

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



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



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

Spring 2009



Help us stop scavengers

Call it a sign of the times, but as the economy has weakened, scavenging of recyclables has been on the rise. In Irvine, scavengers have been going through neighborhoods and parks before the recycling trucks get there to remove recyclables from carts and bins. The City ordinance prohibits any person other than the City's waste hauler from removing recyclable items from the carts and bins. Scavenging from these carts or bins is a crime, and the City of Irvine does enforce this law and investigates the cases that are reported.

Theft of recyclable items can have an adverse impact on the City's financial resources. Scavenging results in lost revenue from the sale of these materials, revenue that helps pay for collection costs and funds other programs and services. Theft of recyclables has also led to vandalism of City equipment, such as recycling containers in City parks.

Scavenging is called a "gateway crime" because people who steal recyclables begin

to believe that it is okay to take something else. Scavenging encourages unknown people, some of whom are highly organized, to come into our neighborhoods with the intent of taking recyclables. This can lead to other types of crime, such as trespassing or theft of larger or more valuable items, as well as breaking and entering.

If you see scavenging, do not confront the scavenger. Instead, jot down a description of the person and vehicle, including a license plate number, if possible. To report scavenging during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), call the Irvine Recycling Hotline at 949-724-7669. At all other times, contact the Irvine Police Department directly at 949-724-7000.



The recycling containers, which were purchased from Kettle Creek, are made from recycled plastic lumber. They are clearly marked to remind you to put only recyclable bottles and cans into recycling bins!

Earth Day Every Day for Everyone

Earth Day is April 22. Each year when Earth Day comes around, we are reminded that the earth is our home 24/7/365. This means, of course, that we need to be taking care of it year-round. Adopt these earth-friendly habits:

1. **Rescue food.** Irvine's Environmental staff and Irvine-based Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County worked with Joel Green, host of the television show *Curiosity Quest*, to produce a segment on food rescue for the show that will be aired on KOCE and Irvine's cable channel this spring.
2. **Celebrate.** The City's Environmental staff will take part in several local Earth Day events, including the "One Day. One Campus. Many Options..." 31st annual Earth Day Celebration at UC-Irvine on Saturday, April 18; a visit to the Lakeview Senior Center on Wednesday, April 22; and a special role in the library's Earth Day outreach program.
3. **Learn more.** Sign up for Earth 911's weekly updates at www.Earth911.com. All year long, you'll receive weekly emails full of helpful tips on reducing, reusing, recycling, and much more!
4. **Save energy.** Turn off lights when you leave the room. Turn off computer monitors when they aren't in use. Buy compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) to replace burned-out incandescent bulbs.
5. **Reduce your waste.** You probably have noticed that paper has a front and a back—use them both. If you take lunch to work or send lunch to school, pack it waste-free with washable and reusable containers and a reusable lunch bag or box. Think before you buy. Sometimes you don't really need what you want.
6. **Conserve water.** Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth or shave. Run the

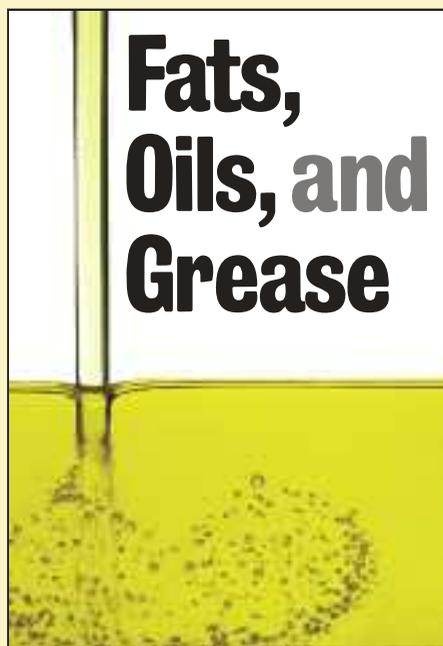
washing machine and dishwasher with full loads.



7. **Recycle.** Recycling is for more than just bottles, cans, jars, and papers. Did you know that you can recycle bottle caps, too? Salons that sell Aveda products are accepting rigid polypropylene plastic (#5 PP) twist-on caps with a threaded neck, such as those on shampoo, water, soda, milk, and other beverage bottles, flip-top caps on tubes and food product bottles (such as ketchup and mayonnaise), and screw-top lids from laundry detergent jugs and peanut butter jars. For more information, visit <http://aveda.aveda.com/aboutaveda/caps.asp>. To find the Aveda location nearest you, click on "Find a Location" at the top of the webpage and enter your ZIP code.
8. **Eliminate plastic bag waste.** Stop accepting the free paper and plastic bags at the store. Instead, use your own canvas bags or purchase reusable shopping bags. Keep the reusable bags in your car and remember to grab them on your way into a store. Many of these reusable bags will hold as much as three to four plastic or two paper bags full of groceries. That also means fewer trips from the car to the house while you are unloading—and we know you'll like that!

For more information about local waste reduction and recycling programs, visit www.cityofirvine.us/index.php or www.wmorangecounty.com.

Fats, Oils, and Grease



(c) iStockphoto.com / Kristian Septimius Krogh

not a dump. To properly dispose of large quantities of oil from deep fryers, please take your used cooking oil to one of the County of Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers. These centers accept up to 15 gallons per visit from residential use only. For more information, call the County's HHW Center hotline at 714-834-6752 or visit www.oilandfills.com.

Here are some steps you can take to properly dispose of small quantities of fats, oils, and grease:

- Use a grease can or small container to collect the excess fats, oils, and grease. Make sure these materials are cool before placing them in the container.
- Mix oils and grease with absorbent material like paper towels, coffee grounds, or kitty litter. Use a plastic liner or "baggy" inside the container; then you can reuse the container and only dispose of the liner.
- Once the container is full, remove the liner or "baggy" and place it into the trash along with other absorbent material, such as paper towels, coffee grounds, or kitty litter.

Did you know that pouring fat, oil, and grease down the drain or into your garbage disposal creates buildups in underground pipes and creates serious problems, such as sewer blockages and overflows? Remember that the drain is

Cans for Cash

Congratulations to the City of Irvine for winning another Cans for Cash award! For the second year in a row, the City partnered with Irvine Unified School District, Irvine Public Schools Foundation, and local businesses to participate in the nationwide aluminum can recycling challenge, "Cans for Cash." The City and partners won the "Most Innovative Ideas" award. The prize money will go to the Irvine Public Schools Foundation to support the school

district's recycling program.

Don't forget that you can turn your cans (and bottles) into cash year-round. Recycle your California Refund Value (CRV) beverage containers at the buy-back center operated by Waste Management and the Orange County Conservation Corps. The center, located at 16122 Construction Circle East in Irvine, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 714-956-6222.

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



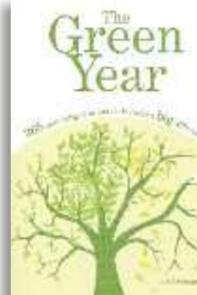
The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy and, after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it, and to foster its renewal, is our only legitimate hope.

Wendell Berry, 1934—
American farmer and poet

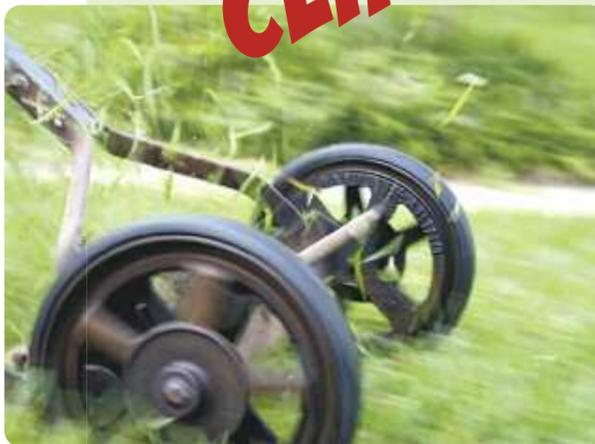
Greening your year

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



(c) Maypop / SnapVillage.com

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/.



Trash Collection Rate Discounts Available

You may be eligible to receive a discount on your trash pickup if you qualify for the following:

Senior Rate

If you are 65 years or older and you are the owner of the property or responsible for the waste bill where you reside, you are eligible for the Senior Rate.

Low Waste Generator Rate

If you opt to use the smallest cart size (35 gallons) for trash collection, you are eligible for the "Low Waste Generator" Rate. Remember—the less you throw away, the more you can recycle and donate for reuse.

To apply for either of these discount rates, please call the Waste Management Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191, or visit the website, www.wmorangecounty.com.

Free workshops!

The Irvine Ranch Water District periodically holds free residential landscape workshops to promote water efficiency and California friendly landscaping. Some of the workshop topics include watering for plant health, lowering water bills, and designing a landscape. These free workshops are open to any residential customer in the IRWD service area. For more information, or to get on the reservation list, visit www.irwd.com/FreePrograms/workshops.php, or call 949-453-5327.

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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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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Sharps by mail

Sharps, such as needles, syringes, and lancets, cannot be mixed with household trash. In order to help you dispose of sharps properly, Waste Management, in partnership with Sharps, Inc., offers a mail-back disposal program. To take part in this low-cost program, residents purchase a kit at a local pharmacy. The first kit is FREE, and two additional kits are available with a \$5 co-pay. Residents simply show a valid ID at any participating pharmacy listed below to verify that they live in Irvine.

Each kit includes a specially designed sharps container and a postage-prepaid shipping container. Used sharps are placed inside the container for safe storage. Once the container is filled, it is dropped in the mail in the postage-prepaid box and sent

to a certified medical waste facility, where it is destroyed. The Sharps Disposal by Mail kits are available at these locations:

- CVS, 15333 Culver Boulevard, Suite 300, 949-654-2600
- CVS, 6775 Quail Hill Parkway, 949-823-8915
- CVS, 5385 Alton Parkway, 949-733-8226
- CVS, 14330 Culver Drive, 949-786-0151
- Rite Aid, 3875 Alton Parkway, 949-250-4465
- Rite Aid, 18112 Culver Drive, 949-786-0151
- Walgreens, 6316 Irvine Boulevard, 949-451-1563
- Walgreens, 5695 Alton Parkway, 949-726-0716

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.



If you would like more information about grasscycling, composting, and California-friendly gardening, contact the University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Hotline at 714-708-1646. You'll also find information at the City's website, www.cityofirvine.us.

Do you have extra yard waste that you can't handle by grasscycling or composting? Most residents with curbside service and larger lot sizes have been provided a green waste cart for collection of yard debris, such as grass clippings, prunings, and leaves. For more information about this service, call Waste Management's Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191.



County HHW Center Now Accepts Sharps

To supplement local mail-back programs, the County's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers recently began accepting medical sharps. Residents can now take their properly packaged sharps to the HHW Center, located at 6411 Oak Canyon in Irvine. Please call the County's HHW hotline at 714-834-6752 for additional information.

Bulky waste service available

Bulky item collection is available year-round to Irvine residents who live in single-family homes and have curbside service. Residents are entitled to two free pickups each year, with up to four large items per pickup. Bulky items include large, hard-to-handle items, such as furniture, mattresses, and appliances, as well as televisions and computer monitors. While there is no charge for this service, it does require an appointment. For more information about the program or to schedule a bulky item pickup, call Waste Management's Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191.

Residents who live in apartments or other multi-family complexes should inquire with their property manager about bulky item service.

Dispose of hazardous wastes properly

If you have household hazardous waste (HHW), universal waste (u-waste), or electronic waste (e-waste), don't put it into the trash! HHW includes paints, pesticides, solvents, cleaners, oils, and expired medicines. U-waste includes fluorescent tubes, mercury-containing items, and batteries. E-waste includes televisions, computer monitors, CPUs, keyboards, printers, cell phones, and similar items.

Dispose properly of these wastes at one of the County's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers. The nearest center is right here in Irvine at 6411 Oak Canyon, off of Sand Canyon between the 5 and 405 freeways. The center is open from 9 a.m.

to 3 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, but closed on rainy days and major holidays. For more information, call the County's hotline at 714-834-6752 or visit the website, www.oclandfills.com.

In Irvine, Waste Management will pick up hazardous electronic waste items, as well as batteries and properly-packaged fluorescent light bulbs, at curbside as part of its free twice-per-year bulky item service. For more information about proper packaging of such items and to schedule a pickup, please call Waste Management's Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191.



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