

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



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



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

Summer 2006



Enjoy the View—But Keep Your Trash to Yourself

Waste Management offers travelers tips for taking care of litter and recycling while on the road

As people enjoy their summer getaways, Waste Management of Orange County asks local residents to stay litter-wise and take good recycling habits with them as they travel, particularly if they will be taking car trips for their vacations.

“Recycling and trash disposal are easy to do when there’s a regular collection service at home or work, but it’s important to be a good neighbor even while on the go so that everyone has a chance to enjoy the view litter-free,” said David Ross, senior district manager of Waste Management of Orange County.

Being litter-wise is easy:

- Start by being vigilant about excess packaging as you prepare for your trip.
- If you purchase items on the road, keep your used shopping bags in the car and reuse them when you can, even if just for collecting your trash while you’re in the car so you can

dispose of it at a rest stop or when you get home.

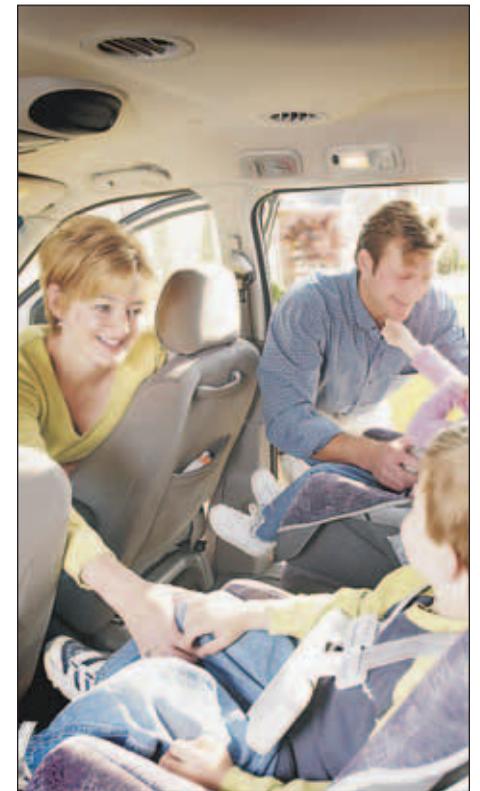
- If you buy take-out food along the road, ask the salespeople to reduce the amount of packaging and forgo environmentally unfriendly packaging like polystyrene (“foam”) and plastics, in favor of paper bags, whenever practical.
- Travel with individual water bottles so that you don’t have to buy disposable bottles on the road. You might also want to travel with lightweight coffee mugs that can be refilled.
- When visiting attractions, try to grab just one set of handouts or maps per family to share, rather than one set per person. When buying souvenirs, make sure they are durable, useful items that won’t end up in the trash when your trip is over.

Being litter-wise also includes good recycling habits. It’s true that finding

places to recycle on the road can be tough. Many cities, however, will often have some sort of recycling program.

- Look for centers set up at local grocery stores you pass by. You can even get the kids involved to make recycling a family effort by having them look out for creative opportunities for recycling and reuse.
- Instead of ditching your newspapers or magazines in the trash, ask at coffee shops or in your hotel lobby if they would like to keep your newspaper for another customer to read. Many airports and train stations also offer recycling, as do some airlines in-flight.
- If you’re visiting family or friends, ask if they recycle and leave the recyclable items you accumulate during your trip with them before you leave to go home.
- Ask your tour guide or the staff at the attractions you visit where you can take your recyclables.

“Being a green traveler is about keeping litter where it belongs and about



recycling more. You can think green to help keep our natural resources clean and enjoyable,” said Ross. “Whatever you do, whether you can recycle or not, please put litter where it belongs—in the trash—and never throw it out the window, leave it on the side of the road or in a parking lot or a natural setting.”

Three simple steps for good recycling

Good recycling involves capturing all the recyclables you can, preparing them properly, and placing them into the correct containers. Follow these steps to be a great recycler!

Step 1: Capture all of your recyclables.

Be sure that all of your recyclable containers and paper get recycled (and don’t go into trash cans!). All of these materials can be recycled: newspapers; mixed paper; bulk mail; cardboard; cereal and gift boxes; magazines; phone books; aluminum cans; tin/steel cans; plastic bottles and jugs; glass food and beverage bottles and jars.

If you read a magazine at a soccer game, take it home and put it into your recycling bin. (Or, pass it along to a friend and ask her to recycle it after she reads it.) If you take a water bottle with you on a shopping trip, take it home to recycle it afterward. That goes for soft drink and sports drink bottles, too!

Step 2: Prepare your recyclables correctly.

Bottles, jars, and cans should be thor-



oughly emptied and rinsed. Leave the containers upside down in the sink to allow them to air-dry for a little while. Remove caps, lids, and pumps, and discard them with your trash. Flatten plastic and metal containers whenever possible.

Make sure that paper products are clean and dry. Flatten boxes. Don’t recycle dirty paper products—such as the newspaper onto which you spilled cereal or the greasy pizza box.

Step 3: Place recyclables into the proper bins and containers.

If you have curbside cart service, mix all of your recyclables together into your gray-lidded cart. If you live in a multi-family complex, check with your property manager for onsite recycling bin locations and sorting instructions.

Remember, your recycler only wants the materials requested. Only place those items into bins or containers. When you put other materials into the bins, they are

considered “contaminants.” Sometimes, these contaminants ruin a load of recyclables; other times they have to be sorted out by hand. Either way, they make recycling more difficult and more expensive, while causing the recyclables to be less valuable to the factories that use them to manufacture new products.

Recyclables inside plastic bags are a particular problem. Plastic bags get caught in equipment. Recyclables inside plastic bags may not be removed and may not be recycled. Make sure that all of your recyclables get recycled. Please, put your recyclables directly into the appropriate bin without the plastic bag. Reuse the plastic bag at home or look for a recycling bin at a grocery or discount store.

Thanks, Irvine!

The City of Irvine continues to meet California waste reduction and recycling diversion goals. Since the year 2000, the California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB939) has required all cities and jurisdictions to keep 50 percent of the solid waste generated within their jurisdictions out of landfills. The City of Irvine’s diversion rate for 2004 was up another five percentage points—to **57 percent**. Thanks, Irvine! Keep up the good work!

10 TIPS for a Healthier Home

The chemicals that you use in and around your home affect your budget, your indoor air quality, your family's safety, and our hazardous waste disposal programs. As you clean, maintain, and improve your home, think about the air you breathe and the water we share.

1. Read the labels on household cleaners and garden chemicals. Look for "signal words." Signal words tell you how hazardous the product is to humans. Here's what you need to know: "Poison" means highly toxic. "Danger" specifies that the product is extremely flammable, corrosive, or toxic. "Warning" indicates a moderate hazard. "Caution" denotes a mild to moderate hazard. Seek products with the "lowest" signal word, *caution* or *warning*.
2. Buy only the amount you need! Know how much product it will take to do the job and only buy that amount. It is better to make a second trip to the store than to have to dispose of large quantities of a hazardous chemical at a special collection.
3. Follow instructions on all chemicals carefully. When you are required to mix a chemical with water, don't guess or dump. Measure the amounts as directed. Dedicate a set of measuring spoons and a measuring cup to use with household or garden chemicals. Be sure to triple-rinse (flush three times with water) your measuring spoons or cups between uses.
4. Store chemicals safely. Children and pets can be easily poisoned or injured by improperly stored chemicals. Be sure to keep all chemicals away from sources of heat, including sun shining into a garage or shed window. The same goes for rags!
5. Consider "home remedies." For

instance, cooking oil is useful to remove adhesive price tags from jars, mugs, and dishes. Vinegar, baking soda, and soap can be effective cleaning agents. For "recipes," look for books about "natural cleaning" at the library or search for "Recipes for Natural Cleaners" on the Internet.

6. When you paint, choose latex. Latex is water-based for easier cleanup. Better yet, choose latex without volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs contribute to the formation of indoor and outdoor air pollution. If you have questions about proper disposal of unneeded latex paint, call us.
7. Weed; don't spray. In addition to reducing your use of pesticides and eliminating hazardous waste, you'll also be improving your muscles and enjoying the fresh air.
8. When it is time to replace your light bulbs, choose compact fluorescents. They use less energy and last much longer, creating less waste. (Compact fluorescents do contain mercury. So they do require special disposal as hazardous waste when they burn out. Call us for details.)
9. Purchase paper products, such as toilet paper, made from recycled paper. (If you buy paper napkins or paper towels, look for recycled-content paper in those, too!)
10. Check out library and Internet resources. Learn some quick and easy steps to a healthier home.



Go back to school without breaking the bank!

Whether you're getting ready for school yourself, getting someone else ready for school, or just taking care of your own end-of-summer shopping, there are ways that you can reduce your waste, improve our environment, and save money, too.

- Plan ahead and make a list. Check to see what you have on hand. After that, make a list of what you really need.
- Reuse what you already own. Check closets for forgotten tote bags, backpacks, lunch boxes, and refillable containers. Go through last year's supplies to find the basics: scissors, rulers, binders, etc. Many items can be reused from year to year. Remember—reusing your own stuff is also less stressful than hitting the stores.
- When you do go shopping, browse reused first. Look for used clothes, shoes, appliances, books, toys, games,



Billboards never got so much attention! This "urban bag for the road," by Vy & Elle, was fashioned from reclaimed billboard vinyl.

office supplies, and household goods through online services such as www.freecycle.org, at garage sales, or at resale shops.

- Buy recycled by picking up recycled-content paper, pens, pencils, scissors, rulers, file folders, binders, storage containers, and jewelry.
- Purchase refilled or remanufactured ink jet cartridges for your printers. Or, buy a refilling kit and do it yourself.
- Pick up a cool recycled accessory, such as a bag or purse made from a reused vinyl billboard. Look for hip new sustainable products at www.sustainablestyle.org.

Worth Noting

A plastic cup that will biodegrade in a food waste compost pile? Yes, some exist and more are in development. Research continues on how to make crops such as corn into biodegradable plastic and how best to compost this plastic, which is known as PLA (polylactic acid).

Biodegradable plastics offer two advantages. First, they are made from renewable resources, instead of non-renewable petroleum resources. Second, they are well-suited to food-contact applications where composting is a better option than recycling, such as single-use drink cups, carry-out food containers, and disposable eating utensils.

The Biodegradable Products Institute tests biobased plastics and certifies those that "have been scientifically proven to biodegrade and compost satisfactorily in municipal and commercial composting operations." The products that meet these criteria receive the Institute's approval to use the "Compostable Logo."

Seeing the "Compostable Logo" does NOT guarantee that the item will compost in your backyard bin or that it is accepted by local composting programs. Just as not all items that carry the "recyclable" logo are locally recyclable, biodegradable plastics may not be either. Always check with your hauler or composter before adding a new item!

For more information, visit the Biodegradable Products Institute website, www.bpiworld.org.



These "leading ladies" from Biocorp sported biodegradable plastic evening gowns at a Hollywood event. (Photo Courtesy of Biocorp, www.biocorpaavc.com)

QUOTES REQUOTED

To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.

Theodore Roosevelt 1858-1919

Cleaning up the Gulf Coast

Late last summer, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the Gulf Coast with a one-two punch. In their wake, were 300,000 displaced Americans and 75 million cubic yards of waste. This debris, the equivalent of 30 years worth of waste in the Gulf Coast region, included about 350,000 flooded vehicles and at least 25 million cubic yards of green waste (tree limbs, trunks, leaves, and dead bushes).

Much of this debris will be landfilled. However, the automobiles and white goods (large appliances) will be recycled in large numbers. After the first six months of cleanup, about 280,000 tons of steel had already been recycled. Meanwhile, smaller scale efforts are gathering plumbing fixtures, cypress wood, and doors, which will be reusable.

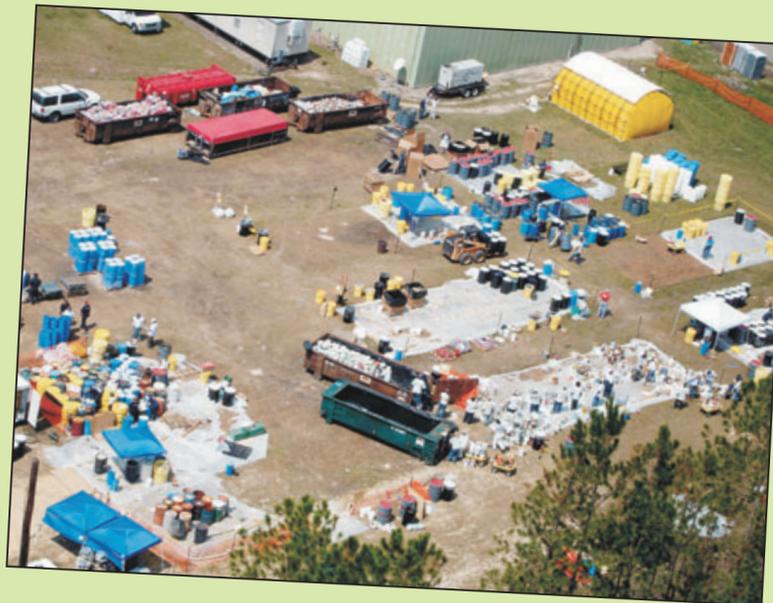
Of particular concern during cleanup is the huge quantity of hazardous waste "orphaned" by the storm, including household hazardous waste. By February, 2 million containers of hazardous waste, a total of more than 10 million pounds, had been collected. Of these, 1.9 million were small containers, many of which were flood-damaged household hazardous materials collected by crews going house to house or dropped off at collection centers by residents.

Preparing your home and family for potential disasters helps minimize waste. For details, visit www.ready.gov.



Chris Jordan photographed this "Remains of a Business, St. Bernard Parish" while working on his upcoming book, *In Katrina's Wake: Portraits of Loss from an Unnatural Disaster*. (Photo courtesy of Chris Jordan, www.chrisjordan.com)

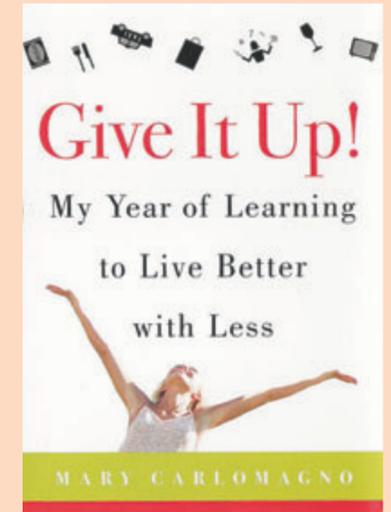
During hurricane cleanup, this Louisiana site was set up to handle the massive quantity of household hazardous waste. Some of this material was found inside houses, garages, and sheds, but a great deal was recovered from swamps, waterways, and other outdoor areas.



What could you live without?

When I set out to write this book, my intention was to eliminate unnecessary facets of life, in essence to determine what I could live without.

Mary Carlomagno
"Introduction," *Give It Up!*



What could you live without? After being hit on the head by boxes of shoes falling from her overfilled closet shelves, author Mary Carlomagno set out to answer this question.

Each month for a year, she gave up something that she valued—something whose sacrifice created for her "a personal and significant 'ouch' factor." Her choices were personal—coffee, reading the newspaper, television, eating out. But the lessons she learned can teach us some things about our own wants and needs.

During the summer, you may take some time off or you may have a different routine. Use some of this time to think about what you could live without. What possessions do you value and which just create clutter? Do you have habits that cost money and create waste?

While setting out to give up something every month for a year may seem daunting, try giving up one of your favorite "wants" for a week or a month. See what you learn about yourself.

Read more about it!

Remember to look for books at the library, at book swaps, at www.freecycle.org, or at used bookstores! Then share titles with friends and relatives!

Choosing Simplicity: Real People Finding Peace and Fulfillment in a Complex World by Linda Breen Pierce (Gallagher Press, 2000)

Give It Up!: My Year of Learning to Live Better with Less by Mary Carlomagno (William Morrow, 2006)

Living Simply with Children: A Voluntary Simplicity Guide for Moms, Dads, and Kids Who Want to Reclaim the Bliss of Childhood and the Joy of Parenting by Marie Sherlock (Three Rivers Press, 2003)

Simplicity Lessons: A 12-Step Guide to Living Simply by Linda Breen Pierce (Gallagher Press, 2003)

Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life That Is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich by Duane Elgin (Revised Edition, Harper Paperbacks, 1998)

What Kids Really Want that Money Can't Buy: Tips for Parenting in a Commercial World by Betsy Taylor (Warner Books, 2003)

Healthy Home Resources

Center for a New American Dream
www.newdream.org/clean

Debra Lynn Dadd, "The Queen of Green"
www.debraslist.com/

Earth Easy's Guide to Living at Home with the Earth
www.eartheasy.com/live_menu.htm

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Do's and Don'ts Around the Home"
www.epa.gov/owow/nps/dosdont.html

Green Seal
www.greenseal.org

LivingHome, an online magazine
<http://library.livinghome.com/Cool-Tools/>

Project Laundry List
www.laundrylist.org

The Seventh Generation "Guide to a Toxin-Free Home"
www.seventhgeneration.com/living_green/toxin_free.php

Better Basics for the Home: Simple Solutions for Less Toxic Living
By Annie Berthold-Bond, Three Rivers Press, 1999

Naturally Clean: The Seventh Generation Guide to Safe & Healthy, Non-Toxic Cleaning
By Jeffrey Hollender, Geoff Davis, Meika Hollender, New Society Publishers, 2006

WHAT'S UP?

Green waste carts are for grass clippings, leaves, weeds, garden trimmings, prunings, wood chips, brush, and small branches. You'll note that this list does NOT include plastic pots, soft drink cans, plastic bags, or household trash. The green waste carts are the carts with the green lids that have been provided to residents with curbside collection service.

In most areas, your green waste carts are serviced by an automated truck using a mechanical arm. The arm lifts the cart above the truck and turns it over to empty it into a hopper. The driver is not able to see the material as it drops into the hopper, so the driver has no way of knowing whether contaminated or clean green waste has gone into the truck.

Unfortunately, when the truck dumps its load at the composting center, an entire load may have been contaminated by a single cart full of garbage. Once contaminated, this material can't be composted because the compost will be contaminated too. In other cases, stray litter and recyclables, which won't compost, must be pulled or screened from the compostable materials, which can be very labor-intensive and costly.

Please keep your green waste clean! Only place yard waste into your green waste cart. We greatly appreciate your cooperation and assistance!



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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Redeem your deposits



Recycle.

Most beverages packaged in aluminum, glass, and plastic, such as soft drinks, water, beer, sports drinks, juices, and coffee and tea drinks, are included in the CRV (California Refund Value) program. When you buy a beverage in one of these containers, you pay a redeemable deposit. When your container is empty, you can redeem it for 4 cents on containers that hold less than 24 ounces, and 8 cents on containers 24 ounces or greater.

Redeem more of your CRV containers at these locations in and near Irvine:

- Orange Coast College Recycling, Adams & Fairview, Costa

Mesa

- Pentum Group/Tawa Supermarket, 15333 Culver Dr., Suite 800, Irvine
- TOMRA Pacific, Albertsons #6507, 4541 Campus Dr., Irvine
- Bionet, Inc., 5402 Walnut Ave., Irvine

Recycle your containers even if you don't want to redeem them for cash. If you don't want to redeem your containers, place them into your curbside recycling cart or into the appropriate bin at your multi-family complex.

Universal and hazardous wastes require special handling

No universal waste or hazardous wastes should be placed into your trash, recycling, or green waste carts! Universal waste includes electronic waste (e-waste), such as TVs, computer monitors, computers, printers, VCRs, cell phones and radios, as well as common household batteries, fluorescent tubes and bulbs, thermostats containing mercury, and mercury fever thermometers. Other hazardous waste includes household, lawn and garden, and automotive chemicals.

Irvine residents can take their universal waste and other hazardous waste to one of the County of Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers (HHWCC). The HHWCCs are open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 714-834-6752 or visit www.oilandfills.com. The nearest center for Irvine residents is the Irvine Regional HHWCC located at 6411 Oak

Canyon in Irvine. The center is located off Sand Canyon between the 5 and 405 freeways; use the same driveway as Bark Park.

Waste Management of Orange County also accepts electronic waste such as televisions or computer monitors at its Sunset Environmental Transfer Station. Sunset is located at 16122 Construction Circle West in Irvine. The facility is open Monday through Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Saturday, 5:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. All other hazardous or universal waste should be taken to one of the HHWCCs.



At the E-Waste Collection Event in April at the Irvine City Hall, we received 140,000 pounds of electronics for recycling. Thanks to everyone who took part!

National Pollution Prevention Week celebrated in Irvine

National Pollution Prevention Week will be celebrated across the country this year during September. The annual event encourages businesses, environmental groups, and citizens to work together to protect the environment and conserve resources. By sharing information about pollution prevention (P2), businesses can become more competitive, businesses and governments can realize cost savings, and environmental quality can be enhanced.

Irvine employees and visitors to the Civic Center will celebrate National Pollution Prevention Week 2006 with an interactive display in the main lobby at Irvine City Hall. The display will be hosted by Irvine Recycles staff, The Energy Coalition, and members of the Orange County Conservation Corps during

the week of September 18-24.

Pollution Prevention Week originated in California in 1992 and in 1995 gained widespread popularity when it became a national effort. Since 1995, the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable, based in Washington, D.C. and the largest membership association devoted solely to pollution prevention, has been advancing pollution prevention awareness through efforts to encourage and promote nationwide participation in National Pollution Prevention Week.

For more information on Pollution Prevention Week, visit the national website at www.p2.org or the EPA's website for Pollution Prevention at www.epa.gov/p2/.