Drop off food scraps for composting

Buncombe County and the City of Asheville are excited to promote our new Food Scraps Drop-Off Program, which debuted October 4. This pilot program aims to help reduce organic matter and greenhouse gas production in the landfill by offering residents a place to drop off compostable food. It is perfect for residents who are interested in composting but worry about bears or finding space on their property.

Buncombe County residents can drop off their food scraps and compostable paper products free of charge at these locations:

- Buncombe County Landfill – Convenience Center
  85 Panther Branch Road, Alexander
  Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Stephens-Lee Recreation Center “Food Scrap Shed” next to the Community Garden on the north side of the parking lot
  30 Washington Carver Avenue, Asheville
  Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.

How the compost drop-off works

- Collect compostable materials at home and be sure to remove all produce stickers, rubber bands, wrappers, ties, bags, and plastics.
- Use a compost pail, bucket, paper bags, or a BPI-certified compostable bag to collect materials for composting.
- At the landfill, let the scale house staff know you would like to drop off compostable materials and they will direct you to the drop-off location. At the recreation center food scrap shed, staff will provide instructions.
- Empty food scraps and all compostable waste into the cart provided.
- Close and secure the lid when finished.
- Do not overfill.

Pre-registration for this program is encouraged by visiting www.BuncombeCounty.org/composting. With questions about this program, please email recycling@buncombecounty.org. For a brochure and video on backyard composting, visit www.ashevillegreenworks.org/composting-information.html.

No plastic bags or Styrofoam, please!

Please keep ALL plastic bags and expanded polystyrene foam (often called “Styrofoam”) out of blue recycling carts and drop-off bins. Polystyrene foam can only be recycled at Asheville Greenworks Hard 2 Recycle events, which occur quarterly. Visit www.ashevillegreenworks.org for event days and locations.

Recyclables should be placed unbagged directly into drop-off bins and carts. If you choose to collect your recycling in plastic bags, please empty recyclables into the cart or bin and then reuse the bag for another purpose or throw it into the trash. When plastic bags are mixed with other recyclables, they get tangled in equipment in our sorting facilities and do not get recycled. Look for our NEW signs and flyers reminding residents that plastic bags of any kind are prohibited in recycling bins.

Plastic bags that are clean, dry, and empty can be taken back to retailers that provide designated plastic bag recycling bins. Look for plastic bag recycling drop-off bins at stores like Ingles, Harris Teeter, or Lowe’s. Thank you for your help!

Deliver your electronics and household hazardous waste to the landfill

Daily During Normal Business Hours

Electronic items, including televisions and computer monitors, are accepted daily at the Buncombe County Landfill during normal operating hours if you can unload the devices without assistance. We accept most electronics from residents at no charge. However, residents will be charged a fee of $10 per TV, laptop, or monitor, regardless of size. If you need assistance with unloading, please utilize the Friday recycling events described below. Businesses may drop off electronics for a fee of 30 cents per pound.

On Select Fridays

Residential residents can drop off old televisions, computers, and other electronics, as well as unneeded household, garden, and automotive chemicals, paints and stains, fluorescent light tubes and bulbs, and spent rechargeable household batteries, at the landfill during special Friday collection events. All of these items are accepted in a special collection area which will be open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on these Fridays only during the coming months:

- January 14
- February 11
- March 11
- April 8
- April 22

The landfill is located at 85 Panther Branch Road, off of 251 North (Old Marshall Highway), north of Alexander. When you get to the landfill scale house, you will be directed to the recycling area. Proof of county residency is required. Fees of $10 per TV, laptop, or monitor apply. Businesses may recycle electronics for a fee but are NOT allowed to drop off hazardous waste. Bio-hazardous materials, radioactive materials, and explosives are NOT accepted at any time.

If you have questions, please call the landfill at 828-250-5462.
Green up your holiday cleanup

There’s no time like the present to kick-start your recycling and reuse efforts! Finish the winter holidays off right by making sure all your waste and leftovers are properly reused, recycled, or disposed. Not only will you have a cleaner home, but you’ll also give everyone the gift of a cleaner environment!

Live holiday trees
With our holiday tree recycling program, “undecking the halls” has never been easier. The trees will be chipped and turned into mulch, so make sure that your tree is totally bare and free of lights, garlands, tinsel, and decorations, as well as the stand. The Buncombe County Landfill offers free tree disposal for the entire month of January. Residents may drop off their trees for free at the landfill in the yard waste area.

Wrapping paper and boxes
Now that your tree is on its way to a second life, let’s give wrapping supplies the same chance. Any usable wrapping paper, boxes, bags, bows, or tissue paper can be folded and stored for next year. If you’re careful when opening presents, this should provide most of next year’s supply. Any boxes beyond reuse can be broken down and recycled. Be sure to remove tissue, plastic bags, and other packing material. Wrapping paper is also recyclable, as long as it is not metallic or metal-flecked. Holiday cards can also be recycled. However, there are some exceptions: no photo paper, no metallic or foil paper, and no cards with ribbons, buttons, or other doodads attached. Non-recyclable cards should be put into the trash or saved for arts and crafts projects. Ribbons and bows are not recyclable but are easily stored for reuse later. If you won’t be saving them, be sure to offer them for free to a local teacher or nonprofit or give them away through an online marketplace, such as Nextdoor or Facebook Marketplace. When all attempts at reuse fail, place non-recyclable wrapping supplies into the curbside trash container.

Replaced toys and unwanted gifts
Some of the gifts wrapped in those bags and bows might have replaced old toys or become unwanted toys themselves. Some stores will accept new toys without a receipt in exchange for store credit. You can always donate new or gently used toys, as well as clothes and other goods that have been replaced, to a local charity or to Goodwill and The Salvation Army.

Batteries
Some of your gifts may need batteries. Consider purchasing rechargeable batteries instead of single-use batteries. Rechargeable batteries can be reused multiple times with the help of a charging cord or device. However, even rechargeables eventually die. When this happens, be sure to recycle them.

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Plastic waste
Plastic waste is one of the most common types of waste generated. It is made from petroleum and is used in a wide variety of products, such as packaging, clothing, and furniture. Plastic waste can take hundreds of years to decompose in landfills and oceans, harming wildlife and ecosystems. It is important to reduce, reuse, and recycle plastic waste to minimize its impact on the environment.

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Interested in recycling at your business?
If your business is interested in learning more about recycling-by-products or waste, wants to educate employees about recycling, or wants to perform a waste audit, the Solid Waste staff is happy to help. Please email recycling@buncombecounty.org with your inquiry.

Recycle:
• Non-foil wrapping paper
• Cardboard boxes (Please flatten, but don’t worry about the tape.)
• Dress boxes
• Holiday cards – no foil, batteries, or non-paper attachments
• Envelopes
• Newspaper and inserts
• Junk mail
• Paper shopping bags and gift bags (Remove and discard the handles.)
• Holiday catalogs
• Broth cartons and wine boxes
• Egg nog cartons
• Crackers, cereal, cake, and similar boxes
• Almost every grocery store container – cans, jugs, bottles, jars – with the exception of black micro-wavable trays or plastic clamshells, which aren’t accepted

NO! Do not recycle:
• Tissue paper
• Ribbons
• Used paper plates or cups
• Expanded polystyrene foam (Styrofoam, packing peanuts, big blocks from appliance and electronic boxes, etc.)
• Napkins and paper towels
• Holiday lights

What types of holiday waste are recyclable?

Did you know?
• We do NOT accept black garden pots for recycling, even if they have a recycling symbol imprinted on them. Residents are encouraged to reuse them or to take them back to the store to be recycled by the company.
• We do NOT accept propane tanks of any kind at the landfill or the transfer station. Please recycle your tanks through a propane tank take-back program, such as Blue Rhino.

A page a day to keep waste away
Are you looking for some daily inspiration for 2022? Do you like ideas that improve your family life and our community and environment? If you answered “yes,” check out Waste Not Everyday: 365 Ways to Reduce, Reuse and Reconnect by Erin Rhoads. You’ll find daily inspiration for your low-waste journey. Her tips are short, usually just a sentence or two, and easy to implement. Plus, Rhoads focuses on kindness and community-building, both of which will make for a better new year. For longer articles and more ideas, follow Rhoads’ blog, www.therogueginger.com.
The dangers of lithium-ion battery fires

Did you know batteries can start fires inside your carts, collection trucks, and our waste facilities? Lithium-ion batteries, found in many rechargeable devices like cell phones, laptops, and headphones, pose a fire risk when you toss them into your trash or recycling bins at home. This past summer, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a report, “An Analysis of Lithium-Ion Battery Fires in Waste Management and Recycling,” analyzing the impact of these batteries when not properly recycled.

The EPA found more than 240 fires caused by lithium-ion batteries at 64 facilities between 2013 and 2020. This number is likely low, since data is limited on lithium-ion battery fires not made public or covered in the news.

Lithium-ion batteries can easily ignite when damaged, and in the process of collecting and processing curbside trash, they are likely to be damaged. Mechanized trucks typically crush waste when picking it up. At materials recovery facilities (MRFs), items travel across conveyors and tumble through a series of sorting machines. At landfills, waste is compacted by heavy equipment. The fires sparked by lithium-ion batteries not only caused damage at the facilities or to the vehicles where they occurred, but they also resulted in injured firefighters, monetary loss, and service disruptions in the community. In addition, when we trash our portable devices and their batteries, we cannot reuse the valuable materials they contain to make new products.

As portable electronics continue to be a critical part of our everyday lives, our waste and recycling systems will only see more of these batteries. Take all batteries and electronics to a household hazardous waste collection facility. Better yet, use your portable electronics as long as you can, only upgrading to a replacement once your device is no longer working.

Even if you can do all our part to ensure we properly dispose of these batteries to keep our community safe, we may face further damages.

Girl Scouts repurpose T-shirts to make dog toys for animal shelters

Early last year, members of Girl Scout Troop 3400 of Nassau County in Long Island, New York found themselves wondering how in the world they could turn the 300 misprinted T-shirts they were given into something useful. The T-shirts had all been printed incorrectly, so the troop was asked not to sell them or give them away. Luckily, the scouts were planning their Bronze Award project, which is an activity Girl Scouts do to learn while helping others. Because they all loved animals, the girls wanted their community service project to involve helping and caring for dogs and cats in animal shelters.

Twelve-year-old Girl Scout Brianna Matos remembers wondering if they could turn the T-shirts into something. Finding a different use or purpose for an item is called repurposing. For ideas, she and other Troop 3400 members looked online and found that unwanted T-shirts could be made into dog toys called “pullies,” so named because dogs like to pull on them while playing tug-of-war. The pullies could then be donated to local animal shelters and used by dogs waiting to be adopted by families.

The girls planned a big in-person event for March 2020 called “Pullies4thePaws” and invited lots of Girl Scouts and animal lovers to help them make the toys. Then the COVID-19 pandemic stopped everything. All in-person events were canceled, animal shelters were not accepting homemade donations, and the girls were asked to wait.

After about a year of waiting, the troop adapted the project so that anyone wanting to help make the pullies could do it safely in their own home. Brianna and her seven-year-old sister Taylor created a how-to video showing others how to make the pullies using only a pair of scissors and a T-shirt. Volunteers picked up the misprinted T-shirts, made the pullies in their homes, and then returned the finished dog toys to Troop 3400.

Brianna and Taylor’s mother Allison Matos estimates that about 150 Girl Scouts, aged five to 17, participated. Over a year after the project began, the pullies were finally delivered to area pet rescue organizations and animal shelters during the summer of 2021. The shelters told the girls that the pullies were safer for small or medium sized dogs because bigger dogs were more likely to get sick from trying to eat them! The scouts were also surprised to hear that the pullies were not only enjoyed as dog toys, but they were also used to keep lonely cats company.

Brianna, Taylor, and all of the girls in Troop 3400 were super happy with the outcome of the project. Girl Scouts from all over their area were able to keep 300 unwanted T-shirts out of the landfill and help numerous dogs and cats — all during a pandemic!

Taylor noted, “It makes more sense to use what you have to make things rather than buying new ones. This makes less garbage which is much better for the planet.”

Brianna agreed. “It was really cool to see the dogs enjoying the toys,” commented Brianna. “Our environment is changing faster than ever, and there are always little things we can do to make a change. If everyone makes a little change, it will make a big difference!”

Watch Brianna and Taylor’s fun, instructional video to see exactly how to make dog pullies from old T-shirts at https://youtu.be/PpMx8L4IQM. For safety, do not leave dogs alone with a pullie or any other homemade toy.

For more inspiring stories about people working to help care for the earth, or to submit your own story, visit the Keep America Beautiful Do Beautiful Things website at https://kab.org/dobeautifulthings.
### KEEP THESE ITEMS OUT!

- Aerosol cans
- All batteries (car, lithium, etc.)
- Ceramic items
- Clothing or textiles
- Diapers
- Disposable cups (plastic and paper)
- Electronics
- Food-tainted items
- Hazardous waste
- Household glass
- Medical waste
- Plastic bags/wrap
- Plastic clamshell packaging
- Scrap metal/wood
- Shredded paper
- Styrofoam/peanuts
- Tanglers (cords, hoses, wires, etc.)
- Tires
- Toys

If you have any questions, please contact the Solid Waste Office at 828-250-5460 or the Landfill at 828-250-5462.

### RECYCLE ALL TOGETHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLASTIC</th>
<th>METAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottles, tubs, jugs and jars</td>
<td>All cans</td>
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**Bottles and jars**

- If you have any questions, please contact the Solid Waste Office at 828-250-5460 or the Landfill at 828-250-5462.

### TV/PAINT RECYCLING EVENTS

Buncombe County Landfill also accepts the following items from residents’ ONLY during TV/Paint Recycling events. Check our website for event details and dates.

- **Electronics:** Cell phones, keyboards, etc.
- **Television, computer monitors and CPUs:** Everyday drop-off is available for residents who are able to self-unload.
- **Paint:** Paint, paint thinners, water sealer, enamels, etc. 20-gallon limit per event.
- **Flammable liquids:** Gasoline and kerosene.
- **Pesticides:** Insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc.
- **Unbroken fluorescent bulbs:** 20 bulbs max per month. Check online for bulb disposal guidelines.

**NOTE:** Bio-Hazardous materials, radioactive materials and explosives are NOT accepted.

*Businesses can recycle electronics by the pound for a fee. No business hazardous wastes will be accepted.

### ACCEPTED EVERY DAY

The landfill also accepts the following materials every day at the Convenience Center from residents only — no commercial quantities.

- **Used cooking oil**
- **Motor oil**
- **Lead acid batteries**
- **Automotive fluids, oil filters and anti-freeze**

### Important Phone Numbers for County Residents

- Bioreactor Manager – Kristy Smith: 828-250-5473
- Buncombe County Landfill: 828-250-5462
- Buncombe County Transfer Station: 828-250-6205
- Mobile Home Removal – Bob Haynes: 828-250-5388
- Environmental Control – Kim Spillars: 828-250-5470
- Recycling Coordinator – Cassandra Lohmeyer: 828-220-1361

### Important Phone Numbers for City of Asheville Residents

- Asheville City Sanitation – Trash Pickup: 828-259-5857
- Curbside Management – Recycling: 828-252-2532

### Buncombe County Landfill Convenience Center

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 traffic light, take Highway 191 North. After crossing I-240, turn left onto Shelburne Road. Turn right onto Panther Branch Road and travel 1/2 mile to the Buncombe County Landfill, which is located on the right. The new landfill is 6 miles north of the old landfill.

### Buncombe County Transfer Station Convenience Center

Directions to the Transfer Station:

From I-240, take exit 18 (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.

### Like us on Facebook!

Get announcements directly in your News Feed about Buncombe County Government activities and programs, including solid waste and recycling. Plus, you’ll be able to post your questions and comments, find county job listings, and more. Like us today at www.facebook.com/buncombecountygov.

### Important Phone Numbers for Buncombe County

- Buncombe County Solid Waste Department: 828-250-5460 • www.buncombecounty.org
- Buncombe County Landfill: 828-250-5462
- Buncombe County Transfer Station: 828-250-6205
- Buncombe County Solid Waste Department: 828-250-5460 • www.buncombecounty.org

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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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PLEASE RECYCLE AFTER READING.