

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



**Buncombe County Solid
Waste Department**
828-250-5460
Winter 2005



After Tropical Storms Ivan and Frances ravaged our area, the Buncombe County Landfill helped speed the cleanup by accepting more than 1,700 TONS of debris from residents at no charge.

When disaster strikes...

County Solid Waste Department and Other Agencies Swing Into Action

When Tropical Storms Ivan and Frances raced through our area last fall, we were left with flooding that resulted in many tons of debris being washed into our rivers and streams. Some of this debris included fuel and chemical tanks that posed fire, explosion, and poisoning risks to residents and businesses if not dealt with rapidly.

Because time was so short, the Asheville Fire & Rescue Haz-Mat Teams, Swift Water Rescue Teams, and Environmental Protection Agency contract personnel teamed up to form River "Recon" Teams. Using high-tech equipment, such as global positioning systems (GPS) and digital photography, as well as lower-tech means, such as legal pads and pens, these teams hit the rivers to find the tanks and drums.

First priority was given to closing valves and stopping leaks to keep pollutants from entering our waterways. The second task, which often required cranes and other heavy equipment, involved righting the tanks and drums and placing them where they could be recycled.

This effort resulted in removal of these tanks and drums from the rivers and streams:

- 450 55-gallon drums of oil
- 162 home heating oil tanks, ranging in size from 275- to 550-gallon
- Six 30,000-gallon oil tanks
- Two 20,000-gallon oil tanks
- A 48-foot trailer, a 24-foot boat, and a military trailer

This quick cleanup, which was coordinated by the Buncombe County Hazardous Waste Office, depended on the assistance and support of many agencies, groups, and individuals. Many thanks to Buncombe County Emergency Services; all Buncombe County Fire & Rescue personnel; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 4 On Scene Coordinator (OSC) Office and their contract personnel, including U.S. Coast Guard, Garco, Inc., Ferguson Harbor, and CMC Inc.; all participating volunteer agencies, including Red Cross and Hearts with Hands; North Carolina Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and the community at large for coming together to make the best of this disaster.



CLIP & SAVE

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

recycled “bling bling”

Bling bling is that wonderful, gaudy stuff that says, “I’m here. Notice me.” And these days, there is plenty of recycled art that does just that. Whether you’re interested in the fancy, the functional, or the fun, there is probably recycled art out there to suit your taste—and your budget.

Artist Stewart Webb creates “technomontages” with old computer chips, used CDs, aerospace junk, lab-grown stones, and antique bakelite. These technomontages take the form of earrings, necklaces, pendants, clocks, and frames. Want to see more? Visit Webb’s site on the Internet, www.arteco.com.

Everything from tote bags to clutches seems to be covered with brightly colored pictures—and have something to say. If you’re a little tired of French that you can’t read, why not look for something more familiar? There are wallets, purses, hobo bags, tote bags, and even duffles made from juice pouches. Or, if you’re interested in something a little spicier, keep an eye out for purses made from chip bags. You can see some of these bags at www.Abernook.com or www.YummyBags.com, or search for “recycled juice pouches” on the Internet.

Juice pouches and chip bags aren’t the only printed purses and bags available. Myrtlerose’s Attic is one of the many studios making purses from such treasures as Tyvek envelopes covered with used stamps, vintage children’s books, and old album covers. To see products made by Charlene at Myrtlerose’s Attic, as well as similar items such as the woven plastic bag tote, visit www.StreetFairAmerica.com and click on “Recycled Items.”



This bookshelf was made from old hardcover books. (Photo courtesy of eco-artware.com)

Art for the home and garden is often made from scrap, found, and waste objects, too. We’ve mentioned the clocks made from computer components. But there are also artists who make tableware, lamps, coffee tables, sculptures, wall hangings, and more from broken glass, corrugated cardboard, shoes, mesh bags, pop cans, and the list goes on.

If you are looking for recycled bling bling, search for “recycled art” on the Internet or go to www.eco-artware.com.

Remember to patronize local artists and artisans.

Around the corner from wherever we are, there are creative minds putting clever hands to work on found objects as varied as wallpaper and wooden pallets. Check out their work at craft fairs, art shows, or gift shops.



Photo courtesy of Abernook.com

X-treme Green at X Games

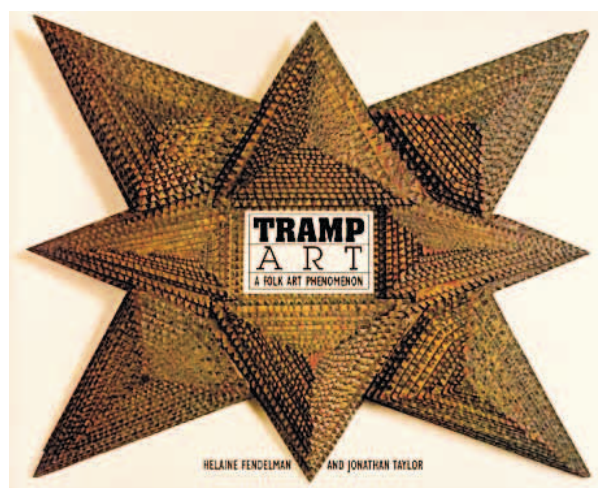


During August, sports fans got to enjoy the summer Olympics in Athens, Greece, and the X Games in Los Angeles, California. If swimming and beach volleyball were a little too tame for your family, chances are you might have watched the extreme stunts of skateboarders, bikers, and skaters at the X Games.

The X Games provided their usual thrills and chills—on a greener platform than usual. The ramps, including the new “Mega Ramp,” were all made from wood that came from forests that are environmentally friendly. (The Forest Stewardship Council certifies these forests.) In addition to these ramps, the Games featured a solar-powered sound system, recycling stations for fans and competitors, and collector cards printed on 100-percent recycled-content paper. Along with stats on the extreme athletes, these collector cards even provided some environmental facts.

Magnificent MONGO

When journalist Ted Botha moved to New York City, he furnished his apartment with found objects. In the process, he learned that the city was full of dumpster divers and garbage gurus who gloried in “mongo.” (Mongo is a slang term that means “any discarded item that is retrieved.”) He has recorded their stories in *Mongo: Adventures in Trash* (Bloomsbury, 2004). Some of the stories are about collectors, and others focus on survivors, but all share a fascination with what might be found in the next bin or bag.



Recycled or found art has traditionally been considered part of “folk art.” Why? Because it is art made from materials that are readily available to regular folk living their everyday lives. Some of the most famous recycled folk art is “Tramp Art.” Tramp Art is three-dimensional art created from discarded cedar and mahogany cigar boxes. This wood was intricately carved, positioned, and glued to create picture frames, boxes, and small tables. Most of these were created around the beginning of the 20th Century by artisans, some of whom were travelers and others who were householders, but almost all of whom are now anonymous to us.

To see Tramp Art, visit a local antique store or go online to www.folkartisans.com/trampart.

To read more about Tramp Art, look for these books: *Tramp Art: A Folk Art Phenomenon* by Helaine Fendelman and Jonathan Taylor (Stewart Tabori & Chang, 1999); *Tramp Art, One Notch At A Time* by Clifford A. Wallach (Wallach-Irons, 1998); and *Hobo & Tramp Art Carving: An Authentic American Folk Tradition* by Adolph Vandertie with Patrick Spielman (Sterling Publishing Company, 1995).

What's new with WasteWise?

In 2004, WasteWise celebrated its 10th anniversary. WasteWise boasts nearly 1,400 business and organization partners representing more than 50 industry sectors and nearly 230 endorsers from 15 sectors. All of the partners and endorsers, who take part in this program voluntarily, are committed to reducing their waste and lowering their costs for waste handling and disposal.

WasteWise makes a difference one business and organization at a time. In 2004, 18 of the participants received awards for their achievements, and another 30 were recognized for their ongoing efforts.

For more information about WasteWise, visit www.epa.gov/wastewise, or call 1-800-EPA-WISE.



10 tips for a greener home

1. When you paint, choose latex. Latex is water-based for easier cleanup—and doesn't require disposal as hazardous waste. Better yet, choose latex without volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs contribute to the formation of indoor and outdoor air pollution.
2. Need "new" furniture? Look for secondhand or antique furniture. Remember—when you reuse, no new product has to be made, saving energy and natural resources.
3. Recarpeting? Look for recycled-content carpet. Carpet can be made from recycled PET bottles. Ask about the recycled-content of the carpets you are considering.
4. If you are replacing appliances, choose energy-efficient "Energy Star" appliances. And remember to sell or donate old working appliances and recycle non-working appliances!
5. When it is time to replace your light bulbs, choose compact fluorescents. They use less energy and last much longer, creating less waste. (Compact fluorescents do contain mercury, so they require special disposal when they burn out. Call us for details.)
6. If you're adding on or building new, check out "green building" techniques and materials. During the project, donate or recycle leftover, scrap, and unused building materials and supplies. If your project includes demolition, look into deconstruction. With deconstruction, you can reduce your project waste by as much as 75 percent.
7. If you're building or rebuilding a deck, look for sustainably harvested wood or recycled plastic lumber. Consider recycled plastic fencing and outdoor furniture as well. It is sturdy and doesn't require painting.
8. Conserve water by installing low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators. You can also conserve water by selecting the correct water level when washing clothes (or washing only full loads if you don't have a water level adjustment). Run your dishwasher only when it is full.
9. When possible, avoid purchasing hazardous products, including cleaners. Read labels carefully. Buy only the amount you need. Follow instructions for use and disposal. Need disposal advice? Call us.
10. Purchase paper products, such as toilet paper, made from recycled paper. (If you buy paper napkins or paper towels, look for recycled-content paper in those, too!)



Better care for batteries

Flashlights, phones, handheld organizers, laptop computers...batteries power much of our daily lives. By making sure that your batteries last as long as possible, you can reduce waste and save money on replacements. Here are some tips to help you give your batteries a long and useful life.

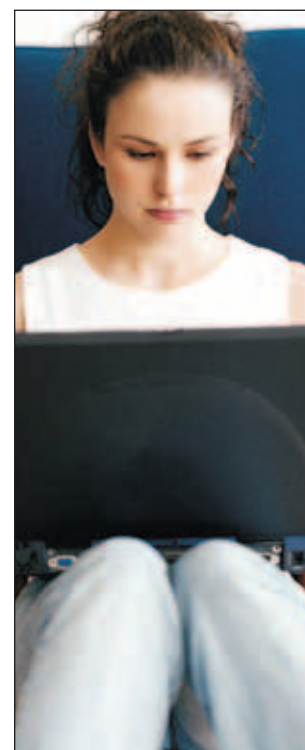
All batteries experience a certain amount of "self-discharge," meaning that they lose some power even when not in use. To reduce the amount of self-discharge that your batteries experience, store them in a cool, dry location. You can store batteries in the refrigerator, but put them into an airtight container and place them in the door, which is the driest part of the refrigerator. Be sure to let your batteries warm up to room temperature before using them.

Don't send a disposable to do a rechargeable's job! Many handheld electronics require high boosts of energy for short periods of time. Rechargeable batteries are the best batteries for this job. Rechargeables can be used as few as 50 to as many as a thousand times. While items like cell phones come with rechargeable batteries, you'll need to select and purchase rechargeables to be used in small appliances that take AAA, AA, C, D, and 9-volt batteries.

Rechargeable batteries come in many shapes, sizes, and chemical compositions. That means the instructions for how to use and recharge the batteries are not, unfortunately, "one size fits all." Whenever you buy rechargeable batteries or a new rechargeable product with a battery inside, read and follow the instructions carefully. Find out whether you can use the batteries right away or if they need to be "initialized," which is a one-time startup charging period. Learn if you are supposed to recharge when the battery gets low or wait until it is fully discharged.

Be sure that you are using the right charger or adapter for each battery. Chargers and adapters may look alike, but they are not necessarily interchangeable.

While this may all sound like a lot of work, knowing how to choose and care for your batteries will greatly improve their reliability, increase their life cycle, and save you money on costly replacements.



Green-sources

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
www.aceee.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy "Energy Star" Program
www.energystar.gov

Earth Easy's Guide to Living at Home with the Earth
www.eartheasy.com/live_menu.htm

Healthy House Institute
www.hhinst.com

National Association of Home Builders' ToolBase
www.toolbase.org/index-toolbase.asp

U.S. Green Building Council
www.usgbc.org



Quotes REQUOTED

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little."

Edmund Burke,
British statesman, 1729–1797

Now starring at Starbucks



Each year, customers across the country walk out of Starbucks stores with about 1.5 billion paper to-go cups. Beginning in 2005, those cups will feature something more than coffee—recycled paper.

Starbucks recently announced that the U.S. Food & Drug Administration had approved the use of paper cups with 10 percent recycled content. While 10 percent may not sound like much, consider that this will save about 5 million pounds of virgin tree fiber each year. Starbucks already uses recycled paper in cardboard cup sleeves, napkins, and drink carriers.

Remember—you can choose to reuse at Starbucks and other coffee shops. Many offer reusable mugs if you'll be staying to drink your coffee. Plus, most allow you to bring in your own mug and have it filled, often at a slightly discounted price. Ask about it where you fill up.

WHAT'S UP?

Household hazardous waste and electronics accepted each week at Landfill

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 (see map).

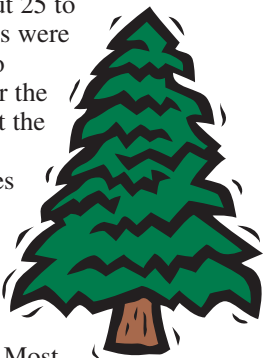
Each week, we accept electronics from residents at no charge. Businesses will also be able to drop off electronics, but they will be charged a fee of 60 cents per pound.

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

For more information, call 250-5460 or the Landfill at 645-5311.

Now's the time to recycle those holiday trees

In December, about 25 to 30 million cut trees were used nationwide to decorate homes for the holidays. Now that the holiday season is over, these cut trees have begun to dry out and must be disposed. Each year, as many as 90 percent of the trees are recycled. Most are chipped and turned into mulch. Others are submerged in ponds to create fish habitat or to prevent shoreline erosion.



After you remove all the decorations, lights, stand, and tinsel from your family's cut holiday tree, give it another life with recycling. We'll be accepting trees for recycling at the Buncombe County Landfill, the Nature Center, and McCormick Field. You can also drop off trees at B.B. Barnes Company, located at 3377 Sweeten Creek Road, Asheville, where Progress Energy will chip the trees. Mulch will be available at all four sites at the end of January.

Last year, we collected and recycled more than 1,000 Christmas trees at the Landfill alone.

Use the Transfer Station for convenient recycling

The Transfer Station, which is located on Brevard Road, is now 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
- Corrugated cardboard
- "Blue bag" or commingled recy-

clable 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.

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.



Do you have an empty propane tank?

If you have a new propane tank for your gas grill or turkey fryer, trade in your empty for a full tank or have your empty tank refilled. However, if you have an older tank, you may not be able to have it refilled any longer. Tanks without a safety device, called an "overflow protection device," can no longer be legally refilled. Instead, these tanks must be recycled. We are now accepting these and other unusable empty propane tanks at the Landfill during regular business hours. This program is for residents only to allow them to recycle tanks used at home.



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
- 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
- Motor oils
- Tires
- White goods, including stoves,

refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, and all metals

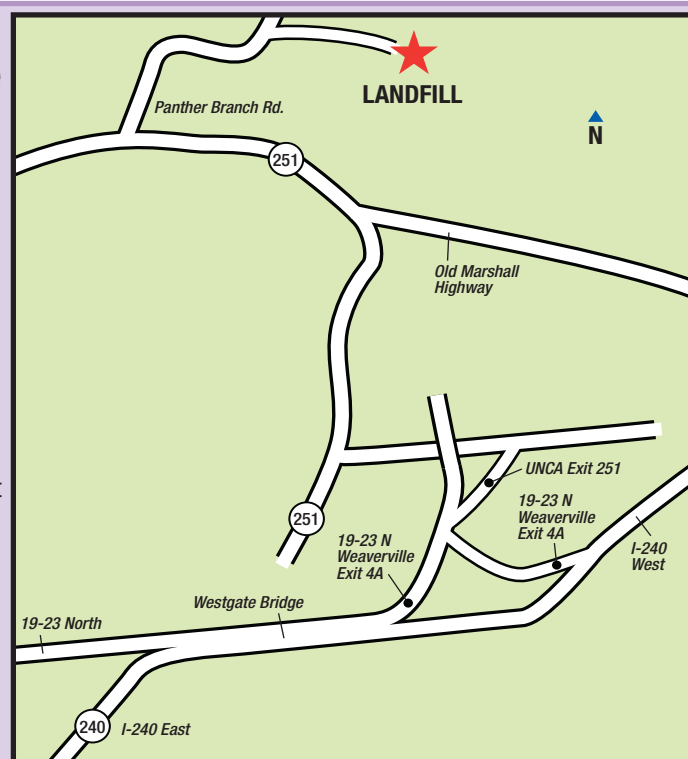
- Empty, triple-rinsed pesticide containers
- Empty propane tanks
- Christmas trees (real, cut trees only—please remove decorations)

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.

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.



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

2229 Riverside Drive
Asheville, NC 28804

828-250-5460

Web: buncombecounty.org

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