

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

828-250-5460

Spring 2009



Join us for Earth Day!

The fourth annual Earth Day celebration will take place on Sunday, April 26 at Biltmore Village, on the lawn area of All Souls Cathedral. This event, which is free and open to the public, offers lots of fun activities for the entire family. In addition to Buncombe County Solid Waste Department's booth with helpful recycling information, you'll



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be able to visit 25 other exhibitors ready to tell you about protecting our air, land, and water.

Look for more information in the *Asheville Citizen Times* and the *Mountain Xpress*.

Buncombe County Recycling is one of the sponsors of this event. Remember to recycle every day!

Changes at the Transfer Station

Beginning April 1, the Buncombe County Transfer Station's hours will be changing. The center will still be open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. However, on Saturday, hours will be shorter than they have been in the past. The new Saturday hours are 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Also, effective March 1, the Buncombe County Transfer Station is NO longer accepting bulky waste, such as furniture, mattresses, wood, construction and demolition debris, automotive batteries, appliances, or any other large, oversized items that are NOT bagged with household garbage. The Transfer Station now accepts only residential household waste. There is a fee for household trash disposal. All other garbage 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

In addition, you can also drop off reusable corrugated moving boxes and shipping cartons for reuse. (Please break down and flatten the boxes.) We accept medical equipment, such as wheelchairs and crutches, for reuse (see What's Up? on the back page). Plus, you can drop off "sharps," such as needles and lancets, and non-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 Transfer Station is located just off Brevard Road. If you have questions, call the Transfer Station at 250-6205.

Got an old mobile home that NEEDS to go?

Buncombe County currently sponsors a program to remove abandoned, dilapidated, or unused mobile homes. The costs to remove the mobile home(s) are covered by the county. This program is free to Buncombe County property owners. Our goal is to help citizens of the county remove unwanted mobile homes in a responsible and non-polluting manner while helping to eliminate and improve blighted areas.



If you own or are aware of a mobile home in your area that appears to be abandoned, dilapidated, or unwanted,

please contact Roger Presley at Buncombe County Solid Waste, 250-5470.

What YOU should know about illegal dumping

Illegally dumped waste looks pretty terrible. But did you know that it makes people feel bad, too? That's right! When people see illegally dumped waste and litter, they think that residents don't care about their community or each other. When businesses see litter, they wonder what kind of employees or customers they will find.

In addition, illegally dumped waste

can be dangerous to humans and animals. Whether trash is in the street or on the sidewalk, swerving to avoid it in a car or on a bike can be dangerous to oncoming traffic. When litter is thrown from moving vehicles, it creates a hazard for the cars behind. Broken glass on the sidewalk or edge of the roadway can cut you or your dog's feet. Plus, animals sometimes try to eat litter, thinking that it is food.

Here's one more reason you should care—illegally dumped trash is expensive. Road and highway departments, parks departments, and businesses pick up and dispose of waste that was accidentally or carelessly tossed by others. In doing so, they spend time and money on someone else's trash. We all have to pay for this, whether through our taxes for government agencies to pick it up or in what we pay for products to businesses

which must charge more to cover the costs of disposal.

As many of you are aware, illegal dumping of trash and litter has been an ongoing problem in Buncombe County. We have many residents who have been eager to get involved and help us clean up the County and keep it clean. In addition to the efforts undertaken by concerned citizens, businesses, and government agencies, the Environmental Control Officers are out enforcing the Buncombe County Solid Waste Ordinance.

A second difficulty is the "hidden" illegal dumping that takes place when garbage is placed into a dumpster without knowledge or permission of the business. Using a dumpster without permission or without paying for it is illegal. The Environmental Control Officers will investigate unauthorized garbage in dumpsters and violators will be subject to the same fines as those who dump garbage on roadsides or in empty lots.

Finally, one of the smallest forms of illegal dumping is also the most com-

mon—cigarette butts. Whether dropped at the entrance to buildings or tossed from car windows, cigarette butt litter is everywhere. Many smokers think, "What's the problem? They're small." The problem is that cigarette butts do not biodegrade and can choke and poison wildlife. Please properly dispose of your butts. You'll keep our community looking better and help reduce the possibility of wildfires.

To report illegal dumping or littering, contact your Buncombe County Solid Waste Enforcement Control Officers:

- Jane Cole, 250-5472
- Rick Ramsey, 250-5471

The Department of Transportation has a Litter Sweep Hotline which people can call when they witness litter being thrown out of a vehicle. Information required when using the hotline is as follows: vehicle tag (license plate) number; date and time of occurrence; and the name of the road. Report this information to the Litter Sweep Hotline at 877-368-4968 or 919-715-3188.



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10 tips for Greener Cleaning



(c) Ivonne Wierink / SnapVillage.com

Read more about it!

485 Ways to Clean, Polish, Disinfect, Deodorize, and Remove Stains
Clean and Green: The Complete Guide to Nontoxic and Environmentally Safe Housekeeping by Annie Berthold-Bond (Ceres Press, 1994)

All-Purpose Cleaners Buying Guide
www.thegreenguide.com/buying-guide/all-purpose-cleaners

Clean Your House Without Hurting the Planet
www.grist.org/advice/possessions/2003/03/18/possessions-cleaning/

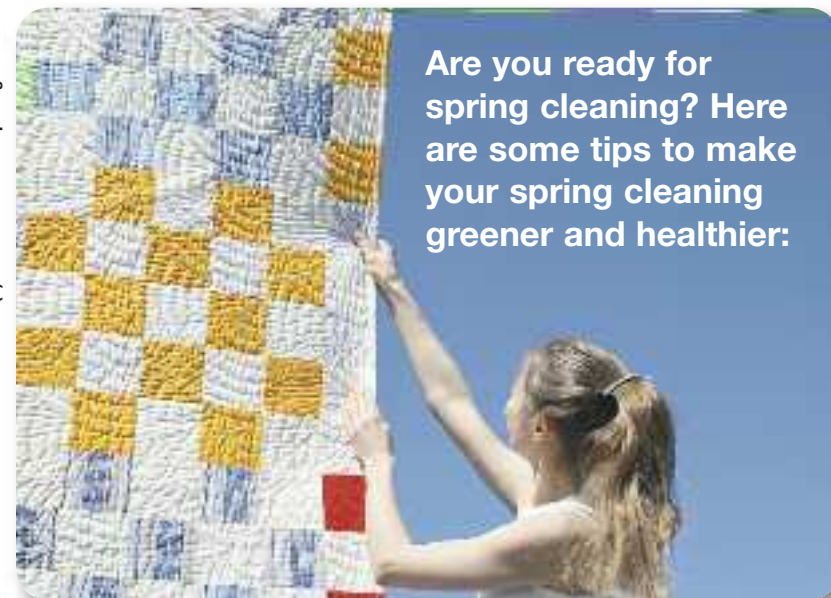
Greener Cleaning
www.thegreenguide.com/home-garden/cleaning

How to Go Green: Cleaning
<http://planetgreen.discovery.com/go-green/green-cleaning/>

How to Make a Non-Toxic Cleaning Kit
www.care2.com/greenliving/make-your-own-non-toxic-cleaning-kit.html

Non-Toxic Home Cleaning
www.earthesy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm

A Test of Green Cleaners
www.grist.org/advice/products/2008/03/25/



(c) Anita Salsara / SnapVillage.com

Are you ready for spring cleaning? Here are some tips to make your spring cleaning greener and healthier:

1. Open the windows. After the house has been closed up for most of the winter, the best thing to do is to give it a good airing out. On a pleasant spring day, throw open the windows and give the house a few hours to breathe in the fresh air.
2. Think mechanical first. A scrub brush, a dish scrubber, and a retired toothbrush can provide a lot of cleaning power with no chemicals at all. Drain baskets keep drains free of debris that can lead to clogs.
3. Use up chemicals that you have on hand before purchasing replacement products. If you have cleaners stored in multiple locations (some in the laundry room, others under the kitchen sink, and a few in the garage), find them and inventory what you have available.
4. Consider creating your own cleaners from common household products, such as vinegar, baking soda, salt, lemon juice, and mineral oil. Many of these cleaners are easy to make, effective, and less expensive than pre-mixed chemical solutions. (Remember that even homemade cleaners can be irritating to skin and eyes. Always use caution in mixing, storing, and using homemade cleaners.)

5. If you choose to purchase a cleaning product, choose the mildest and most benign chemical product available. Although it is not mandatory, a few manufacturers do voluntarily provide a complete list of ingredients. Try to select products that provide you complete information on ingredients, offer the most clear instructions on use, and don't require extraordinary safety measures for use or disposal.
6. When you purchase products or containers, look for recycled-content and recyclable containers. Rather than using paper towels, use reusable towels and old rags. If you purchase paper towels, please choose those made from recycled-content paper.
7. Buying concentrates reduces packaging waste. Some cleaning products are now sold in concentrated form; you finish making the solution by adding tap water at home. Other products, such as laundry detergent, are concentrated and ready to use when you get home. Remember—if you have softened water, you can use even less detergent.
8. Keep unfinished products in their original, labeled containers. *Never* pour potentially harmful chemicals into food or beverage containers for storage. Store all cleaning products out of reach of children and away from pets. Do not store potentially hazardous materials close to sources of heat or in direct sunlight.
9. Dispose of containers and unused chemicals properly. Follow the label instructions. If the instructions are unclear, call the manufacturer for more details or call us.
10. Make sure everyone in your family knows about your new "greener cleaning" habits.

On the GO

If you're trying to trim your expenses, you may be walking or biking more. Walking and biking are good for your health and your pocketbook. Of course, they are also better for our environment because walking and biking don't require fuel or spew out emissions.

However, if you like to take a cup of coffee with you when you leave the house, what are you supposed to do? Reusable travel mugs are fine if you are walking, but may not be fully leak-proof when you bike. There's a simple, waste-free solution—thermal or canteen bottles. The thermal-style bottles keep hot drinks hot and cold drinks cold. These bottles can be sealed, so you can put them into a backpack or bag without worrying about leaks and spills. Many have a built-in loop to allow you to hang the bottle from your handle bars. Others have insulated pouches with handles or loops. Still others will fit right into your bike's water bottle holder.

If your drink of choice is water or a sports drink, you can use the same style bottles. Simply fill the clean bottle with tap water or sports drink from your gallon jug.

Look for leak-proof thermal bottles and accessories. Or, go online and search for "thermo bottles."



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Hope for harried readers Planet Green

“Like money, books must be kept in constant circulation. Lend and borrow to the maximum.”

At a time when many have had to tighten their belts, novelist Henry Miller offers good advice for readers. Enjoying a good book doesn't require buying a new copy or even owning it. Books can be borrowed, shared, and swapped. The pleasure is the same, but the cost is less.

The library is, of course, the least expensive way to enjoy good books. You can borrow from the local library's many resources. All you need is a library card.

Another option is used bookstores. When you buy used books, you often pay only one-quarter to one-half of the original price. Some of the "used" books have never even been read. Many secondhand stores sell books, and books are a common item at garage sales, as well.

Sharing books with friends is free. Often, you and your friends enjoy the same types of books or authors. You can also spread your enthusiasm for a book that you couldn't put down by passing it along to a new reader.

In addition to these local resources, there are many online options as well:

- Book Crossing is a program that allows people to "read and release"

books. If you want to release a book or are hunting for one, visit www.bookcrossing.com.

- Several sites offer readers the chance to trade one or more books with other readers, usually for just the cost of shipping. For more information about book swaps by mail, visit www.bookins.com, www.bookmooch.com, www.paperbackswap.com, or www.swaptree.com.

- If you've ever wondered why there isn't a "Netflix" for books, your wait is over. BookSwim allows readers to rent books. This concept is not new. Before the age of downloadable audiobooks, readers could rent books on tape (and later on CD) by mail. Now, readers can rent bestsellers at a fraction of the purchase price. For more information, go to www.bookswim.com.

Books aren't the only media that can be borrowed, shared, swapped, or purchased used, of course. The same applies to DVDs and CDs, as well as many magazines.

You don't have to give up at-home entertainment, but you can lower its cost by lending and borrowing to the maximum.



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If you have a pay-TV service, such as cable or satellite, you may be getting the Planet Green network. If you enjoy the Discovery channel, you'll like Planet Green.

Planet Green offers a variety of original programs. If you love home renovation or want to know how to live an everyday green life, you'll be able to watch shows like *Living With Ed*, *Renovation Nation*, *Total Wrecklamation*, *Wa\$ted!*, *World's Greenest Homes*, *Focus Earth*, and *Greenovate*. Maybe you're more interested in food. Check out *Emeril Green* or *Supper Club*. If you're wondering what is new in transportation, catch an episode of *Mean Green Machines*. Do you love entertainment news? Watch *Hollywood Green*. How about a game show? Play along with *Go for the Green*.

In addition to the programming, you'll find "Go Green" tips at the website, <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/>, along with games and video clips. There is even a convenient "channel finder" — all you need to know is your ZIP code and your pay-TV service provider.

QUOTES REQUOTED



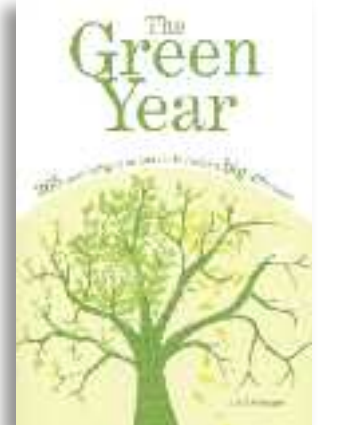
The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy and, after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it, and to foster its renewal, is our only legitimate hope.

Wendell Berry, 1934—
American farmer and poet

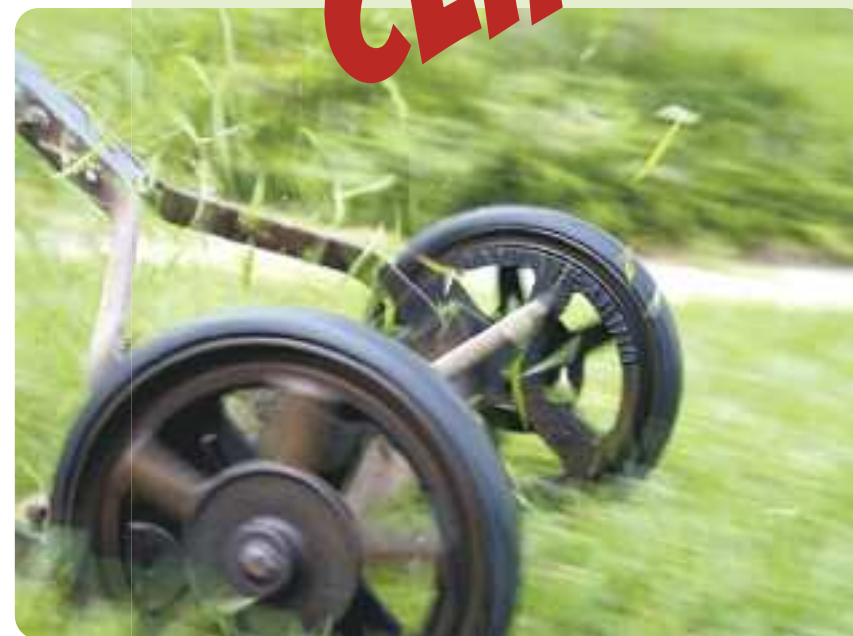
Greening your year

Looking for small steps that will make a big difference? Check out *The Green Year: 365 Small Things You Can Do to Make a Big Difference* by Jodi Helmer (Penguin Group, 2008). This book has one simple idea for each day of the year. Each page also has a spot for you to check off that you've done the activity or to write your own alternative that will work better for you and your family.

The ideas include reducing waste, saving energy, and much more. Some days suggest things that you probably already do—or have thought about doing—such as replacing incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents and sharing magazines. Other days give you new and fun ideas. For instance, when you stop at your favorite ice cream shop, don't get ice cream in a cup. Instead, order your ice cream in an edible and waste-free cone. Here's another one: Clean out your car's trunk or cargo area and improve your gas mileage. According to Helmer, an extra 100 pounds in the trunk can reduce your fuel efficiency by 2 percent.



CLIP AND SAVE



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Each year in the U.S., gas-powered lawn mowers consume more than 720 million gallons of gasoline. At the same time, these mowers spit out harmful air pollutants and disturb the peace and quiet of our spring and summer days.

However, gas-powered mowers aren't the only way to keep your lawn looking good. Electric mowers are quieter and exhaust-free. Some electric mowers need an extension cord, but many of the newer ones contain a rechargeable battery. With battery-powered models, you simply plug in the mower to charge it and then unplug it while you cut the grass. These cordless mowers are heavier and a bit more difficult to maneuver than the corded models. Neither type requires oil changes or gasoline. You do have the cost for electricity, but that may be as little as \$5-10 per year.

Another—and even more environmentally friendly—option is a manual reel lawn mower. Here are just a few of the great reasons to use a reel mower:

- Reel mowers leave behind healthier grass plants because they "snip" the grass, cutting it in the same way that a pair of scissors would. (Powered rotary mowers actually tear the grass blades.)
- Manual mowers don't need gasoline, so an empty gas can will never change your plans. They also don't require an electrical charge, so you don't have to remember to plug them in.
- Push reel mowers produce no harmful emissions and emit no exhaust into your face and your neighborhood's air.
- Manual mowers are whisper-quiet, allowing you to hear your children playing and to enjoy the birds chirping. You can still listen to your music on headphones, but you won't have to!
- You'll enjoy a brisk walk and some resistance training while you mow.
- Reel mowers are virtually maintenance-free. Occasionally, the bearings and cutting edges may need a little lubricant and a slight adjustment. The cutters will need to be sharpened every couple of years.
- You'll never struggle with the pull cord on a manual mower. Simply start walking and the mower starts, too.
- Reel mowers take less space in the garage or shed.
- Push reel mowers are the cheapest to purchase, operate, and maintain.

A manual reel mower isn't right for every yard. The mowers are best suited to smaller yards, such as those that are 10,000 square feet (about one-quarter acre) or less. However, many of today's yards are no bigger than this.

If you'd like more information about reel mowers (or about electric mowers), ask at your hardware store, lawn and garden center, or home supply store. You can also learn more at www.cleanaingardening.com, www.planetnatural.com, www.gardeners.com, www.reelin.com, or www.reelmowerguide.com/.



Medical Equipment Rescue Program

Do you own medical equipment that you no longer need? Pass it along and help a neighbor.

Anyone who wishes to pass along walkers, wheelchairs, canes, or crutches should bring them to the Buncombe County Landfill or the Transfer Station. Tell the scalehouse 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 (ABCCM) Medical Clinic. When we have a full load, the ABCCM Clinic staff will pick the items up.

The Center loans medical equipment to patients who need it temporarily or gives it to people who will use it permanently.

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.

Pick It Up

Take part in our spring litter sweep, "Pick It Up." Buncombe County Solid Waste will supply trash bags, gloves, vests, and T-shirts, so gather your favorite group and join in "Pick It Up" this spring. For details, call Jane Cole at 250-5472 or Rick Ramsey at 250-5471.

Learn more about illegal open burning!

The Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency has an ongoing illegal open burning program. To learn more, visit the website, www.wncairquality.org, and click on "Open Burning" from the "Rules & Regulations" drop-down list. There is also a hotline where you can receive burning day information; dial 250-6777, and press #1.



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, as well as bulky waste, construction & demolition debris, and yard waste, at the Landfill.

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.



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.

Friday-only collections 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, 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 with a 20-gallon limit
- ❖ Pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, motor oil, antifreeze, and lead-acid batteries – No Charge
- ❖ Rechargeable batteries, such as Nickel Cadmium, Nickel Metal Hydride, Lithium Ion, Nickel Zinc, and Small Sealed Lead batteries found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, digital cameras, two-way radios, camcorders, and remote control

toys – No Charge for typical household quantities

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

Important Change at the Buncombe County Landfill!

Effective March 1, 2009, mulch is no longer available to the public. Instead, it is being used as an alternative daily cover at the Landfill.

A great time to "grasscycle"

When you "grasscycle," you simply let your clippings drop back onto your lawn instead of bagging them. Grass clippings are mostly made up of nitrogen and water—both of which your lawn needs. Because each mowing will take about one-third less time, grasscycling saves your family time, too. So, grasscycling is better for the lawn and easier for your family. What's not to like?

You don't have to have a special mower to grasscycle. You can use a mulching mower, which will chop the clippings

very small. But, you can also use a regular mower by taking off the bagger attachment. If you remove the bagger, be sure that you insert the "chute cover," which is a safety device to cover the hole where the bagger would go.



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If you want to learn more about lawn waste reduction and the proper way to fertilize and water your lawn and garden, the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension has a great deal of useful information in the office and on their website.

Buncombe County Cooperative Extension is providing "The Backyard Composting Workshop" again this year. The workshop begins April 11 and continues through September 26. It is held every second and fourth Saturday of the month at the WNC

Farmers Market compost demonstration site.

For more information about the programs and services provided by the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension, stop by their office at 94 Coxe Avenue in Asheville, call 255-5522, or visit buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu.

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

**Buncombe County
Solid Waste Department
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70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS
CONTENT, USING SOY INKS

CLIP & SAVE

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