

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



**The City  
of Irvine**  
(949) 724-7669



**Waste Management  
of Orange County**  
(949) 642-1191

Winter 2008



# Switch to CFLs and save

One of the easiest ways to save natural resources and reduce greenhouse gases, which are the primary cause of global warming, is to use less energy. Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) last 9 to 10 times longer than the typical incandescent bulbs they replace and use about one-fourth of the energy. So, not only do they save energy (and money!), they save time because you don't need to change light bulbs as often. For the greatest impact, first change out the lights you use most often, such as in the kitchen, the bathroom, and the family room, as well as

security lamps. You will see a difference in your electric bill right away.

The City of Irvine, through the Community Energy Partnership with Southern California Edison, The Gas Company, and The Energy Coalition, is distributing CFLs free to Irvine residents. These CFLs will help reduce electricity use and thus reduce the natural resources used to make electricity. Residents of Irvine can pick up a maximum of four CFLs per household at any one of eight community centers in the city: Bill Barber, Northwood, Deerfield, Las

Lomas, Heritage, Woodbury, Turtle Rock, and University. Check with the center nearest you (see box) for hours of operation and current supply. Each free CFL replaces a standard 100-watt light bulb. Once you have installed the free CFLs



and seen how easy it is to use them, you might consider replacing some other light bulbs in your home. Fluorescent bulbs imitate the soft, warm lighting of incandescent bulbs and come in many varieties. There are fluorescent bulbs that can be dimmed with a dimmer switch. There are specialty fluorescent bulbs designed to look like, and replace, candelabra lights, floodlights, and vanity bathroom

lights. And don't forget to replace those high-heat, high-energy-consuming halogen torchieres with much more energy-efficient fluorescent torchieres. You can purchase these other varieties of fluorescent light bulbs and light fixtures at local hardware, home supply, and do-it-yourself stores.

Fluorescent bulbs contain a small amount of mercury—an average of four milligrams—which is an essential part of the bulb's efficiency. Mercury is used in many household items, such as thermostats, thermometers, fluorescent lights, batteries, and switches for appliances, lights, and automobiles. Because of this, all of these items, including fluorescent bulbs, need to be disposed of as Universal Waste. Residents can take fluorescent bulbs to the County Household Hazardous Waste disposal site at 6411 Oak Canyon. This disposal facility is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., unless it is raining or a holiday.

If a fluorescent bulb breaks, please take care in cleaning it up, and never use a vacuum because that will spread the mercury to other parts of your home. For specific instructions on how to clean up broken fluorescent bulbs, please go to [www.CityofIrvine.us/energy\\_home.html](http://www.CityofIrvine.us/energy_home.html).

Community Center	Address	Phone
Bill Barber	4 Civic Center Plaza	724-6711
Deerfield	55 Deerwood West	724-6725
Heritage	14301 Yale Avenue	724-6750
Las Lomas	10 Federation	724-6844
Northwood	4531 Bryan Avenue	724-6728
Turtle Rock	1 Sunnyhill Drive	724-6734
University	1 Beech Tree Lane	724-6815
Woodbury	130 Sanctuary	724-6840

# Clean up from the holidays safely—for the environment and yourself

**Waste Management urges customers to recycle post-holiday mailings and catalogs and protect personal information when discarding receipts and billing statements.**

As Orange County residents clean up after the holidays, Waste Management of Orange County advises customers to be proactive about recycling holiday shopping catalogs and taking care when disposing of items that contain personal information.

In Orange County, most junk mail, including solicitations and catalogs, can be recycled in residents' mixed recyclables bins. "It's always important to remember to be careful when disposing of sensitive information," said David Ross, Senior District Manager for Waste Management of Orange County. "So as you are cleaning out receipts from holiday shopping, billing statements, or credit card offers you may receive as a result of your holiday purchases, be sure to shred or tear them up before placing them in your recycling bin."

Waste Management urges customers to tear or shred:

- Charge receipts
- Copies of credit applications
- Insurance forms
- Physician statements
- Checks and bank statements
- Expired charge cards that you're discarding
- Credit offers you receive in the mail

Any items that contain account numbers or Social Security numbers should be destroyed before disposal. In order to reduce your risk for identity theft—and also cut down on unwanted mail or solicitations—you can also opt out of receiving credit offers. Contact the three major

credit bureaus at 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688) for more information. When you call, you will need to provide your home telephone number, name, and Social Security number. The information you provide is confidential and will be used only to process your request to opt out of receiving pre-screened offers for credit.

After the holidays, many residents also find themselves on the receiving end of more catalogs or mailings. "People who shopped at different retailers during the holidays or signed up for catalogs at the cash register may find extra mail filling their boxes in the New Year," said Ross. "We encourage people to do their browsing or shopping online, and to reduce the number of paper catalogs they receive by opting out of mailing lists."

According to the Direct Marketing Association, approximately 18 billion catalogs are mailed per year in the United States, which equals about 64 catalogs per person per year. A study by Resource Information Systems Inc. estimates this number of catalogs consumes



more than 3 million tons of paper. Other calculations by the U.S. Forest Service and conservation groups indicate 100 million trees' worth of bulk mail is sent each year to American mailboxes, with the peak in mailings during the holiday season. This is the equivalent of deforesting all of Rocky Mountain National Park every four months.

You can reduce the number of unwanted mailings arriving at your home by:

- Declining to be added to mailing lists when you shop at a store or online. Also, when you place an order or make a donation, write or ask the company not to rent your name to other companies or organizations.
- Contacting the companies from which you receive catalogs and asking to be removed from their mailing lists.
- Sharing catalogs with roommates, family members, neighbors, or friends, rather than each individual receiving a copy.
- Visiting the Direct Marketing Association's website at [www.dmaconsumers.org](http://www.dmaconsumers.org) to register for the Mail Preference Service and have your name removed from general mailing lists.

Reducing and recycling catalogs and junk mail help preserve natural resources not only by saving trees, but also by reducing the need for landfill space for these discarded items. By actively cutting down on unwanted mailings and recycling those you do receive, you can also help the City of Irvine meet recycling goals, which is important for the sustainability and environmental future of our community.

# 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



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.

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. Recently, Linda Carlin of Frog Design, a marketing consulting group, and Tess Vigeland, a reporter on American Public Media's Marketplace radio



program, carried around their non-recyclable waste for two weeks. Find the record of the ups and downs of these projects in “Trash Talk” at [www.frogdesign.com/frogblog/author/trash-talk/](http://www.frogdesign.com/frogblog/author/trash-talk/) and in “Tess' Trash Challenge” at [www.publicradio.org/columns/marketplace/trash](http://www.publicradio.org/columns/marketplace/trash).

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.

## 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](http://www.kidsfootprint.org)

**Best Foot Forward: Bringing Sustainability Down to Earth**  
[www.bestfootforward.com](http://www.bestfootforward.com)

**Ecological Footprint Quiz**  
[www.myfootprint.org/](http://www.myfootprint.org/)

**Global Footprint Network**  
[www.footprintnetwork.org](http://www.footprintnetwork.org)

**The Green Office: Carbon Offsetting**  
[www.thegreenoffice.com/carbon](http://www.thegreenoffice.com/carbon)

## What will they think of next?



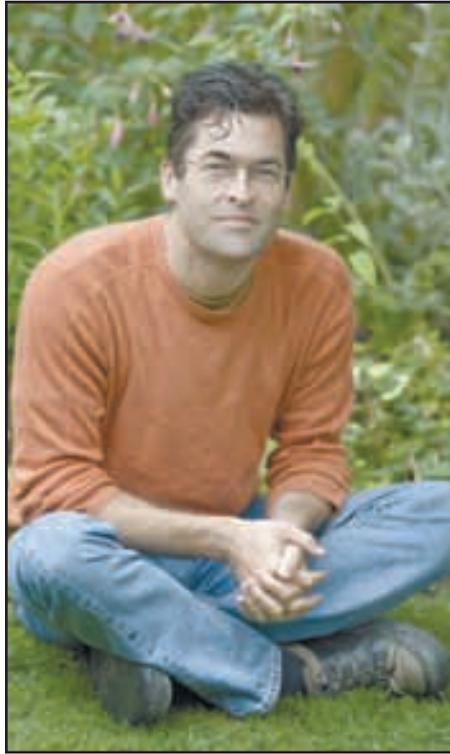
Last fall, a British reality TV show invited 11 volunteers to participate in a “Survivor”-type challenge at a South London garbage dump. The volunteers were dropped off on the landfill and challenged to survive for three weeks. Learn more about the show, discover what happened to the volunteers after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

# Running the Numbers

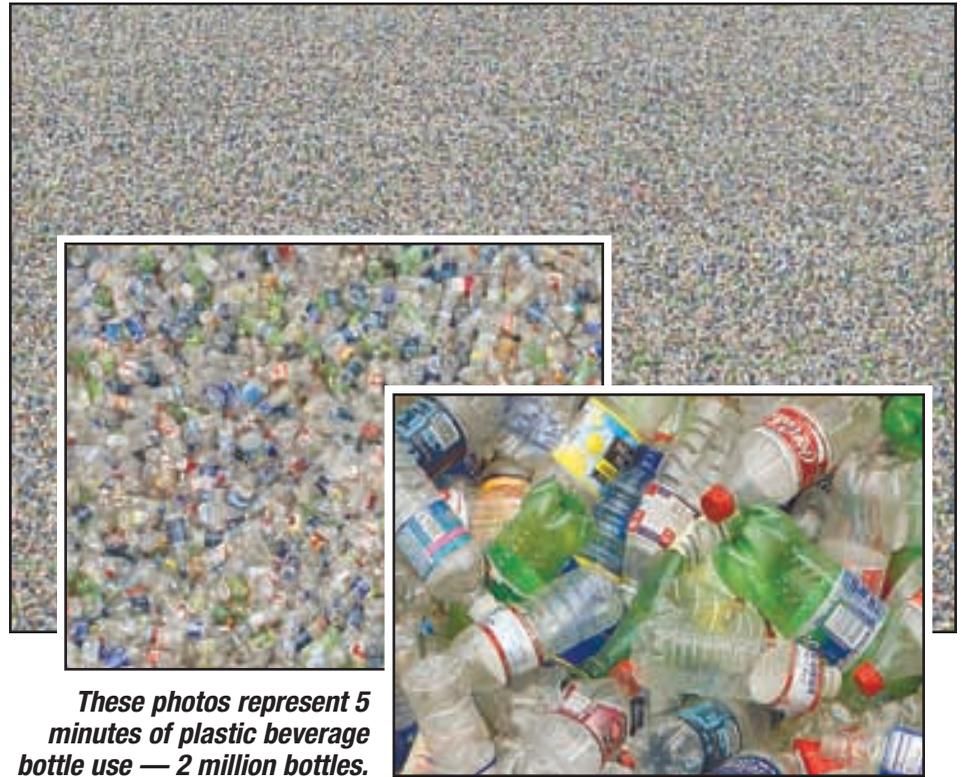
Artist Chris Jordan believes that statistics can tell stories, helping to create an American self-portrait. His new series of large-scale photographs depicts a specific quantity of selected items, such as five minutes of office paper use (15 million sheets), 30 seconds of aluminum can consumption (106,000 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](http://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](http://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](http://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



## WHAT'S UP?

Electronic waste is now accepted in the curbside bulky item collection program. Residents with curbside service are provided with two bulky item pickups a year at no charge. During each of these bulky item pickups, up to four items will be accepted. The expanded bulky item collection includes televisions, computer monitors, and electronic equipment, such as computers, VCRs, cell phones, batteries, CFLs, and fluorescent light tubes.



We are now accepting plastic bags for recycling in the curbside recycling program. Residents with curbside recycling service may now place their plastic bags in the gray recycling cart. Use one bag as a holder and place all of the other bags inside it. Then tie it shut and drop it into your gray cart. **PLEASE DO NOT PUT LOOSE PLASTIC BAGS INTO YOUR CART!**



**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

**The City of Irvine  
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The views and statements of environmental organizations referenced in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the City of Irvine.



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## Treecycle!

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

Holiday tree recycling collection will be available to residents who have curbside service. Trees will be collected on your service day for three weeks following Christmas. Simply place your tree out at the curb on your collection day. Trees must be free from decorations, stands, lights, etc. Trees taller than four feet (4') must be cut in half. For more information, contact Waste Management at 949-642-1191. If you would like to recycle your tree after the three-week collection period, please cut up the tree and place it into your green waste cart.

Irvine residents who live in multi-family housing complexes with bin service may want to inquire with the property manager regarding holiday tree disposal or

any special tree collections. Multi-family residents who wish to recycle their holiday trees can take them to Sunset Environmental, located at 16122 Construction Circle West (near Jamboree and Barranca). Trees will be accepted starting December 26 and continuing through January 19. Trees will be accepted Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. You will need to show proof of residency in Irvine (such as a utility bill or current driver's license).

These collections are for "real" Christmas trees only. Please place broken artificial trees into your trash.



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

## Powering our portables

Batteries provide cordless, portable power by turning chemical energy into electrical energy. In turn, these batteries provide the electrical power needed to run cell and portable phones, remote controls, flashlights, laptop computers, music and DVD players, power tools, smoke detectors, digital cameras, PDAs, the dog's invisible fence collar, and much more.

Household batteries come in two basic varieties: single-use and rechargeable. Rechargeable batteries can be used, recharged, and used again. Some rechargeables must be taken out and placed into a charger that is plugged into a wall outlet. These rechargeable batteries usually look a lot like single-use batteries and come in the same varieties: AA, AAA, C, D, and 9-volt. Other rechargeable batteries are "built-in" to the item. You don't remove these batteries to recharge them. Instead, you simply plug a charging cable (often called an "adapter") into the item and plug the other end into a wall outlet, a car's lighter, or a computer's USB port.

Since many of the things you use every day depend on batteries for electrical power, make the most of your batteries. When you do, you'll save energy and reduce your waste.

First, reduce your use of batteries by turning off items when they are not in use. Store unused batteries in a cool, dry location. Keep your inventory of extra batteries together in one place—this ensures that your replacement batteries are fresh and also keeps you from buying duplicates of what you already have on-hand.

Second, choose rechargeables. Rechargeables, which can be used as few as 50 to as many as a thousand times, create less waste and require less energy per use than single-use batteries. Many items come with rechargeable batteries

built-in, such as laptop computers and cell phones. In other cases, you need to select rechargeable AA, AAA, C, D, and



9-volt batteries and purchase the appropriate type of recharging unit. Make sure that the recharger is made for the type of batteries you select. For instance, rechargeable alkaline batteries may require a different recharging unit than rechargeable NiMH (nickel metal hydride) batteries. The recharging unit is a one-time purchase. Be sure that everyone in your family knows which batteries are rechargeable.

Third, recycle your "dead" or "spent" batteries. These include single-use batteries, as well as rechargeables that will no longer accept a charge. Many batteries contain metals and chemicals that can be hazardous if disposed improperly. Because of the risks posed by the improper disposal of batteries, they are considered Universal Waste and, under California law, cannot be disposed of with mixed household or business trash.

Irvine residents can take their batteries, along with other hazardous waste, to one of the County's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Centers. The County operates four permanent collection centers **FOR RESIDENTS ONLY**, and one is located in Irvine at 6411 Oak Canyon. For more information, hours, and a list of acceptable items, visit the County's website at [www.oilandfills.com](http://www.oilandfills.com).

## Holiday Recycling

Holiday wrapping paper, greeting cards, and gift boxes can be recycled after the holidays. You may place these items into your gray curbside cart (single-family residents) or into the gray recycling bin (multi-family residents with bin service).

## Buy, sell, or trade

Does your business or organization have unneeded, but usable, industrial process wastes, byproducts, surplus raw materials, chemicals, off-specification products, or packaging? A materials exchange can help you get these items out of storage, keep them from disposal, and save money. Or, maybe you don't need to get rid of anything—maybe there is something you need. With a materials exchange, you can buy, sell, or trade.

A materials exchange is an information service that lists products available from some businesses and institutions, as well as items wanted by others. Materials listed and wanted include pallets, boxes, wood, leather, metals, construction materials, equipment, acids, solvents, and more. This information is published by category in an electronic list, which is updated with regular emails as new items are posted. The exchange does not broker any deals. The businesses or institutions make their own arrangements for the exchange of the materials, including transportation and payment.

If you have materials "available" or "wanted," sign up today. Here's the information that you'll need for your posting:

1. A complete and accurate description of the material available or wanted
2. The exact amount of material that is available or wanted
3. Any special considerations or requirements, such as the physical state of the material, contaminants present or allowable, packaging, or shipping expectations

For more information, go to the California Materials Exchange website, [www.calmax.org](http://www.calmax.org). If you would like to donate your materials, such as furniture, equipment, or office and art supplies, to schools, check out the special KidMAX program designed to support California schools.

The City of Irvine also operates a local materials exchange network, modeled after the state program, which is specifically designed to bring together Orange County businesses and residents that have surplus materials with those that have a need for such materials. Application forms are issued to businesses annually with the business license renewal applications and upon request. If you would like an application, please call our office at 949-724-7669.

## Did you know?

The City of Irvine offers technical assistance, including waste audits and assistance in establishing recycling programs, to businesses. For more information, contact the Irvine Recycles Hotline at 949-724-7669.