

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

828-250-5460

Winter 2008



County targets deserted mobile homes **Treecycle!**

Abandoned mobile homes can be an eyesore, blighting the surrounding area. Abandoned mobile homes often become havens for criminal activities or partying youth. Unfortunately, they can also attract curious children, who can be trapped or injured inside.



The North Carolina Association of County Commissioners estimates that there may be as many as 40,000 abandoned mobile homes in the state. Identifying the problems associated with these deserted, dilapidated, and unused mobile homes has been the easy part. Finding a solution has been more challenging. Property owners are oftentimes unable or unsure of how to demolish and dispose of old mobile homes, and few companies specialize in such work. So, once a mobile home is no longer habitable, it is often just left behind to slowly rot away.

To help solve this problem and begin to rid Buncombe County of unused and abandoned mobile homes, Buncombe County Solid Waste is now helping citizens remove unwanted mobile homes in a responsible and non-polluting manner. The costs to remove the mobile homes are covered by the County. Removal is free to the property owner.

This is a voluntary program, so property owners must request this service. Removal by the County is subject to these conditions:

- Property owner must have clear ownership of the mobile home

- and the property where the mobile home is located.
- This program is offered to private land owners. It is not available to mobile home park owners.
- The program is intended to be used by persons who are unable to remove the mobile home through their own means. Participants agree that they will not develop or sell their property for a period of at least 12 months following the removal of the mobile home. If development does occur within that time period, the property owner will reimburse the County for the removal of the home, as well as for associated administrative costs.
- Participants agree to maintain their property following removal of the mobile home.

If you own an unused mobile home or are aware of mobile homes in your area that appear to be abandoned, dilapidated, or unwanted, please contact Roger Presley at the Buncombe County Solid Waste Department at 250-5470.

You grasscycle your lawn clippings, recycle your containers and paper, and e-cycle your computers. Now it's time to "treecycle" your cut, real Christmas tree. If your family enjoyed a real Christmas tree this past holiday season, it's time to recycle it.

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. Remove all decorations, ornaments, lights, tinsel, and garland, as well as



Remember to remove ALL the decorations from your tree before you treecycle!

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

On paper

Every year, we each use about 670 pounds of paper and paper products. That's the equivalent of about one sheet every 12 minutes! While that is a lot of paper, we have some good news. First, our use of paper has declined from about 735 pounds per person just a few years ago. Second, more than half of this paper, about 360 pounds per person per year, is now being recovered for recycling.

Here are some tips to reduce your paper use and increase your paper recycling:

- Use less paper by saving emails in electronic folders, bookmarking websites, and archiving documents on your computer hard drive and on a backup medium, such as a flash drive or CD.
- Get more use from your paper by using both sides. Whether you are printing or copying, choose the "two-sided" option.
- Reuse paper and paper products. Save and reuse boxes. Flatten, fold, and reuse wrapping paper. Print drafts of documents on reused paper that had printing on only one side. Use scrap paper and

envelopes as notepaper around your home or office.

- Recycle more paper and paper products. Recycling paper reduces the demands on our forests and tree farms. In addition, making new paper products from recaptured paper uses less total energy and less water, requires less bleach, and results in fewer toxic releases of air and water pollutants. You can mix paper, including copier/printer paper, mail and envelopes, brown paper bags, magazines, catalogs, and newspaper, in your blue bag. You can also recycle flattened corrugated cardboard.
- Buy recycled-content paper and paper products. We can help improve markets for our papers by seeking out recycled-content products, such as printer paper, stationery, notebooks and notebook paper, boxes, tissue products, and more.

You can learn more about paper use and recycling by visiting these websites: www.environmentaldefense.org/papercalculator/ and www.paperrecycles.org/recycling/index.html.



Metal Recycling



The Buncombe County Transfer Station, located at 190 Hominy Creek Road in Asheville, now accepts: Metal, Aluminum, Appliances, Bicycles, Water Heaters, Old Grills, Lawn Mowers, Etc.

No charge to Buncombe County residents.

The Transfer Station is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. until 3 p.m.
Questions? Call 250-6205.

10 Tips to reduce your footprint



Ever walked down a beach or through a soggy meadow and looked back? You probably saw your footprints, a clear trail of the path you'd taken. You might not realize it, but your life choices are also leaving behind footprints. Only these footprints are ecological—resource extraction, energy consumption, water and air emissions, and waste.

The concept of ecological footprints begins with the obvious—we have only so much land here on Earth. Of this land, only about two-thirds can be considered productive. This productive space must be capable of meeting all of our needs and absorbing all of our wastes. Based on the world's current population, there are about 4.45 productive acres available per person per year. However, the average global citizen has a footprint of about 5.56 acres. Not surprisingly, the average American's footprint is larger than the international average—about 23 acres.

Decisions we make about transportation, travel, housing, food, energy consumption, and more have a direct impact on how many resources and how much energy our lives require. These decisions also impact what and how much we waste. Follow these tips to create a smaller, and more earth-friendly, footprint:

1. At least once a week, eat foods that were produced in-state. Much of our food travels from overseas or from distant states. In fact, the average meal travels about 1,000 miles to get to your plate. This transport of food uses a great deal of fuel and produces harmful air emissions, as well. By “eating local” at least once a week, you reduce the amount of fuel required to provide your diet. Eating locally or regionally produced food can also reduce waste. Why? When foods are transported long distances, there is often a higher rate of spoilage. While you don't necessarily throw this waste away at home, it is thrown away on your behalf.
2. Thirsty? Choose tap water instead of buying water bottles, many of which were filled with tap water from someone else's community water supply. Buy durable water bottles and fill your own. At home, keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator and fill a glass. Every time you drink a glass of tap water, you eliminate a plastic bottle that you'll need to recycle.
3. As long as we're talking about reusables, let's talk about coffee and tea. If you're a regular at a local java joint or tea shop, carry your own reusable mug. Most stores will give you a slight discount on your drink. Plus, you'll eliminate the waste of one cup and perhaps a cardboard sleeve for every drink that goes into your reusable mug.
4. Use what you already own for a longer period of time. Many items—from toaster ovens to iPods—are replaced while they are still in perfect working condition. Rather than replace what is working, keep using it. In the long-run, what is “cooler”—having the money in your pocket and no waste in your trash or having the newest “it” gadget?
5. Recycle everything that is accepted



6. Start composting. Your yard waste, plus many of your fruit and vegetable kitchen scraps, can be composted, turning a “waste” into a valuable nutrient for your lawn and garden.
7. Choose the least toxic products for every household and home improvement job. And remember to buy *only* the amount you will need to use. Not only can household chemicals contribute to indoor air pollution, as well as soil and water contamination, but they also end up as “hazardous wastes” when we no longer need them. Hazardous wastes are costly to dispose properly.
8. Save money on gas and reduce your air emissions. Plan your errands to make efficient use of your time and fuel. If possible, make your trips during lower traffic times, when you will spend less time idling in congested traffic. Planning your errands also helps eliminate waste by reducing the chances that you'll make impulse purchases. Remember to carry your own reusable shopping bags and eliminate disposable bag waste, too!
9. Carry around your trash. For one day (or one week, if you are brave and daring!), carry all of your non-recyclable waste with you. Keep it in a sealed plastic container or resealable bag to reduce odors. Make sure it is never more than 5 feet away from you. By the end of your project, you'll have come to some conclusions about what you use and what you waste. In fact, you may have decided that it is time to make some changes.



10. Stop thinking of yourself as a “consumer.” What if you began to think of yourself less as a *consumer* and more as a *producer, creator, inventor, artist, community leader, or volunteer, or even friend, parent, or child?* The labels we use can change the way we think about ourselves and our world. They can also affect the decisions we make. This is one of the points that Ernest Callenbach makes in his book, *Living Cheaply with Style: Live Better & Spend Less*. He argues that the environment, personal health, and family finances are part of an interrelated triangle. When one is out of balance, the others are negatively affected. By keeping these three factors in balance, you can spend less, enjoy more, and treat our communities and planet with care. Check out his book at your local library or look for it in a used bookstore.



locally. For instance, no beverage bottles and cans, steel cans, or newspaper needs to go into your trash. Make sure that your trash is “recyclables free.” Remember that recycling conserves natural resources, saves energy, eliminates waste, and reduces air and water pollution. It's better for our planet than disposal and better than making new products from virgin materials.

Learn more! Do more!

Find out how you are doing. Several websites allow you to calculate your ecological footprint by completing an interactive survey. At the end, most of these sites show you how many planets it would take for everyone on Earth to live your lifestyle. The results may surprise you!

Adventures with Bobbie Bigfoot
www.kidsfootprint.org

Best Foot Forward: Bringing Sustainability Down to Earth
www.bestfootforward.com

Ecological Footprint Quiz
www.myfootprint.org/

Global Footprint Network
www.footprintnetwork.org

The Green Office: Carbon Offsetting
www.thegreenoffice.com/carbon

What will they think of next?



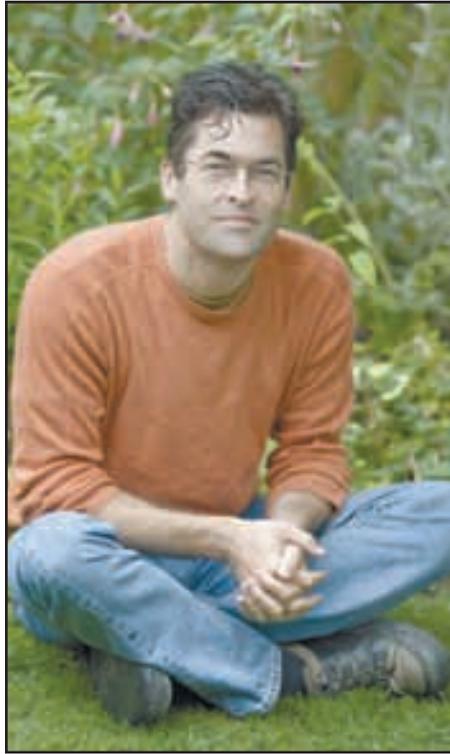
Last fall, a British reality TV show invited 11 volunteers to participate in a “Survivor”-type challenge at a South London garbage dump. The volunteers were dropped off on the landfill and challenged to survive for three weeks. Learn more about the show, discover what happened to the volunteers after they left the dump, or watch episodes online at www.channel4.com/lifestyle/green/dumped/index.html.

Running the Numbers

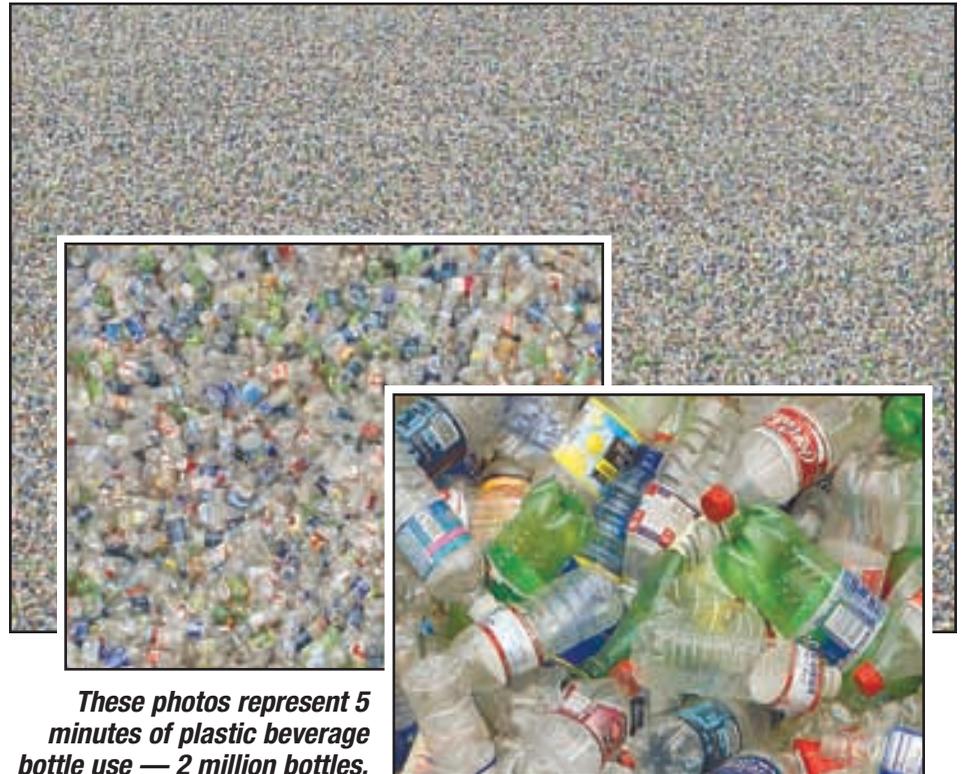
Artist Chris Jordan believes that statistics can tell stories, helping to create an American self-portrait. His new series of large-scale photographs depicts a specific quantity of selected items, such as five minutes of office paper use (15 million sheets), 30 seconds of aluminum can consumption (106,000 cans), five minutes of plastic beverage bottle use (2 million bottles), a day's worth of retired cell phones (426,000 phones just in the U.S.), and an hour of paper grocery bag consumption (1.14 million brown bags).

Jordan writes, "This project visually examines these vast and bizarre measures of our society, in large intricately detailed prints assembled from thousands of smaller photographs." He continues, "My underlying desire is to emphasize the role of the individual in a society that is increasingly enormous, incomprehensible, and overwhelming."

For more information about Chris Jordan's series, "Running the Numbers: An American Self-Portrait," including a list of galleries that will be exhibiting his work, visit www.chrisjordan.com.



Photos Courtesy of Chris Jordan



These photos represent 5 minutes of plastic beverage bottle use — 2 million bottles.

Change is in the air

In a little more than a year, TV will be changing. There will still be the Big 3 networks, news will still be available 24/7, and you'll still be able to enjoy your favorite shows. However, the way that TV is being transmitted will change.

Since the inception of television, most television came into your home as an analog signal. Beginning on February 17, 2009, all TV signals will have to be broadcast digitally, using computer-type code instead of over-the-air frequencies. Since nearly every home in America has at least one television, this change will affect almost everyone.

Older televisions have analog tuners built in, so these TVs will not be able to read the new digital transmissions. This doesn't mean your old TV will be obsolete. It does mean that you may need a converter box to keep using it.

During the coming year, you'll be hearing more about this change. You'll probably also see a lot of

advertisements encouraging you to get new TVs that include digital tuners to replace your older TVs. Remember—you don't have to replace your TVs!

If you are a cable TV or satellite subscriber, call your cable or satellite company to find out what you'll need to do to continue using your older TVs. In many cases, you won't even need a converter box, but your fees may change. If you rely on an antenna, you'll need to purchase a converter box. The federal government has set aside funds to help Americans purchase converter boxes.

For more details about the conversion to digital transmission and how it will affect you and your TVs, visit the Federal Communication Commission's website, <http://dtv.gov/>, and the National Association of Broadcasters website, www.DTVanswers.com.

If you do choose to replace your old TV, remember that TVs shouldn't go into the trash! Contact us about proper disposal.



Tissue facts

Each year, Americans use about 50 pounds of tissue paper products, such as toilet paper, facial tissues, paper towels, paper napkins, and similar products. About two-thirds of tissue products are used at home, with commercial and industrial products constituting

the remaining one-third. According to Conservatree, more than 40 percent of tissue products do have some recycled content, and overall 60 percent of the fibers used to make new tissue products come from recycled paper. However, the most popular commercial brands of tissue products used by people at home, including toilet paper, facial tissues, and paper towels, are all made from 100 percent virgin forest fibers.

While you have no direct control over the type of paper used to print your favorite magazine, you have total control over what type of tissue paper products come into your home. When you shop, look for recycled-content tissue products. There are many brands that contain a high percentage of recycled fiber.

Check the labels.

Remember to reduce your use of disposable tis-

sue paper products, as well. Instead of paper towels, choose washable cloths and rags. Instead of paper napkins, opt for cloth napkins.

For more details about tissue paper products, including a list of which brands contain recycled content, visit www.conservatree.org/paper/PaperTypes/tissueoverview.shtml#intro.

QUOTES REQUOTED

The only lost cause is one we give up on before we enter the struggle.

Václav Havel, 1936–
Czech writer and former president



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 this page).

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 and paint-related material, such as paint thinner, kerosene, and gasoline. 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 250-5462.

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
Solid Waste Department
81 Panther Branch Road
Alexander, NC 28701
828-250-5460
www.buncombecounty.org**

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Transfer Station recycling

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:

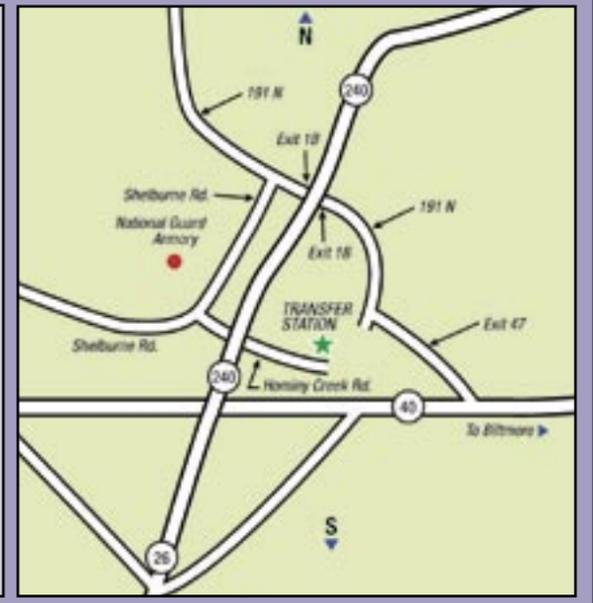
- ❖ Lead-acid batteries
- ❖ Newspaper and brown paper bags
- ❖ Office paper and mail
- ❖ Magazines and catalogs
- ❖ Corrugated cardboard
- ❖ "Blue Bag" or co-mingled recyclable containers, including #1 and #2 plastic bottles and jugs; aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass; and steel cans

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,"

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.



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.

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

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:

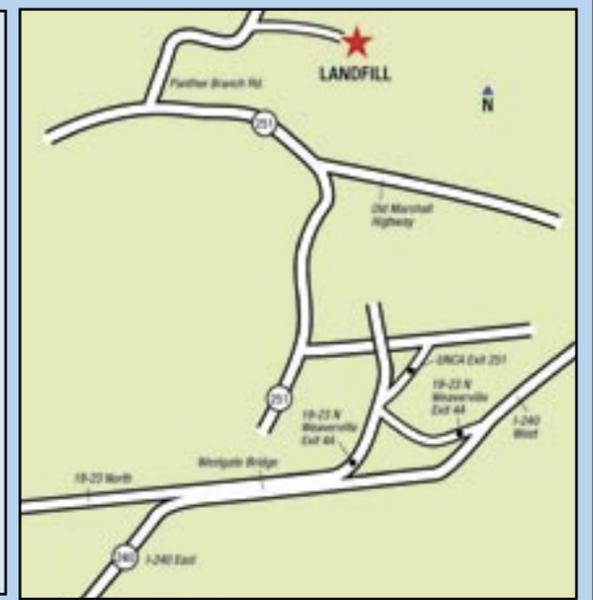
- ❖ Lead-acid batteries
- ❖ Newspaper and brown paper bags
- ❖ Magazines and catalogs
- ❖ Office paper and mail
- ❖ Corrugated cardboard
- ❖ Co-mingled recyclable containers, including #1 and #2 plastic (milk jugs, soft drink bottles, laundry detergent jugs, and shampoo bottles); aluminum cans; clear, 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)
- ❖ Cut, bare, real Christmas trees (remove all stands, decorations, lights, and tinsel)

You can also 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,

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.



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 250-5462.

Drop-off centers accept recyclables, too

Don't want to drive to the Transfer Station or the Landfill to recycle? We have three drop-off recycling centers, too!

You can recycle white and colored office paper, such as copier and printer paper, and mail, including envelopes, as well as magazines, catalogs, newspaper, cardboard, #1 and #2 plastic bottles and jugs, 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



Rinse your recyclable food and beverage containers and allow them to air-dry. Don't forget to remove and discard caps and lids.

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/Bioreactor Manager — Kristy Smith	828-250-5473
Buncombe County Landfill	828-250-5462
Buncombe County Transfer Station	828-250-6205

The Buncombe County Solid Waste Administrative Offices and Environmental Control are now located at:
81 Panther Branch Road, Alexander, NC 28701

CLIP & SAVE