

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department
828-250-5460
Winter 2009



Recycle your old, tired tree

Each year, Americans purchase about 25 to 30 million fresh-cut trees to decorate their homes during the holidays. The following spring, tree farmers plant two to three seedlings to replace each tree. Over the next seven years, these trees will mature and be ready for harvest.

If your family enjoyed a fresh-cut holiday tree this year, be sure to recycle it after the holiday season. By now, your tree is probably beginning to get dried out and is losing its needles more rapidly. That's a sure sign that it's time to take the tree down. Remove all the decorations, ornament hooks, lights, garland, and tinsel, as well as the stand. We'll be accepting Christmas trees at the Buncombe County Landfill. These trees will be chipped and turned into mulch or submerged in lakes or ponds to create fish habitat. Please make sure that your tree is totally bare.

This collection is for "real" Christmas trees only. Please place broken artificial trees into your trash.



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Bans in place

Recycling programs expand

As of the beginning of 2009, plastic bottles and used oil filters will be banned from disposal in North Carolina landfills. The state legislature passed these bans several years ago, providing communities such as ours with time to put new or expanded recycling programs in place.

By accepting all plastic bottles in recycling programs, we capture many more of the most valuable bottles—plastics #1 (PET) and #2 (HDPE). Many of the nation's largest recyclers of recovered plastic bottles are located in the Carolinas and rely on this material as a feedstock in making new products, such as carpet.

In Buncombe County, we now have "all bottle" recycling programs in place. Whether you recycle through a blue bag

curbside program or drop off your recyclables, you can now recycle all bottled-shaped rigid plastic containers. This includes any bottle with a neck smaller than the container and a screw-on or snap-on lid. Examples of these are soda bottles,



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water bottles, milk jugs, juice jugs, shampoo bottles, laundry detergent and fabric softener jugs, peanut butter containers, squeezable jelly bottles, ketchup and mustard bottles, and more. All bottles should be empty and rinsed, if needed. The only plastic bottles that we do NOT

accept for recycling are empty motor oil bottles and empty agricultural pesticide jugs.

Each year in North Carolina, about 14.3 million used oil filters are discarded. Prior to the ban, only about 30% of these were being recycled. As a result, 2 to 8 ounces of oil per filter, or as much as half a million gallons a year, were ending up in our landfills. By recycling filters, we recapture this oil for reuse and also help ensure the safety of our statewide water supplies.

Buncombe County Solid Waste is working diligently to make the transition to 100% recycling as easy as possible for everyone, so watch for more details soon about expanded opportunities for used oil filter recycling.



What & Where to Recycle

Material	Locations	Preparation
Bottles & Cans		
All Plastic Bottles & Jugs (NO food containers, clamshells, or tubs)	All	Rinse, remove lids, and flatten.
Aluminum Cans	All	Rinse.
Steel Cans	All	Rinse.
Glass (clear, green, and brown bottles and jars)	All	Rinse and remove lids.
Paper		
Newspaper	All	At curb: May be placed in blue bag—no need to bundle separately.
Corrugated Cardboard	All	Flatten and tie in bundles. (At curb: Place next to blue bag.)
Mixed Paper (magazines, office paper, junk mail, cereal boxes, etc.)	All	At curb: May be placed in blue bag.
Special Wastes		
Lead-Acid Batteries	B and C	
Motor Oil	B only	
Tires	B only	
White Goods (stoves, refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, scrap metal)	B and C	
Household Hazardous Waste	B only	
Electronics	B only	
Non-Infectious Medical Waste (including "sharps")	C only	
Wood Waste	B only	

Recycling Options in Buncombe County

- A: Blue Bag Program** – Residents who receive garbage service from GDS may purchase blue bags from Ingles' Supermarkets, Wal-Mart, and Sam's. Please note: blue bag supplies vary. Call your neighborhood store to be certain bags are available.
- B: Solid Waste Management Facility (Landfill)** on Panther Branch Road – See map on Page 4.
- C: Transfer Station** on Brevard Road – See map on Page 4.
- D: Westgate Shopping Center**

CORRECTION!

In the Fall edition, we incorrectly stated that yard waste can be dropped off at no charge at the Landfill. Yard waste, including leaves, grass clippings, brush, and tree/bush trimmings, are accepted at the landfill, but *fees do apply*. For yard waste materials that are suitable for mulching, there is a \$22 per-ton disposal fee. We're sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

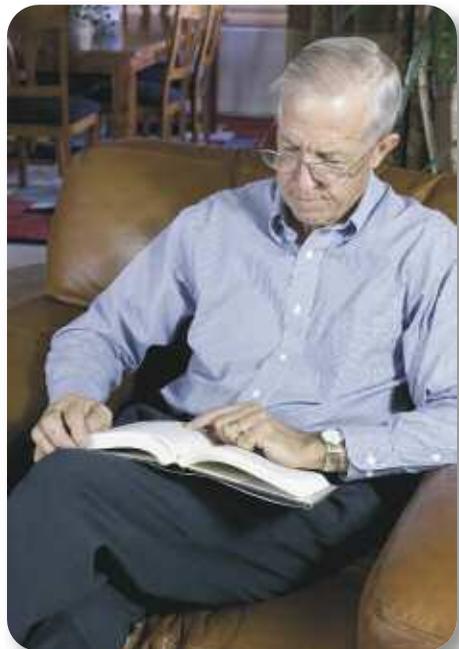
Residents get caught recycling

Last summer, Buncombe County Solid Waste partnered with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources Pollution Prevention Division to encourage recycling. Several hundred residents who were "caught recycling" received tickets to an Asheville Tourists Minor League Baseball game. GDS rewarded blue bag recyclers throughout Buncombe County. Curbside Management gave away 200 tickets to curbside customers in the towns of Woodfin and Weaverville, and 500 tickets were given away at the three drop-off locations operated by Buncombe County.

10 tips FOR A BETTER New Year

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

1. Before you buy, ask yourself these questions: Do I need this? Do I already have something like this? Do I need something new right now? Does it have too much packaging? What will I do with this when I no longer need it?
2. Stop making "wish lists." Whether you make them online, write them on a scrap of paper, or keep them in your head, wish lists keep you thinking about what you want but don't yet have.



(c) Louoates/SnapVillage.com

3. Start your exercise, weight-loss, 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 later, if you need them.
4. Precycle. You do this by shopping for groceries and other products with recycling in mind. Know what you can recycle and choose products packaged in those materials. Better yet, try to buy items with no packaging whenever possible. For example, if you need a bunch of bananas or two apples, you don't need a plastic produce bag.
5. Commit to recycled-content products. Successful recycling programs depend on having manufacturers use your recyclables. If you need a new fleece vest or jacket, look for fleece made from recycled soft drink bottles. Did the dog ruin your carpet? Select recycled-content carpet.
6. Take an inventory at home. Do you have supplies for a hobby that you never started? Now would be a good time to begin. Do you have books on



(c) Monkey Business Images/SnapVillage.com

your shelf that you haven't read? Don't buy a new book—read one you already own. The same goes for movies—have you watched all of the DVDs you have at home? If not, start now.

7. Find your library card. The library is a great resource for no-cost entertainment. Look for books, magazines, CDs, movies, and more.

8. Scan your pantry shelves for food that your family won't eat. We all have canned and boxed goods that we purchased but never got around to using. Check the "use by" or "best by" dates and donate unexpired items to a local food pantry or other non-profit organization.

9. Give more of your time and talent. If you are feeling that you can't afford to donate as much money to your favorite causes, commit more of your time and energy.
10. Start thinking now about planting a garden this year. A garden can be a relaxing hobby and also a good source of food for your family. Even if you just have a small patio, consider planting tomatoes or peppers, which can grow in a pot.

For more information, visit www.newdream.org/marketplace/economy.php for The Center for a New American Dream's "Economy Survival Guide: Give Your Life a Make-Under," or call 877-68-DREAM.

Every dollar I spend is a statement about the kind of world I want and the quality of life I value.

New American Dream
www.newdream.org

“Junk” highlights plastic problem in oceans

Last summer, Dr. Marcus Eriksen and Joel Paschal set sail from Long Beach, California and headed for Honolulu, Hawaii. However, they weren't traveling on a traditional and comfortable craft. Instead, they were aboard a raft floating on pontoons made from 15,000 plastic water bottles, sitting atop a deck made from salvaged sailboat masts, and enjoying only the shelter of an old Cessna private plane's body. The raft had four sails and was able to travel about 50 miles each day. The 2,600 mile journey took nearly three months.

The raft was made from junk and christened "Junk" to shed light on an urgent marine problem—the accumulation of plastic debris, especially bottles and bags, in our oceans. Plastic debris in the oceans can harm aquatic life, choking birds, killing plankton, and releasing toxins into the water. In an area north of Hawaii, known as the North Pacific Gyre, a large whirlpool of plastic trash spins. The area is home to more plastic, by weight, than plankton, which are small drifting organisms that form the bottom of the marine food chain.

Thanks to modern technology, the mariners were able to stay on course and in touch with Anna Cummins, who provided ground support. During the voyage, they took video and blogged their journey, posting the results regularly on the Internet.

To learn more about making the Junk raft and the trip across the eastern Pacific, visit www.junkraft.blogspot.com or <http://junkraft.com>. To watch video about the voyage, go to www.YouTube.com and search for "junk raft."



Photos courtesy of YachtPals.com

QUOTES REQUOTED

Use it up,
wear it out,
make it do, or
do without.

Early American Saying

Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration



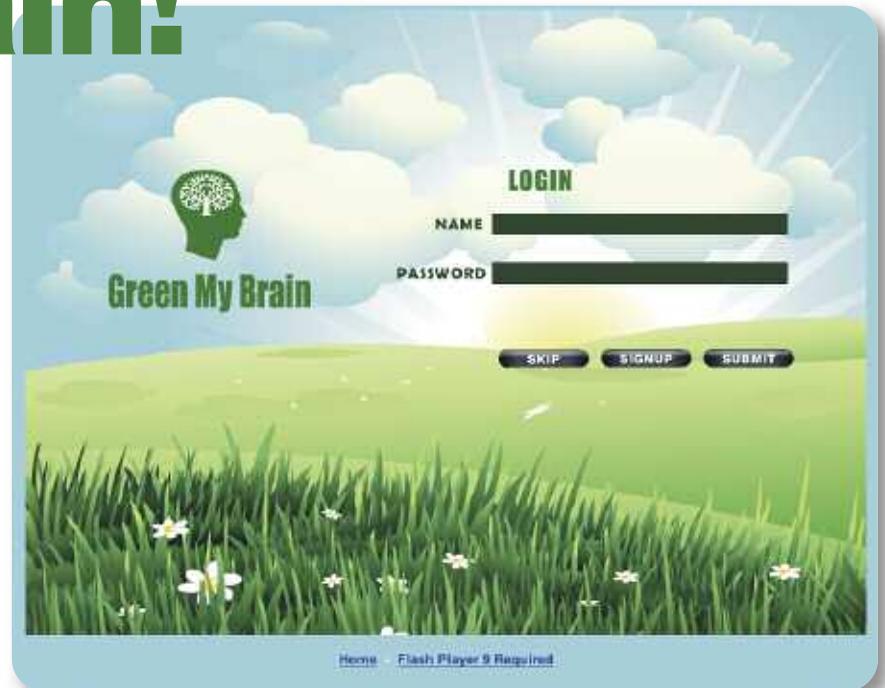
Green your brain!

Are you looking for some indoor fun? Test your “green score” by playing the interactive trivia game at www.greenmybrain.com. Each question addresses an environmental problem, a solution, or an action that you can take. Answers are multiple choice. There are two levels, with level two questions being more challenging.

Even at level one, you’ll find some tricky questions, such as: “Between 1980 and 1999, the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulations on lead usage reduced lead emissions by what percent?” (The answer is 95%!) Other questions may cover more familiar territory, like this one: “Instead of buying containers for leftovers at the store, you can....” (We’ll let you figure that one out yourself!)

Whether you are a novice or an expert, you’ll have fun playing this game and will learn a lot along the way.

Players can even submit questions. Of course, the game masters do thorough fact-checking before posting submitted questions and answers.



Paper, paper everywhere

Each year, we preserve only 10% of the paper that we receive and handle. This preserved paper includes books, magazines, photographs, and filed documents. The rest of the paper is recycled or disposed. As much as 81% of this paper could be recycled, while the remainder is destroyed during use or contaminated, such as tissues. However, at present, 56% of paper is being recycled, which means we can do better.

Our paper recycling in the U.S. affects the supply of recyclable paper around the globe. America has been referred to as “the Saudi Arabia of recovered paper.” On average, Americans recycle 360 pounds of paper and paper products (such as corrugated cardboard) each year. In 2007, 54.3 million tons of paper were recovered for recycling in the U.S. This paper becomes the feedstock for paper recycling mills around the world. Just as the Middle East provides much of the

world with oil, the U.S. supplies much of the world with recyclable paper.

In a time when U.S. paper consumption has leveled off, paper consumption around the world is increasing rapidly. At present, worldwide consumption is about 440 million tons per year. However, by 2015, that number may be as high as 550 million tons, with the largest growth in China and India, the world’s most populous nations. If the U.S. were to recycle all of the paper that is currently recyclable, we could meet nearly one-quarter of that additional demand, supplying about 25 million tons more paper to the recovery system.

But what about the non-recyclable paper—those papers that are destroyed or contaminated during use? The best option is to purchase 100% recycled-content alternatives. For instance, if every household in the U.S. purchased a single roll of 100% recycled-content toilet paper, we could save 330,000 trees.

To learn more about paper manufacturing, use, and recycling, go to INFORM’s Secret Life Series at www.secret-life.org/paper/. You’ll find a helpful video, as well as a great deal of useful information.

For more information about paper recycling, visit www.paperrecycles.org or contact our office.

What is the Forest Stewardship Council?

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, international organization which certifies forests and forest-based products. The FSC standards focus on environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable forestry management practices. The goal of the FSC is forests that conserve biological diversity, minimize logging-related pollution, improve the lives of forest workers and surrounding communities, and encourage long-term health and usefulness of the forest stock.

However, FSC certification doesn’t stop at the edge of the forest. Through a rigorous, chain of custody certification program, FSC follows the tree to sawmill, manufacturing plant, and distribution center. When a paper or building product bears the FSC logo, you’ll know that the trees used to make the product were harvested in the most sustainable way possible.

In 2008, 254 million acres of forest worldwide, representing about 7% of all forests, had received FSC certification. More than 10,000 products are FSC certified. When you shop for building products, paper, and paper products, look for the FSC logo.

For more information, visit www.fscus.org.

Forty Years Later...

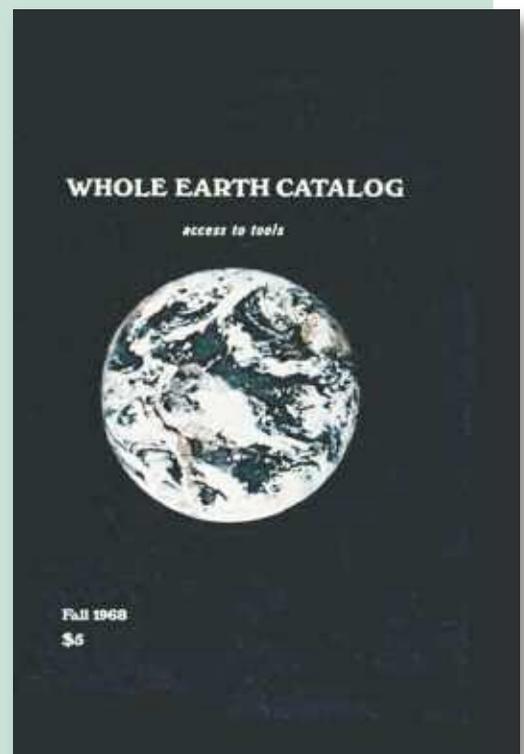
In the fall of 1968, Stewart Brand and friends published a catalog that became a sensation. The *Whole Earth Catalog*, which was only published regularly through 1972 and then periodically thereafter, is where the weekend do-it-yourselfer crossed paths with the back-to-land enthusiast.

The goal of the catalog was to provide “access to tools.” Some of these tools were products, but others were ideas, including books, journals, magazines, maps, and classes. This wasn’t a mail-order catalog, but rather, a resource on systems and technologies, companies, and products. Members of the Whole Earth team sought out and evaluated tools and ideas, providing helpful reviews for the readers. To be listed, an item had to meet several criteria, including that it was: useful as a tool; relevant to independent education; high-quality or low-cost; not already commonly known; and easily available by mail. For example, the first catalog had features on the magazine *Scientific American*, the outdoor outfitter L.L. Bean, and a Hewlett-Packard tabletop calculator.

According to Apple founder Steve Jobs, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was the forerunner of the Internet. First, the catalog actively promoted emerging technologies. Second, it encouraged thinking in terms of “systems.” And, third, it relied heavily on the collaboration of its contributors, including “user-generated content.” In other words, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was a search engine, like Google, and a blog — long before those two existed.

In 1972, the *Whole Earth Catalog* won a National Book Award for the serialized publication of Gurney Norman’s novel, *Divine Right’s Trip*. This was the only National Book Award ever given to a catalog.

If you don’t remember the *Whole Earth Catalog*, visit www.wholeearth.com, where you can see old editions online or read some of the articles.



WHAT'S UP?

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. Contact the Solid Waste Department prior to arrival. Businesses are assessed a fee for electronics recycling. **Proof of County residency is required.**

The following items must be separated out of loads and brought to the electronics recycling area. Remember, electronics are only accepted on Fridays!

- VCRs and DVD Players
- Copiers
- Fax Machines
- Telephones
- Stereos
- Calculators
- Cell Phones
- Video Cameras
- Televisions (limit 3 per month)
- Computers, such as monitors (limit 3 per month), CPUs, and keyboards

Household Hazardous Waste is also accepted on Fridays only. HHW includes:

- Paint and paint-related items, such as water sealer, paint thinners, enamels, and polyurethane – \$2.00 per gallon
- Pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, motor oil, antifreeze, and lead-acid batteries – No Charge

No hazardous wastes from businesses will be accepted. Bio-hazardous materials, radioactives, and explosives are NOT accepted at any time.



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.

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

**Buncombe County
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Alexander, NC 28701
828-250-5460
www.buncombecounty.org**

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Buncombe County Landfill

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

- 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, shampoo bottles); aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass bottles and jars; and steel cans
- Lead-acid batteries
- 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 12:30 p.m.

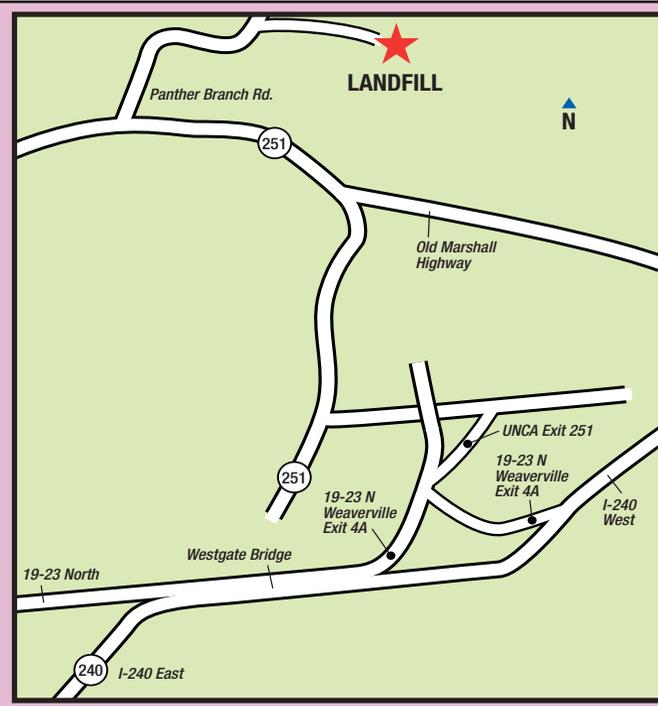
Transfer Station

The Transfer Station, which is located just off 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:

- 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
- White goods (large appliances) and other metals
- Lead-acid batteries
- "Sharps," such as needles and

Directions to the Buncombe County Landfill:

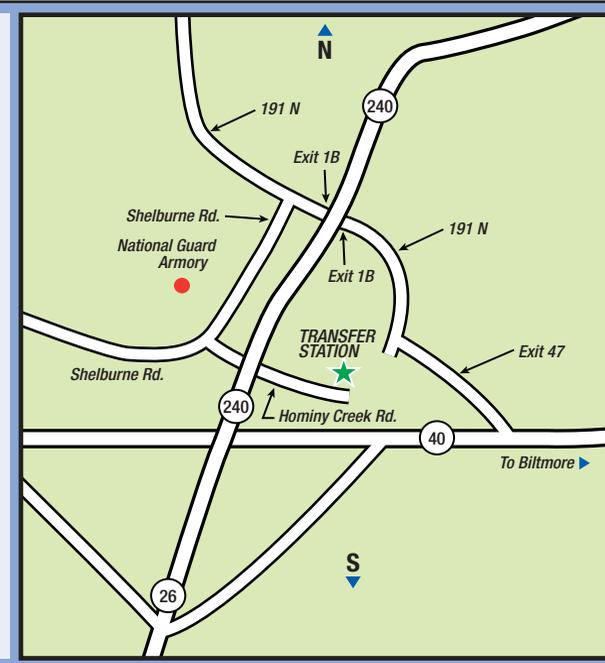
From I-240 East or West, take Exit 4A to 19/23 North. Travel 1 mile and then take UNC-A exit. At the end of the exit, turn left. Go to traffic light and turn right onto 251 North. Continue on 251 North for 9 miles to Panther Branch Road. Turn right onto Panther Branch Road and travel 1/10 of a mile to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



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.



lancets, and non-infectious medical waste from in-home care

We also accept reusable corrugated cardboard moving boxes and shipping

cartons. Please break down and flatten the boxes for storage.

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

Recycling Fluorescent Tubes and Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs

Residents can drop off used compact and regular fluorescent light bulbs and tubes at any of these participating municipal and volunteer fire departments:

- Asheville #2 and #11
- Beaverdam
- Black Mountain
- Enka-Candler (2 sites)
- Fairview
- Reems Creek
- Reynolds
- Riceville
- Skyland

- Swannanoa
- Weaverville

If the fluorescent lamps are broken, they will be accepted, but follow the cleanup guidelines below to ensure your safety and that of the firefighters. **BULBS FROM BUSINESSES OR SCHOOLS ARE NOT ACCEPTED AT THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS.**

Residents have two other options, as



well. You can drop off compact fluorescent lights at the customer service counter of any Home Depot store. Or, you can order at-home fluorescent tube and compact fluorescent bulb recycling kits from Waste Management at www.thinkgreenfromhome.com.

When a fluorescent tube or bulb is broken, mercury is released. Most of the mercury is released as a vapor, with a small amount left behind as a powder. Here are the guidelines to follow for safe cleanup if a fluorescent tube or bulb breaks:

- Sweep up the contents of all broken bulbs and place into a zippered plastic bag. DO NOT use a vacuum cleaner, as this will spread hazardous vapors and contaminate the vacuum.
- Wipe the area with a wet paper towel or cloth. Place this damp paper towel or cloth into a second zippered plastic bag.
- Ventilate the room where the lamp was broken.
- Bring the zippered plastic bags to the Fire Station. Please make sure the broken bulb and towel are sealed tightly in the plastic bags when transporting them to the Fire Station.

During the first year of the fluorescent tube and bulb recycling program, Buncombe County recycled 5,114 lamps, keeping them out of the landfill. One hundred percent of these lamps are recycled.

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

CLIP & SAVE