newspapers.
- I use refillable water bottles.
- I never mix hazardous chemicals or other hazardous waste with my household trash.



QUOTES REQUOTED

Every increased
possession loads
us with a new
weariness.

John Ruskin, 1819–1900
Author and Social Critic

Eco Action through Action Sports

The X Games are all about extreme action on the ramps and the slopes. But the organizers are also serious about extreme environmental activity. From on-site recycling and environmental education for spectators to clean energy credits to offset carbon emissions created by the event, the X Games are walking their talk, or should we say “grinding their rail.”

Here are a few of the eco-friendly actions that have been a part of the recent Winter and Summer X Games. The plastic bottles from Winter X 10 were used to create 21,000 snow jackets insulated with fiberfill made from recycled plastic beverage bottles. The 360 truckloads of dirt used to build the Moto X track for Summer X 12 will be reused to build tracks at future action sports events. The skateboard ramps at the summer games were made from wood grown in sustainable forests or built using reclaimed wood from previous events. This wood will be reused for future events.

For more information about the X Games “Environmentality,” visit <http://disney.go.com/environmentality/xgames/index.html>.



Spring cleaning for the streets!

During April, Quality Forward is inviting residents to come out and enjoy the spring weather at the 2007 Great Asheville/Buncombe Cleanup. These are the cleanup dates and locations that have been set so far:

- Monday, April 2, Chamber of Commerce
- Saturday, April 7, West Asheville
- Saturday, April 7, Montford
- Saturday, April 7, Leicester/Mt. Carmel Road
- Saturday, April 14, Enka/Candler
- Saturday, April 14, Weaverville/Reems Creek
- Saturday, April 14, South Asheville/Shiloh
- Saturday, April 21, Deaverview Public

Housing

- Saturday, April 21 and Sunday, April 22, Downtown Asheville
- Saturday, April 28, Clingman Neighborhood
- Saturday, April 28, Fairview

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. We are looking for site leaders. 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, including cleanup times and meeting locations, contact Ric Zeller at 254-1776 or info@qualityforward.org.

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

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)

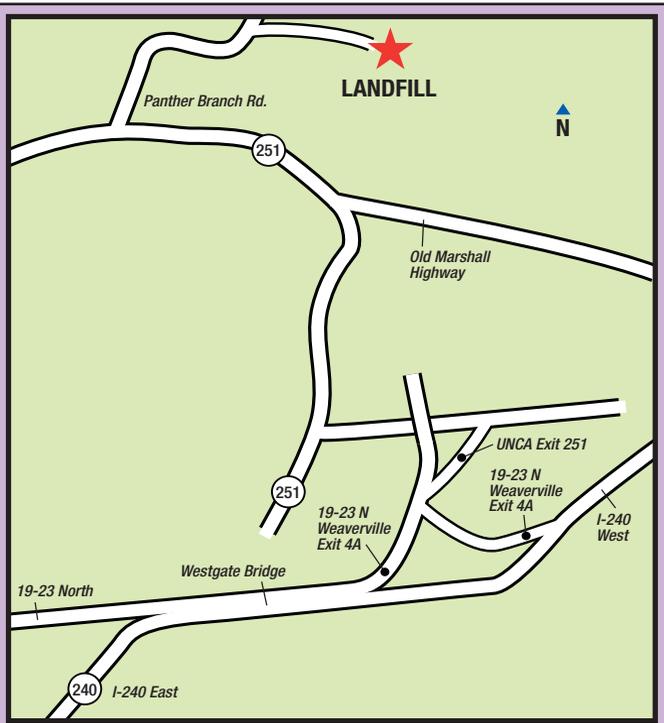
You can drop off household trash at the Landfill. There is a fee to dispose of trash.

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.



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 below left). Please make a note that no collection will be held on Friday, April 6, 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 are 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.

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

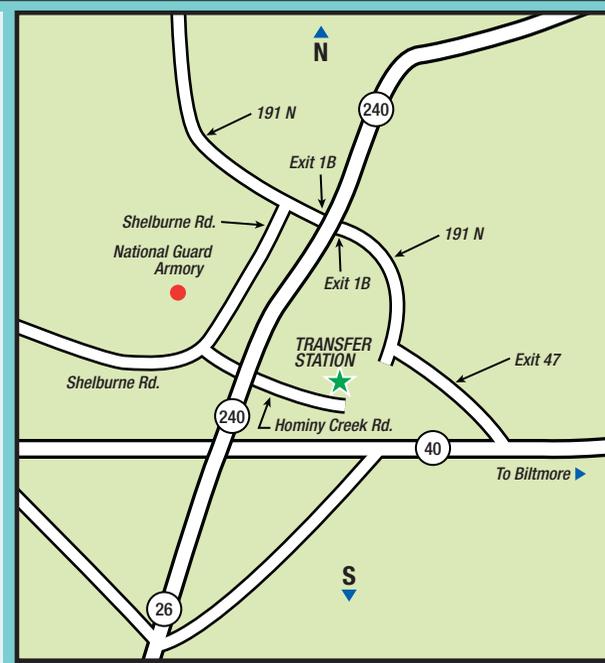
We also accept reusable corrugated cardboard moving boxes and shipping cartons. Please break down and flatten the boxes for storage.

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.



You recycle, but do you grasscycle?

We know you are good recyclers, collecting bottles, cans, and paper. But what about grass? Do you recycle your grass clippings? If not, you should! When you "grasscycle," you simply let clippings drop back onto the lawn as you mow. Nature takes care of the rest!

Grass clippings provide your lawn with nitrogen, a food that it needs. In fact, letting your grass clippings drop back onto the lawn each mowing season may cut in half the amount of lawn food (fertilizer) that you'll need. Grass clippings, which are 80 to 90 percent water, provide some of the moisture your lawn needs, meaning you water less often, too.

Grasscycling also saves you time. When you grasscycle, mowing takes about one-third less time. So if your lawn takes an hour to mow when you bag the grass, it will only take about 40 minutes when you grasscycle. The way we see it,

that's 20 more minutes for hiking or your favorite book!

Grasscycling reduces our need for landfill space. During the growing season, as much as 20 percent of our household waste might be yard trimmings. You'll save bags, too.

Any mower can be a grasscycling mower. Special mowers, called "mulching mowers," will chop the grass blades into tiny pieces. However, other mowers can grasscycle, too. Simply remove the bag attachment from your mower and insert the "chute cover," a safety device that covers the hole where the bag is normally attached.

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



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
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