

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

828-250-5460

Fall 2006



Putting waste to work

At the Buncombe County Landfill, waste is turning into usable gas thanks to a "bioreactor" that speeds the rotting process. We're putting our waste to work!

In a normal landfill, waste is entombed in such a way that as little water as possible gets in. As a result, it may take 50 or more years for materials to decompose. In a bioreactor landfill, moisture is added to the waste, causing the biodegradable materials to decompose in as little as 15 years.

The bioreactor process offers several benefits. First, much of the moisture that is being added back to the waste comes from the landfill's

"leachate collection" system. This system captures rainfall and runoff that percolate through the waste. This leachate would



Retrofitting a landfill cell with the bioreactor

Landfill also a drop-off for residents

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

- 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
- Batteries, such as rechargeable batteries, cell phone batteries, marine batteries, lead-acid automotive batteries, and lawnmower batteries
- Tires

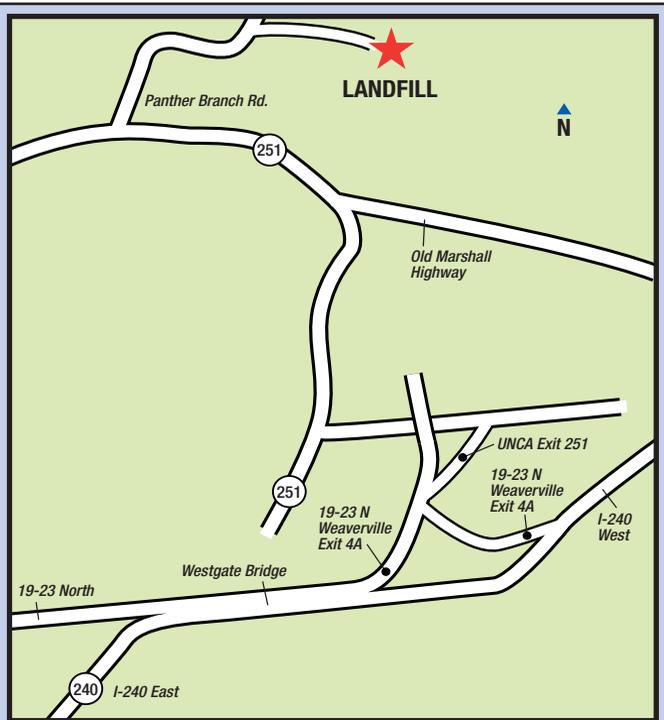
- White goods, including stoves, refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, and all metals
- Empty, triple-rinsed pesticide containers
- Empty propane tanks (20-pound, gas grill type ONLY)
- Cut, bare real Christmas trees (remove all stands, decorations, lights, and tinsel)

You can drop off household trash at the Landfill. There is a fee to dispose of trash. The Landfill is open to accept trash and recyclables Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tours of the landfill are available to interested groups, including clubs, civic organizations, scout troops, and classes. For details, call 645-5311.

Directions to the Buncombe County Landfill:

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



have to be treated and discharged if we were not reusing it. Second, the landfilled materials shrink and settle more quickly, providing more space for additional waste in the same area, called a "cell." Third, by speeding up and controlling the decomposition process in our bioreactor landfill, we are able to harvest methane gas now, rather than waiting until the landfill is closed.

Methane gas is a powerful greenhouse gas when released into the air. However, if it is captured, it can be used as a fuel, similar to natural gas or propane. At the landfill, enough methane gas is being captured to power an onsite electricity generation plant. The methane from the landfill is currently providing a sufficient amount of electricity for 650



Methane flare station

homes each year. The electricity is marketed through NC GreenPower.

In addition, the methane can be used to run natural gas vehicles, which is why the County is working to convert much of its fleet to natural gas-powered vehicles.

Learn more about the bioreactor project at www.buncombebioreactor.com, or call the Landfill Bioreactor Project Manager Denese Ballew at 250-5460.

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:

- Batteries, such as rechargeable batteries, cell phone batteries, marine batteries, lead-acid automotive batteries, and lawnmower batteries
- Newspaper and brown paper bags

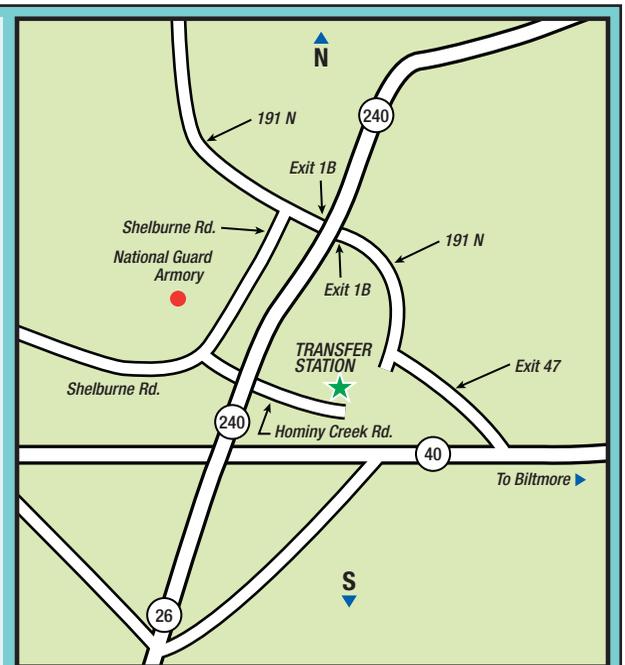
- Office paper and mail
- Corrugated cardboard
- "Blue Bag" or commingled recyclable containers, including #1 & #2 plastic; aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass; and steel cans

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

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.



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

10 Tips for a happier holiday season

Beginning with fall football bashes and continuing until Valentine's Day, fall and winter are a time for festivals, parties, family gatherings, and holiday celebrations. This means more food, more gifts, and more stuff. Here are some tips for a greener, cleaner, and perhaps happier holiday season.

1. Plan your parties with care. Get an accurate head count so that you can prepare enough food, but not too much. If you need help with your calculations, use the party food and beverage calculators at www.greatpartyrecipes.com/partyfoodplanning.html. At the end of the party, send leftover food home with guests in clean, reused containers.
2. Steer clear of disposables whenever possible. There's no need to stock up on paper tablecloths, paper plates, plastic cups, and plastic flatware. Use your own washable tablecloths, napkins, dishes, glassware, and silverware. Don't have enough on hand? Purchase low-cost extras at secondhand stores, borrow from friends or relatives, or rent what you need.
3. Resist the temptation to buy unneeded extras. Your guests will probably enjoy a New Year's Eve party just as much without the plastic party hats. In fact, they may enjoy it more! If you decide to buy decorations for one of your parties, ask yourself: Will I be able to use these decorations again later? Do I have room to store them? If you answer yes, then shop and enjoy. If you answer no, step back and think about whether you really want them after all. You can create your own decorations with things you already have. Tape together old calendar pages for your New Year's Eve table. Grab footballs and create a pigskin centerpiece for your Super Bowl party.
4. Make it easy for guests to recycle at your parties. Put a recycling bin or container right next to each trash can.
5. Reduce, reuse, and recycle while you travel. On car trips, pack your own sandwiches and healthy snacks, and bring drinks in reusable or recyclable containers. Many Interstate rest areas have recycling drop-off bins. If you don't see them, simply keep your containers in a bag or box and recycle them when you arrive at your destination or back at home. On plane trips, look for recycling bins for newspaper and beverage containers in airports. Remember to pack your carry-on bags so that you aren't standing at security throwing things away. Many items that used to be OK in carry-ons are now banned and must be placed into checked luggage. If you haven't flown in a while, check the current guidelines at www.tsa.gov.
6. Take a long, hard look at your gift list. In some cases, you may be exchanging gifts with people out of a sense of obligation. If you are close to these people, discuss a non-gift alternative, such as doing something fun together in the spring, meeting once a month to catch up, or donating your time together to help someone in need. If people still want something to unwrap, talk about drawing names for a gift exchange. Not close enough to have this discussion?
7. Give gifts that are thoughtful. A thoughtful gift doesn't have to be expensive and it doesn't have to be brand-new, but it does need to show that you care about the recipient and the things that make him or her happy. For instance, a movie fan with a collection of old westerns may love to have a used DVD of a hard-to-find classic. For a music buff, a gift certificate from an online music store may be the ideal gift. For the person who has everything, the best gift may be a donation to an organization he or she cares about.
8. Wrap gifts with old maps, colorful magazine pages, fabric scraps, or reused paper and gift bags. Or, better yet, make the wrapping part of the gift. For a gardener, put a trowel and seeds into an empty flower pot—just add a reused ribbon and the gift is "wrapped." Reuse the fronts of last year's holiday or birthday cards as gift tags.
9. Declare a "Buy Nothing Day" (or two)! Devote this day to family and friends. Bake cookies, make your favorite appetizers, or pop some popcorn. Watch the bowl games. Learn new board games. Have a movie marathon. The official "Buy Nothing Day" is the Friday after Thanksgiving, which is November 24 this year. However, you can make any day into a "Buy Nothing Day."
10. Enjoy your time with family and friends! Get-togethers should make everyone feel more connected, rather than more rushed.



worth noting

Recently, Random House became the first major U.S. publishing company to commit to using a substantial amount of recycled paper in its books. The publisher has set two goals: 10 percent recycled-content paper for its "glossy" titles, such as cookbooks and art books, by 2008, and 30 percent recycled content in all other books by 2010. Because Random House holds about 13 percent of the adult book market, these measures equate to preserving more than 550,000 trees each year.

According to the Green Press Initiative, which campaigns for more recycled paper in books and other printed materials, Random House is the first major publisher to join around 100 smaller companies that have already made the move to recycled-content paper.

Trade the stuff you're done with for stuff you want!

That's the motto of Zunafish, a new website devoted to helping people trade DVDs, CDs, paperback books, video games, VHS tapes, and audiobooks. If your media collection has grown too large or if you never did like a few of the CDs or DVDs you've ended up with, this is a great way to trade them for classics, favorites, or simply items that are new-to-you.

At this site, you post your list of items that you would like to trade. Someone makes an offer for one of your items and you go to his or her list to find something you want. If you find something and agree to the trade, you each pay Zunafish \$1 and they provide you with the mailing labels. You are each responsible for postage to ship your traded items.

For details, visit www.Zunafish.com.

Seasonal Suggestions

Gift Rapt

www.grist.org/news/maindish/2005/11/22/giftguide/index.html

Give More with Less

<http://eartheasy.com/give-menu.htm>

The Great Green Gift-Giving Guide

www.nrdc.org/cities/living/ggift.asp

Green Up Your Get-Togethers

www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/504-green-up-your-gettogethers.html

Holiday Lights: LED and Fiber Optics

www.energyideas.org/documents/factsheets/holidaylighting.pdf

Low-Impact Travel Tips

www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/304-lowimpact-travel-tips.html

Reducing Holiday Waste

www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/specials/funfacts/winter.htm

Tips for a Cleaner, "Greener" Holiday

www.informinc.org/greener_holiday.php

Tips for Reducing Holiday Waste

www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=1110

What Matters to You this Holiday Season?

www.newdream.org/holiday/

QUOTES REQUOTED

Source Reduction is to garbage what preventive medicine is to health.

William L. Rathje, PhD

Born 1945

Director of the Garbage Project

Author of *Rubbish!: The Archaeology of Garbage*



Credit: Alan Levenson

The same dress, every day, **FOR A YEAR!**

Alex Martin in a “one-woman show against fashion” designed a little brown dress—and then proceeded to wear it every day from July 7, 2005 to July 7, 2006. During the course of that year, she created an online journal and posted pictures.

Martin, who is a dancer and artist, set out to wear her little brown dress for a year to make a comment about consumerism and its affects on women in particular. She writes at her website, “I challenged myself to reject the economic system that pushes over-consumption, and the bill of goods that has been sold, especially to women, about what makes a person good, attractive and interesting. Clothes are a big part of this image, and the expectation in time, effort, and financial investment is immense.”

Of course, she washed the dress. She also layered it with other clothing that she already owned, most of which had been purchased used. She did spend about \$20 extra on clothes—for sweaters from Goodwill during a cold spell.

To read and see more about Martin’s adventures in the little brown dress, visit <http://littlebrowndress.com>.



Photos courtesy of Alex Martin

Be well

When children headed back to school this fall, they may have noticed some changes, including vending machines with healthier selections and soft drink machines now holding only water, milk, and juice. These changes are designed to provide students with healthier options and to reduce their school-day intake of high-calorie, low-nutrition snacks and drinks. At the same time, students may have more recreational time and may be invited to participate in fitness activities, such as walking clubs.

The reason for these changes is a new federal law requiring all public and private schools that offer a federally funded school meal program to have a wellness policy in place that addresses both nutrition and physical activity. These plans outline food guidelines in the lunchroom and in classrooms, make suggestions for activities that get kids moving during class time and in between, and encourage

families and staff to exercise more and eat better.

This is good news for students’ health, but it may also be good news for our waste stream. For instance, an apple with its compostable organic core leaves behind a lot less waste than the sticky paper and plastic wrappers from cupcakes. Healthier packed lunches from home often use more washable containers and contain fewer pre-packaged foods. Plus, adding fitness time is adding “no waste” time to the school day. In some schools, gardening and composting will help teach students about science, health, fitness, and nutrition.

For more information, visit www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org or www.ecoliteracy.org.



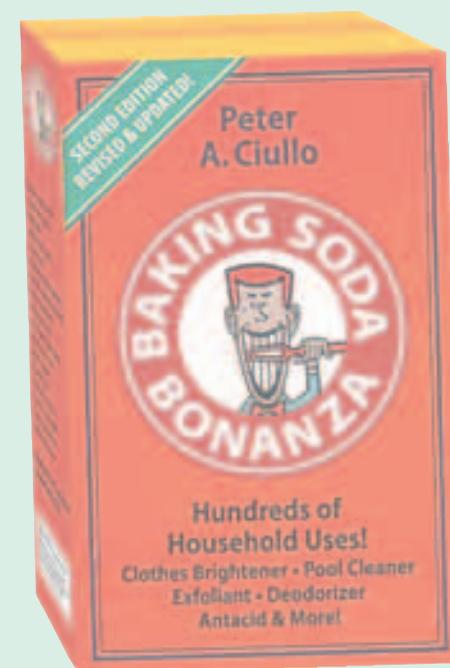
Pack healthy, low-litter lunches

Do you “brown-bag it”? If so, a lunch bag full of heavily packaged and heavily processed food may not be the best choice for your body or our environment. Instead, pack a healthy lunch in reusable containers. Here are some tips:

- Choose a small canvas bag, lunch box, or insulated lunch tote.
- If you need to keep food cold, freeze water in a reused bottle to make an “ice pack.” (Be sure the bottle has been thoroughly cleaned and fill it about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water. Put the lid loosely onto the bottle and freeze it upright. Screw the lid on tight before putting your “ice pack” into your lunch bag.)
- Use your own washable, reusable containers, such as plastic containers that you previously purchased. Or, save and wash the tubs that hold sour cream, cream cheese, or butter.
- If you plan to heat something in a microwave, be sure to put it into a microwave-safe plastic or glass dish. The microwave is no place for your reused plastic containers—save them for the cold food!
- Pack healthy foods that don’t need a container, such as oranges, apples, plums, and bananas.
- Pack foods you like in amounts that you will eat.
- Put your drink in a refillable bottle or opt for a recyclable drink container. (Be sure to recycle it!)
- Don’t forget a cloth napkin and reusable flatware.



Baking Soda Bonanza



Peter A. Ciullo’s revised and updated second edition of *Baking Soda Bonanza* should have been called “1,001 Uses for Baking Soda” because that’s what the book contains. In addition to an interesting and highly readable history of baking soda (yes, it is interesting!), you’ll find tips for using baking soda to cook, clean, soothe, deodorize, and much more! The book even includes 56 pages of recipes. Look for a copy of this book at the library or your favorite used bookstore.

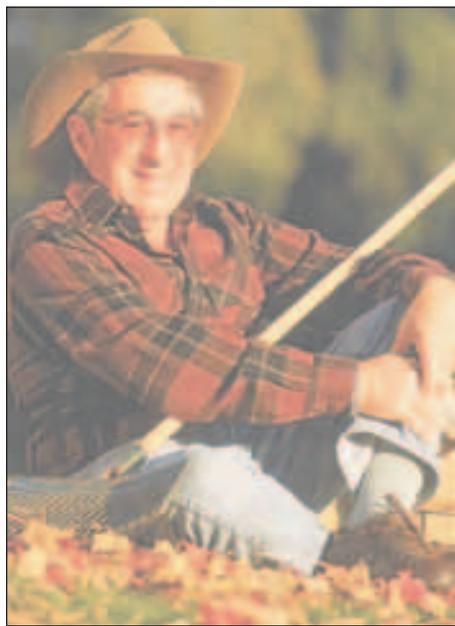
WHAT'S UP?

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 on Page 1). Due to holidays, there will be no HHW and E-waste recycling on these dates: November 10, November 24, and December 22.

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.



Re-leaf

The trees are changing colors. The leaves are about to fall. You know what that means—the chores are about to begin!

Here are some reuse ideas:

- Using a mulching mower, shred leaves and let them stay on the grass. The shredded leaves will provide a protective winter cover and decompose by spring. If you have a lot of leaves, you'll need to mow often during the weeks with the heaviest leaf-fall.
- Use your mower to pick up leaves. Simply attach the bagger and collect the leaves. Your mower will shred the leaves as it picks them up, creating a great mulch. Put the leaf mulch on your garden or flower beds, around

trees, or on paths.

- Pick up shredded leaves with the mower or rake up whole leaves and add them to your compost pile.
- Collect your leaves and drop them off at the Buncombe County Landfill (see Page 1 for directions and map).

Don't burn your fall leaves!

Leaf burning releases harmful pollutants into the air. In fact, smoke from just five pounds of burning leaves creates a full pound of pollution. Leaf burning can create health hazards for children, the elderly, and people with breathing difficulties. Burning can also put nearby properties at risk. Be a good neighbor—don't burn your leaves!

Do you have used needles?

Then the Buncombe County Solid Waste Department needs your help!

Used needles, syringes, and lancets should never be mixed with your household trash or placed with your recyclables. Putting these "sharps" into trash or recycling containers places our employees at risk of a needle stick injury and potential infection. So, please keep your



sharps separate from your trash and recyclables. Here's what you need to do:

- Place used needles and other sharps into a rigid plastic container, such as a 2-liter soft drink bottle, a milk jug, or a liquid laundry detergent jug.
- When the container is full, screw the cap on tightly and tape it with packing or duct tape.
- Deliver the sealed container to the Buncombe County Transfer Station on Hominy Creek Road (see Page 1 for map and directions).
- Place the container full of needles into the Red Biohazard Container near the office.

All sharps are treated as biohazardous waste by Buncombe County Solid Waste Department's contractor. We offer this service to Buncombe County residents for free, but we do need you to prepare your sharps properly.

If you have questions, please call 250-5460 or call the Transfer Station at 250-6206.

Thank you for helping us dispose of medical waste safely and protecting our staff members!

PICKUP! ITUP! 2006

Help Keep Buncombe County Clean.

Gather your favorite group of people and join in the 2006 Pickup! Campaign.

Collect 3 bags of trash and get a free Pickup! T-shirt. We provide the bags and safety vests. Call 250-5460 for more information and to sign up!



BUNCOMBE COUNTY 4 CORNER CLEANUP
Buncombe County Environmental Control

Recycling drop-off centers

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

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

We are also available to speak to your club or class about solid waste, waste reduction, recycling and composting.

**Buncombe County
Solid Waste Department**
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www.buncombecounty.org

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