

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Buncombe County Solid Waste Department

828-250-5460

www.buncombecounty.org/green
Summer 2010



Residential service available from Waste Pro

Waste Pro, the new residential garbage company, has been operating in the unincorporated areas of Buncombe County since January 1, 2010. In addition to weekly garbage pick-up, Waste Pro also offers blue-bag recycling at the curb weekly. Recyclables are then transported to a local company that processes more than 1,200 tons per month from six counties, including Buncombe County. Waste Pro offers its customers other services, such as



back door service, bulky item pick-up, and white goods pick-up, for an additional fee. Waste Pro also has garbage carts, recycling bins, and recycling carts available for a small monthly fee.

If you do not currently have curbside pick-up at your home, call Waste Pro for details at 828-684-7790 or go online to www.wasteprousa.com.



Recycle these items at the curb!

With Waste Pro service, you can recycle these items at the curb:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All plastic bottles and jugs ◆ Aluminum and steel beverage and food cans ◆ Glass bottles and jars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Newspaper ◆ Corrugated cardboard ◆ Mixed paper, including mail, catalogs, and magazines
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A "bear" of a problem

Chances are, you love the natural beauty, green space, and wildlife that make Buncombe County unique. These surroundings, of course, offer their own challenges. One of these, especially for mountain residents, is bears.

Waste Pro now offers a bear-proof trash cart. These carts, which were tested on a grizzly that was trying to get at the peanut butter s'mores inside, are designed with a special latch that can be easily opened by residents. In addition, the carts have thicker walls so that bears cannot crack or claw through the sides. The carts cost \$8.00 per month (compared to \$3.50 per month for the regular 95-gallon carts). Waste Pro guarantees replacement of the cart if a bear damages it. For details, call 828-684-7790, or visit www.wasteprousa.com.

Your actions can help discourage bears

from coming onto your property. When food sources are readily available to bears in your backyard or your trash can, they are attracted to your neighborhood. Don't put out the welcome mat for bears! Follow these guidelines to limit potential food sources and decrease bear visits:

- ◆ Keep your trash and recycling containers in your garage or behind a bear-proof fence.
- ◆ Place your trash and recycling containers at the curb or end of your driveway on the morning of collection rather than the night before. When you set out containers, be sure that lids are completely closed.
- ◆ Keep your garage door closed.
- ◆ If you are parked outside, close your vehicle's windows. Bears will sometimes get inside vehicles in search of food.

New life for old electronics

Each day, 112,000 desktop and laptop computers are discarded in the U.S. Add to that the printers and other computer peripherals, TVs, DVD players, VCRs, DVRs, digital cameras, video recorders, stereos, cell phones, MP3 players, telephones, and more, and you have a mountain of electronic waste. In fact, over 3 million tons of electronic waste are discarded each year. Of this, only about 14% is currently being recovered for reuse or recycling. We can do better!

First, maintain your electronics for a long working life. Remove dust from ventilation fans and air vents. Run regular software cleanup programs on computers. Properly ventilate around electronics so that equipment doesn't overheat. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for recharging internal batteries.

Second, don't store equipment that you no longer need or use. If you won't be using the equipment again, don't put it into a closet or drawer. Electronics are most useful to someone else when they are less than five years old. Don't use them for three years and then store them for another three!

Third, donate or sell working equipment that is less than five years old. Used cell phones, computers, TVs, and accessories might be just what a new owner needs. Be sure to completely remove all of your personal data before donating or selling your equipment.

Fourth, recycle unusable electronic equipment. We refer to this as electronic waste, or e-waste.

Buncombe County accepts e-waste every Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at a special drop-off area at the Landfill, excluding weeks with a holiday. We accept electronics from residents at no charge, subject to a limit of three televisions or computers per month. For more details, turn to "What's Up?" on the back page.

Recycling electronics ensures that hazardous materials, such as lead and mercury, are safely managed. It also

conserves resources, recaptures precious metals, reduces pollution, saves energy, and helps create jobs.

To learn more about electronics recycling, visit www.epa.gov/waste/partnerships/plugin/.



- ◆ Do not leave pet food outside. If you have bird feeders, hang them too high for bears to access. (Bears are most active in the spring and fall. You might want to remove bird feeders during these periods.)
- ◆ Keep barbeque grills clean and grease-free.
- ◆ If you compost, bury fruit and vegetable scraps deep in the pile or containers. If bears have been a problem in your area, spray lime juice on your compost pile or into your bin. This reduces odors and speeds decomposition.
- ◆ Remove dense brush that could provide cover for bears. (This also eliminates fuel for wildfires, creating a more fire-safe environment.)
- ◆ Consider shrubs that don't produce edible berries or fruit.
- ◆ Pick up fallen fruit from around trees and dispose of it.
- ◆ Never feed wildlife.

For more information, visit www.bearaware.org.



This bear-proof cart is now available to Buncombe County residents. A sample cart was filled with peanut butter s'mores and given to a grizzly bear. The bear couldn't get inside! Watch the bear's efforts and learn more about the carts at <http://wlos.com> (search for "bear-proof carts").

Food, glorious food

Each year, Americans throw away about 27% of the food they purchase and bring home. When added to unusable food from farms, factories, and stores, food waste tops a whopping 100 billion pounds! And waste isn't the only result — a 2009 study found that a quarter of U.S. water consumption and over 300 million barrels of oil go into producing and distributing food that ends up in landfills.

Annually, food waste comprises about 12.7% of municipal trash, or about 200 pounds per person per year. A family of four disposes of \$590 worth of edible food each year.

Yet, unlike containers, paper products, and yard trimmings, very little food is recovered. Only about 2.5% is recovered, either for use or for composting.

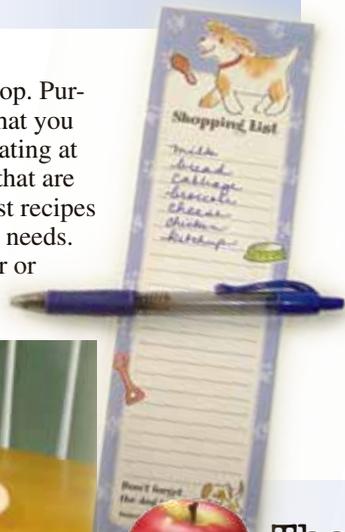
At home, you can reduce your food waste by using the 3 R's — Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle:

- Reduce your food waste at home. Make a list before you shop. Purchase only the amount of food that you need for the meals you will be eating at home. Avoid exotic ingredients that are needed for a single recipe. Adjust recipes to make the amount your family needs. Store leftovers in the refrigerator or freezer.



Most food in the U.S. travels between 1,500 and 2,000 miles before being eaten.

– Iowa State University



The average American farmer receives about 20 cents of every dollar spent on food. But when customers buy directly from the farm, the farmer gets the whole dollar.

– University of Missouri



- Reduce food waste at restaurants. If portions are large, share a full order with your companion. When you are full, put leftovers into a carry-out container. Better yet, bring your own reusable container from home and put leftovers into it. Remember to eat the leftovers soon!
- Freeze food for future use. If you bought too many carrots, you can chop them up and freeze them. They'll be ready to toss into a nice soup next winter.

- Share unwanted food with friends and co-workers. Do you have leftover birthday cake? Invite a neighbor over for a slice or take the extra to work.
- Donate unneeded food products to local food banks and other charitable organizations. Go through your non-perishable boxed and canned goods regularly. If an item has been sitting in your pantry for six months, you probably aren't going to use it before the expiration date. Give it to someone who will use it.
- Give away unwanted produce. If you have a garden, share nature's bounty with friends, neighbors, and co-workers. If you purchased too much produce or your family just didn't like the plums, give the items away before they rot.
- Compost your food scraps. You can compost fruit and vegetable scraps, as well as bread, pasta, and grains, in your backyard compost pile. Bury the food about 10" below the surface to discourage unwanted visitors. You can also compost food scraps in a vermicompost (worm composting) bin indoors or an in-ground food composter outdoors.



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In the U.S., agricultural imports are rising twice as fast as exports. Over the past two decades, imports of fruit, vegetables, and grains increased by more than 100%. Today, the typical American meal contains ingredients from at least five countries outside the U.S.

– U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cutting back on campus

A study of an all-you-can-eat campus dining hall found a significant decrease in edible food waste by making one small change—taking away large plastic trays. These trays allow students to carry all of their food selections at one time. While inedible, compostable waste stayed steady during the study, the amount of edible food waste dropped by about 30%. Students could return for more food as many times as they wished. However, removing the tray kept students from taking more food on their first trip than they would be able to eat. "Trayless trials" at other colleges have yielded similar outcomes.

Results of this study, which was conducted by Andy Sarjahanian, Elena L. Serranob, and Rick Johnson, were published in the January 2009 edition of the *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*.



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Learn more!

www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/materials/organics/food/index.htm – Find information on food scraps and how to reduce, reuse, and recycle them at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's food waste site.

www.leanpath.com – A website devoted to food waste reduction in the food service industry, the site includes a blog, "Food Waste Focus," and an e-newsletter, "Food Waste Flyer."

www.localharvest.org – This site is a national, easily searchable database for local food available from farms, farmers markets, restaurants, grocery stores, and other sources. You can also search by type of food.

www.slowfoodusa.org – An international movement, Slow Food works to link the pleasure of food with a commitment to community and the environment.

www.wastedfood.com – Jonathan Bloom's site is part blog and part call to action to reduce food waste and hunger.

FAST FACTS

Couch abandonment

A recent survey found that millions of Americans will abandon or leave behind large furniture on their next move. In this situation, one resident's trash may not be the next resident's treasure!



© Jordan Rusev | Dreamstime.com

Rather than abandon perfectly good furniture or appliances that you don't want or can't take with you, make arrangements to sell or donate them. List them for sale in the local paper or online through a service such as Craigslist.com or AmericanListed.com. To donate, contact friends or charitable organizations. If transportation is a problem, ask whether pickup service is available.

If the furniture or large appliance is worn-out or broken, contact us about proper disposal.

Trashy TV

You've probably heard someone say, "Everything on TV is trash." We have a feeling they didn't mean the kind of trash you might find on TV today. On cable shows like "Dirty Jobs," "Hoarders," "Mission: Organization," "Hoarding: Buried Alive," and "Wa\$ted," trash and recycling take center stage. Even a couple episodes of "Undercover Boss" focused on waste.

In a recent issue of *Waste & Recycling News*, "Dirty Jobs" host Mike Rowe said, "Our focus is more on people and work, but the environment is a factor in virtually every segment, and recycling is quite possibly the biggest recurring theme."

Rather than watching re-runs this summer, check out some of the trashy shows on TV. You'll be surprised and probably a little grossed-out, but you won't look at waste the same way again!



"Hoarding: Buried Alive" is one of the shows that focuses on waste. (Photo courtesy of Discovery Communications, Inc.)

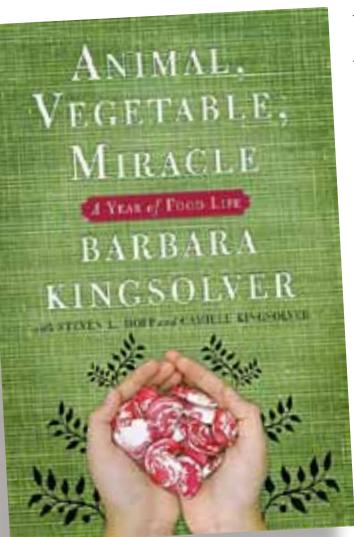
Targeting recyclables

Nationwide, the 1,740 Target stores now offer customers a recycling station for plastic bags, MP3 players, cell phones, ink cartridges, and beverage containers. This is Target's first large-scale effort to offer customer recycling. Previously, Target's reuse and recycling efforts were mostly behind the scenes. For instance, Target stores reused 437 million garment hangers and recycled 935 million pounds of cardboard in 2008.

With this program, Target joins many grocery and electronics stores in offering recycling for some of the products they distribute. Look for – and ask about – recycling programs where you shop!



Local for a year



What happens when one American family decides to get its food from nearby farms and its own backyard? The book, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver, explores this journey through planting, harvesting, and preserving. To learn more, find recipes, or learn about other families' efforts, visit www.animalvegetablemiracle.com.

North of the border, Canadians Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon took a similar journey, which they chronicle in *Plenty: Eating*

Locally on the 100-Mile Diet. You can learn more about their experiences at www.100milediet.org.

Green and gorgeous

Choosing products that are better for the environment doesn't mean sacrificing style. From purses to glassware, clever entrepreneurs are making treasures from our trash.

Several companies are taking car parts, including license plates, tires, and seatbelt strapping, used billboards, metal pull-tabs, and discarded wrappers to make purses. Because used materials are made to fashion the purses, many of the patterns are unrepeatable. You'll find these unique bags at gift shops, as well as at online stores, such as www.ecoist.com and www.niokagreenstore.com.

The Green Glass Company takes used drink bottles and turns them into beautiful glassware. Green Glass began with a unique wine bottle-to-goblet conversion process to fashion functional and eye-catching wineglasses. That has led to other products, including a new line of tumblers made from soft drink and beer bottles. The company's designs turn ordinary bottles into extraordinary glasses, pitchers, and vases. To see Green Glass products, which are sold in gift shops as well as online, visit www.greenglass.com.



Green Glass makes these tumblers from Boylan soda bottles.

Candy and gum wrappers were folded and woven to create this purse.

QUOTES REQUOTED



Photo credit: Annie Griffiths

I can plant something as an act of faith in time itself, a vow that we will, sure enough, have a fall and a winter this year, to be followed again by spring

Maybe life doesn't get any better than this, or any worse, and what we get is just what we're willing to find: small wonders, where they grow.

Barbara Kingsolver, 1955–
Small Wonders
American author



© Raanan Mori | Dreamstime.com

One Change

If you were going to make one change this month, what would it be? Here's an idea—a reusable coffee mug! This year, Americans will carry out 23 billion paper cups filled with coffee and other hot drinks. If you buy one cup of coffee per week, you could avoid 52 disposable cups, lids, and sleeves by carrying your own mug. If you buy one cup of carry-out coffee per work day, you could reduce your waste by 250 disposable cups, lids, and sleeves. If you buy two cups of carry-out coffee every day...well, you get the idea. In addition to reducing your waste, you might also be saving money. Many shops will give you a discount if you bring in your own mug.

Don't forget reusable cups for cold drinks, too!



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, subject to a limit of three televisions or computers per month. Businesses are able to drop off electronics for a recycling fee, but special arrangements need to be made prior to acceptance. Contact the Solid Waste Department prior to arrival. 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 three per month)
- ❖ Computers, such as monitors (limit three 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
- ❖ All flammable liquids (gasoline, kerosene, etc.) – Recycling fee of \$2.00 per gallon
- ❖ 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.

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

**Buncombe County
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Buncombe County Transfer Station

The Transfer Station now accepts *only* residential household waste, which must be bagged. There is a fee for household trash disposal. All other garbage items, including bulky waste, construction and demolition debris, mattresses, wood, and other oversized items, must be disposed of at the Buncombe County Landfill.

The Transfer Station continues 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
- ❖ Appliances
- ❖ Lead-acid batteries

In addition, you can drop off reusable corrugated moving boxes and shipping cartons for reuse. (Please break down and flatten the boxes.) We also accept medical equipment, such as wheelchairs and crutches, for reuse. Plus, you can drop off “sharps,” such as needles and lancets, and non-infectious medical waste from in-home

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.



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 Buncombe County Transfer Station’s hours are Monday through Friday,

from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

Buncombe County 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.



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

- ❖ Oil filters

- ❖ Newspaper
- ❖ Corrugated cardboard
- ❖ Co-mingled recyclable containers, including **plastic bottles** (milk jugs, soft

drink bottles, laundry detergent jugs, and shampoo bottles); aluminum cans; clear, green, and brown glass bottles and jars; and steel cans

- ❖ Lead-acid batteries
- ❖ Motor oil
- ❖ 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)

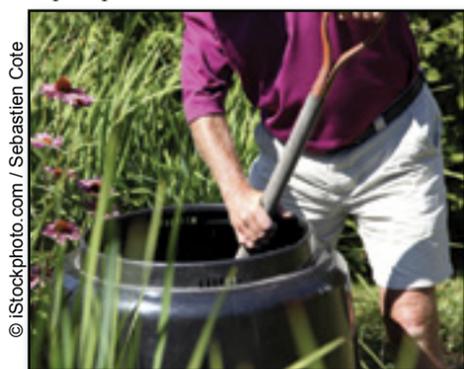
You may also recycle tires. Each year, residents may recycle 10 tires without rims at no charge. After that, tires may be recycled at \$2 per tire. All tires on rims (even the first 10) are \$2 per tire.

You can drop off household trash, as well as bulky waste, construction and demolition waste, and yard waste, at the 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. If you have questions, call the Landfill at 250-5462.

Simple steps to composting success

Across the U.S., yard trimmings comprise 13.2% of waste generated. In any given yard, the size of the lawn, the number of trees, and the presence of a garden and planting beds can affect how much yard waste you have. Nationwide, nearly two-thirds of yard waste is reused or recycled. Many grass clippings never leave the lawn, being “grasscycled” instead. Some yard waste is collected through municipal programs and composted at large-scale facilities. And other yard waste is recycled at home with the help of a compost pile or bin.



© iStockphoto.com / Sebastien Cote

You can make your own backyard compost. The ingredients you’ll need are readily available—“green” and “brown” organic waste, water, and air. After you’ve mixed these ingredients and given them some time to cook, you’ll have a finished compost that will make a nutritious

amendment for your soil.

To learn more about making your own backyard compost, visit www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserves/rrr/composting/index.htm or contact the Cooperative Extension Service.

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
Waste Pro – Residential Trash Pick-up	828-684-7790

Important Phone Numbers for City of Asheville Residents

Asheville City Sanitation – Trash Pick-up	828-259-5857
Curbside Management – Recycling	828-252-2532

CLIP & SAVE