

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

828-250-5460

Fall 2009



Disposal bans now in effect

On October 1, a law signed by Governor Perdue goes into effect, banning plastic bottles, oil filters, and wooden pallets from landfill disposal. It is now **ILLEGAL** to throw these items into the trash. They must be recycled. The law does not apply to plastic motor oil containers.

Here are some statistics to help you understand why North Carolina passed such a law:

- ❖ North Carolinians throw away more than \$41,411,600 in plastic each year.
- ❖ Recycling plastic bottles conserves energy and resources and adds to the more than 14,000 recycling-related jobs in N.C.
- ❖ In the time it takes you to brush your teeth (2 minutes), North Carolinians send 4,657 plastic drink bottles to a landfill.
- ❖ Producing new plastic from recycled material uses only two-thirds of the energy required to manufacture it from raw materials.
- ❖ In a year, North Carolinians throw away enough plastic bottles to line the Blue Ridge Parkway 642 times.

Households: The Buncombe County Solid Waste Management Facility requires the franchised waste hauler to pick up

curbside recycling for all residential **HOUSEHOLDS** (not businesses) that subscribe to garbage service. This is the easiest way to get started: Just go purchase some blue recycling bags at a supermarket (like Ingles) and begin placing plastic bottles, along with mixed paper, aluminum cans, and glass bottles, in the blue bag. The blue bag is set *next to* the garbage for recycling collection. (In Asheville, Curbside Management picks up recyclables that are placed out in bins.)

Drop-Off Centers: For residents of the county who do not use a curbside garbage service, there are a number of drop-off centers available. The recycling center at the Westgate Shopping Center (behind EarthFare), the Transfer Station, and the Buncombe County Landfill all accept your plastic bottles for recycling, as well as other household recyclables.

Oil Filters: Oil filters can be recycled at several businesses that sell motor oil. For example, any Wal-Mart that has a Tire and Lube Center also has a place for you to pour your old oil and recycle your oil filter. The Buncombe County Landfill on Panther Branch Road accepts used oil filters in the area just next to the drum used for oil recycling.

Wood Pallets: The Landfill has a wood mulching area where wooden pallets can be recycled.

Residents often ask, "Is this item recyclable?" The easiest way to determine whether your plastic is recyclable is to refer to the graphics on this page. You no longer need to flip the container over and look for the recycling triangle or a specific number. Just determine if the neck is smaller than the base. If it is, you can recycle the container. If it is not, then it goes into the garbage.

When it comes to paper, almost all types are recyclable, including office paper, copier/

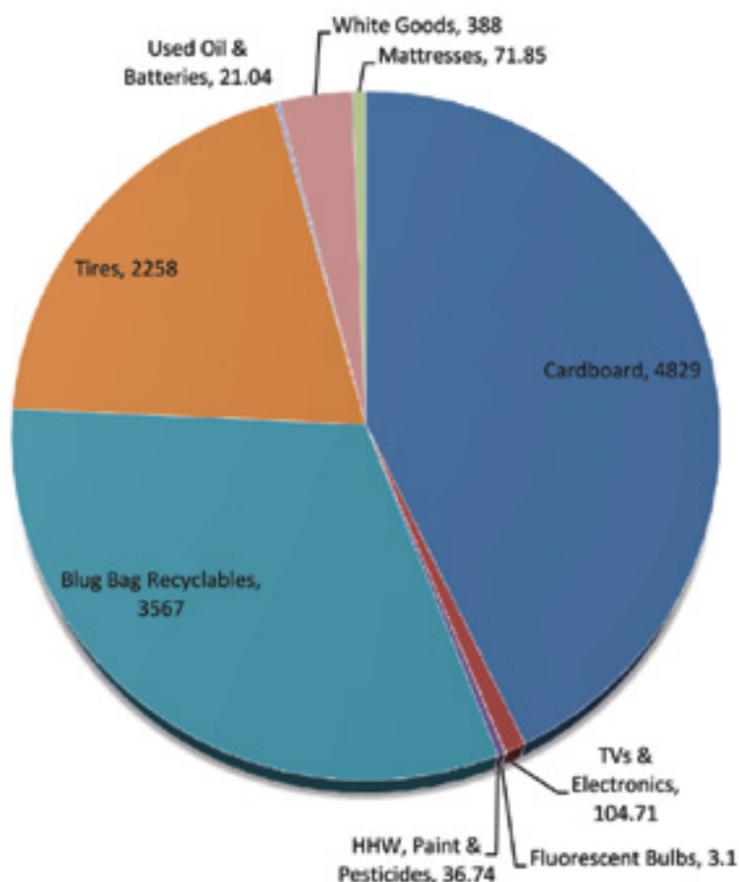
printer paper, junk mail, newspaper, and magazines. The only exceptions are food-stained paper products (such as pizza boxes) and waxy paper (like milk cartons and juice boxes). These items will need to be thrown away.

More information about the state law can be found at <http://p2pays.org/BannedMaterials/index.asp>. With specific questions about the types of plastic and paper that are accepted for recycling, call Curbside Management at 252-2532 or Asheville Waste Paper at 252-6963

Frequently Asked Questions about Preparing Your Recyclables

- **Do I need to rinse the bottle?** No, but it's best to dump the liquid and thoroughly empty the container. Rinse, if you can.
- **Do I need to remove the paper from the bottle or can?** No, just put the bottle or can in the recycling.
- **Do I need to remove the lid?** Yes, please remove lids! When plastics are baled into cubes for market, lids can be violently propelled and create a hazard for employees.
- **Does the number on the bottom of the plastic bottle or the recycling symbol matter?** Again, just make sure you have a plastic *bottle* with a neck that is smaller than the base. If the neck is smaller than the base, the bottle *must be recycled*. If it isn't, the bottle is *trash*.
- **How is this law going to be enforced?** There will not be any recycling police inspecting your garbage can. Solid Waste inspectors will enforce the law during Landfill inspections. So recycle and be a responsible citizen – take pride in helping the County's Landfill avoid penalties and/or fines.

Recycled Commodities at the Buncombe County Solid Waste Management Facility, Fiscal Year 2009 (Tons)



Recycle these plastics!

All plastic bottles and jugs must now be recycled! There is no need to look at the bottom for the recycling symbol and number. Just remember—the neck must be smaller than the base.



NOT recyclable!

If it isn't bottle-shaped, it isn't recyclable. Don't recycle tubs, such as yogurt and margarine containers, food trays, deli containers, plant trays, plant pots, plastic furniture, or toys.



HELPFUL HINTS for the HOLIDAY SEASON

As the holiday season approaches, you are probably already planning trips and parties. Beginning in November and continuing through Super Bowl Sunday, many people travel, visit relatives, eat big meals, prepare special foods, and give more than a few gifts. Because of this, the holiday season is often also waste season. It doesn't have to be. Here are some tips to help you have a less wasteful—and more relaxing—winter season.

■ **Party Planning** – Know how many people are coming to each event you're hosting and plan the food accordingly. If you have more leftovers than your family can finish, send food home with your guests. Avoid disposable decorations, dishes, cups, and napkins. Instead, reuse old family decorations, your own dishes, glasses, and cups, and reusable cloth napkins. If you don't have cloth napkins, maybe this would be a good time to invest in some. They are inexpensive and can be reused year after year. If you take a gift to your hosts, make sure it is consumable, such as food and drinks, or reusable, like a serving tray.

■ **Travel** – Road trips often include disposable food packaging and recyclable drink containers that end up in roadside trash cans. If you're traveling by car, pack snacks (and even lunch) in your own washable, reusable containers. You can put them into a cooler with drinks from home. When you get to your destination, wash your containers. They'll be ready to repack for the trip home. Look for roadside recycling containers, which are available at some rest stops. If you don't find them, put your aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage cans and bottles into a bag or box and recycle them when you get home. If you are flying, look for recycling bins for paper and drink containers in the airport.

■ **Gift Giving** – Make a list of everyone to whom you'll give a gift this holiday season. After making the list, decide how much you want to spend on gifts. Now, decide what you would like to give. One budget-conscious and waste-reducing way to give gifts is to shop for gently-used books and other items at secondhand and antique stores. Give

reusable gifts, such as washable placemats and cloth napkins, or consumable gifts, such as gift cards to a restaurant or movie. Gift cards for



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downloadable music are also a great, waste-free idea. Another option is to give of yourself, such as offering to run errands, babysit, take a walk in the woods, or meet for a picnic in the park. You also might consider giving to a good cause in honor of someone on the list; you can make a card describing the group that has received money or goods in their name. Framed photos make a wonderful gift—you might even be able to make a frame or find a unique used frame. If you choose to buy new gifts, look for items such as jewelry or handmade stationery made from recyclables.

■ **Gift Wrapping** – Reuse wrapping paper, gift bags, ribbon, and tags from past years. If you don't have any on hand, make your own wrapping paper by decorating the blank side of brown paper grocery bags; reusing colored sections of newspaper, old maps, or children's artwork; or using fabric, shelf paper, or wallpaper scraps. In other words, begin with items that you already have on hand! Or, "wrap" the gift in a basket or canvas bag that will be reusable later. If you buy wrapping paper, look for paper with recycled-content.

■ **Holiday Greetings** – Think about the holiday greetings that your family most enjoys—they are probably the cards or letters that include a personal touch, whether that is newsy notes or fun photos. Consider creating your own letter with family updates and holiday greetings. Of course, print it on recycled-content paper and mail it in recycled-content envelopes. Or, email paperless greetings instead.

This is a great time of year to discuss what really matters most to you, your family members, and friends. During this season of giving, learn what your family and friends really need. You might find that they could use more of your time and attention. Time and attention don't cost money and create significantly less waste than giving them a lot of stuff.

Read more about it!

42 Ways to Trim Your Holiday Wasteline
www.use-less-stuff.com/ULSDAY/42ways.html

Reducing Holiday Waste
www.epa.gov/osw/wycd/funfacts/winter.htm

Simplify the Holidays
www.newdream.org/holiday/

Tips for a Cleaner, "Greener" Holiday
www.informinc.org/greener_holiday.php



A ship-tastic idea!

Are you ordering a gift online for someone who lives faraway? Don't have it shipped to your house, unpack it, wrap it, and re-ship it. Save time, packaging, shipping costs, and fuel by having it delivered directly to your far-off friend or family member. If you really want the gift wrapped, many online retailers offer gift wrapping services, too.



Make Something Day

This isn't an enforced craft event for the non-crafty! Instead, it is an opportunity for each person to make something they enjoy. By hosting a "Make Something Day" with friends and relatives, you bring people together to enjoy each other's company and use their hands and hearts to create something special. For some, it will be a great meal. For others, it might involve sewing, knitting, or beading. One person may write a poem or a song. Others could paint, draw, or scrapbook. A few may decide to create holiday cards or gifts. Express your talent and share it.

Hosting a Make Something Day is easy:

1. Set the date and location.
2. Ask each person to come up with a creative idea and gather the needed supplies.
3. Set up tables so that crafters with common materials can work together. For instance, those with fabric will want to be at a separate table from the folks working on collages with glue!
4. Celebrate the creations over a meal. If one of your creative friends has cooked, enjoy. If not, have a pitch-in meal or order pizza.

QUOTES REQUOTED



When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe

John Muir, 1838–1914
American naturalist and writer

fast facts

Going Waste-Free

According to WasteFreeLunches.org, packing a waste-free lunch for your child costs about \$2.65 per day, while packing a lunch full of single-serve and disposable items costs \$4.02. Waste-free lunches can save your family \$1.37 per child per day. That's a savings of over \$240 for the school year. The same applies for lunches that adults take to work, but the savings is even greater—as much as \$340 per year. Pack waste-free to save!



Overshooting

According to The Global Footprint Network, we reached "Earth Overshoot Day" in mid to late September. This marks "the day when humanity begins using more ecological resources and services in a given year than Earth can regenerate in that year." From that day on, we are consuming resources that we are, in essence, borrowing from the future. "Put another way, in less than 10 months, humanity will have used ecological services it takes 12 months for the Earth to regenerate."



Creating Community

According to Bill McKibben in *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*, "consumers have ten times as many conversations at farmers' markets as they do at supermarkets.... When you go to the farmers' market, in other words, you're not just acquiring tomatoes; you're making friends."

Ecological Intelligence

Daniel Goleman explores the relatively new field of Industrial Ecology in his newest book, *Ecological Intelligence* (Broadway Business, 2009). The study of Industrial Ecology focuses on Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs), which guide businesses and consumers in judging the relative impacts of their actions. LCAs explore the environmental impact of each stage of extraction, transportation, and manufacture. LCAs are increasingly used by businesses to make supply-chain, manufacturing, and distribution decisions.

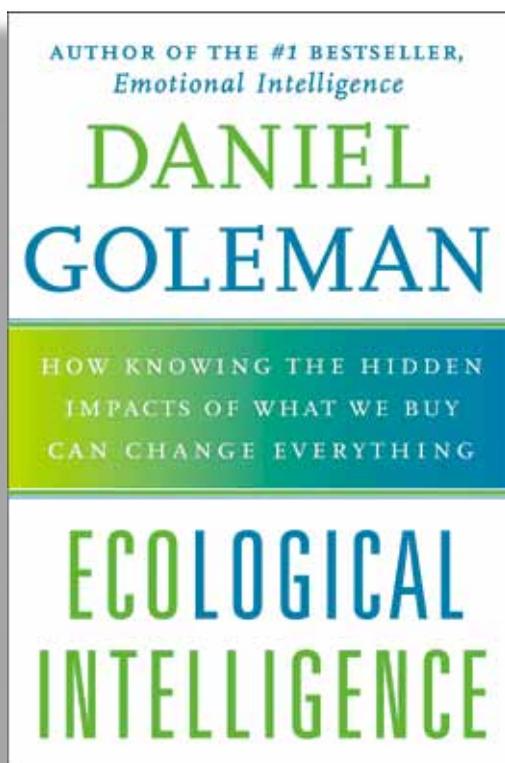
Goleman advocates for what he terms "radical transparency," which would involve making a large quantity of LCA information available to the average consumer. Much as food products are labeled with nutritional information, a radically transparent consumer product might be labeled with environmental impact information, such as pollution created, energy consumed, human and animal health effects, and non-renewable resource consumption.

Goleman writes, "If we get better, more complete information about the true effects of an item at the moment we are deciding whether to buy it, we could make wiser decisions. Such full disclosure can make each of us an agent for small, gradual changes that, when multiplied by millions, will ripple through the industrial enterprise, from manufacturing and design, through supply chains and transport, to the distant ends of consumption."

A single glass bottle, from cradle to grave, involves as many as 1,959 separate steps, each with its own environmental impacts. No consumer, no matter how well informed, can be expected to know and evaluate all of this information. Fortunately, there are many organizations devoted to helping consumers make wiser and greener decisions.

To learn more about the ecological impacts of various consumer products, visit these websites: Center for a New American Dream, www.newdream.org/marketplace/; Consumer Reports' Greener Choices, www.greenerchoices.org; and Good Guide, www.goodguide.com. At your local library, look for books such as *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things* by John C. Ryan and Alan Thein Durning.

Several organizations certify certain products as being sustainable or environmentally friendly, including: Forest Stewardship Council (paper and wood products), www.fscus.org; Green Seal (cleaning and construction products and services), www.greenseal.org; and USDA Organic (certified organic food products), www.ams.usda.gov/nop. Another certification coming soon will be Good Housekeeping's Green Seal of Approval.



Re-style

When the going gets tough, the tough get creative! Whether you are decorating your house or outfitting yourself, hard times don't have to mean that style goes out the window. Learn to rework what you have.

Decorating your house? Look to Mark and Sally Bailey for ideas. Sally's book, *Recycled Home*, explores their adventures in reusing their own stuff and the discards of others. Visit the local library to look for this and other books full of home decorating ideas that focus on reuse. While you are there, take a look at the magazine section. Periodicals such as *Ready Made*, *Country Living*, and *This Old House*, among others, are full of ideas for taking the used to create the useful and the ornamental.

Don't forget the clothes! Old jeans, T-shirts, and more, which are found in the back of nearly every closet, can be turned into all sorts of creative clothing and accessories. Turn an old backpack into a new fanny pack. Repurpose an old T-shirt into a shopping bag or a scarf. Create capris, shorts, or a skirt with an old pair of jeans. Or, turn the jeans into pot holders, bags, or a rag rug. For ideas, visit www.threadbanger.com, www.generation-t.com, or www.eHow.com (search for recycled clothes).





Household Hazardous Waste & Electronics

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, excluding weeks with a holiday.

Each week, we accept electronics from residents at no charge. Businesses will also be able to drop off electronics, but special arrangements need to be made prior to acceptance. Businesses are assessed a fee for electronics recycling, so please contact the Solid Waste Department prior to arrival. Proof of County residency is required.

Household Hazardous Waste is also accepted on Fridays only. No hazardous wastes from businesses will be accepted. Bio-hazardous materials, radioactives, and explosives are NOT accepted at any time.

If you have questions about fees or limitations, or need other information, please call 250-5462.

Medical Equipment Rescue Program

You can donate unneeded walkers, wheelchairs, canes, or crutches at the Buncombe County Landfill or the Transfer Station. Tell the scale house attendant that you want to participate in the Medical Equipment Rescue Program. The items will be placed in a storage building until enough equipment is collected for Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry Medical Clinic.

Attention, City of Asheville Residents!

If you live inside the city limits of Asheville and have questions about garbage or recycling pickup, please call Asheville City Sanitation at 259-5857.

Mark your calendar!

Buncombe County Solid Waste and the new Arden Wal-Mart will be hosting an e-waste collection event on Saturday, October 24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event is open to all Buncombe County residents who want to recycle their electronic waste responsibly.

Buncombe County Landfill

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

- ◆ Oil filters
- ◆ Wood pallets
- ◆ Newspaper and brown paper bags
- ◆ Magazines and catalogs
- ◆ Office paper and mail
- ◆ Corrugated cardboard
- ◆ Co-mingled recyclable containers, including **plastic bottles** (milk jugs, soft drink bottles, laundry detergent jugs, and shampoo bottles); aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass bottles and jars; and steel cans
- ◆ Lead-acid batteries
- ◆ Motor oil
- ◆ 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 may also recycle tires. Each year, residents may recycle 10 tires without rims at no charge. After that, tires may be recycled at \$2 per tire. All tires on rims (even the first 10) are \$2 per tire.

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.



You can drop off household trash, as well as bulky waste, construction and demolition waste, and yard waste, at the Landfill. There is a fee to dispose of trash, bulky waste, and yard waste.

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 12:30 p.m. If you have questions, call the Landfill at 250-5462.

The Landfill is open to accept trash and

Buncombe County Transfer Station

The Transfer Station now accepts *only* residential household waste, which must be bagged. There is a fee for household trash disposal. All other garbage items, including bulky waste, construction and demolition debris, mattresses, wood, and other oversized items, will need to be disposed of at the Buncombe County Landfill.

The Transfer Station will continue to accept these recyclables at no charge:

- ❖ Newspaper and brown paper bags
- ❖ Office paper and mail
- ❖ Magazines and catalogs
- ❖ Corrugated cardboard
- ❖ "Blue Bag" or co-mingled recyclable containers, including plastic bottles and jugs; aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass; and steel cans
- ❖ Appliances

In addition, you can drop off reusable corrugated moving boxes and shipping cartons for reuse. (Please break down and flatten the boxes.) We also accept medical equipment, such as wheelchairs and crutches, for reuse (see "What's Up?" on this page). Plus, you can drop off "sharps," such as needles and lancets, and non-

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.



infectious medical waste from in-home care. Please place sharps and other medical waste in an approved sharps container (available at pharmacies) or in a sturdy, thick-walled plastic jug.

The Buncombe County Transfer Station's hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

If you have questions, call the Transfer Station at 250-6205.

The Buncombe County Transfer

Make mine reusable!

Reducing your waste is easy—stop accepting the free paper and plastic bags at the store. Once you get home to put away your groceries or other purchases, you are stuck with these bags. Many of the lightweight plastic bags end up on our roadsides or hanging from trees as litter. You probably already have several canvas bags that you can reuse. If not, you can purchase reusable shopping bags. Buncombe County Government has reusable shopping bags, which are available

for purchase at most libraries throughout the county. Plus, many stores sell bags for a minimal price. Most of these reusable bags will hold as much as three to four plastic or two paper bags full of groceries.

Each year in the U.S., retailers hand out more than 380 billion plastic shopping bags and another 10 billion paper bags. When you say, "No, thanks, I'm going with reusable" to the plastic/paper question, you help our environment and keep our community cleaner.

Each year in the U.S., retailers hand

Important Phone Numbers for County Residents

Junk Motor Vehicle Officer – Roger Presley	828-250-5470
Mobile Home Removal – Roger Presley	828-250-5470
Environmental Control Officer – Rick Ramsey	828-250-5471
Environmental Control Officer – Jane Cole	828-250-5472
Bioreactor Manager – Kristy Smith	828-250-5473
Buncombe County Landfill	828-250-5462
Buncombe County Transfer Station	828-250-6205
GDS – Residential Trash Pick-up	828-253-3929

Important Phone Numbers for City of Asheville Residents

Asheville City Sanitation – Trash Pick-up	828-259-5857
Curbside Management – Recycling	828-252-2532
Asheville City – Recycling Division	828-259-5936

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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