

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



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



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

Winter 2007



Cleaning up from the holidays safely—for the environment and yourself

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

As Orange County residents clean up from 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, or 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 (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 of 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 numbers 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 you receive. Here's how:

- Decline 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.
- Contact the companies from which you receive catalogs and ask to be removed from their mailing lists.
- Share catalogs with roommates, family members, neighbors, or friends, rather than each individual receiving a copy.
- Visit the Direct Marketing Association's website at 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 helps 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 cities in Orange County meet their recycling goals, which is important for the sustainability and environmental future of the community.

California Refund Value program celebrates 20 years of recycling

More than 160 billion bottles and cans recycled in California since 1986

As California marks 20 years of the biggest bottle and can recycling program in the country, consumers will soon have an even greater incentive to recycle. Beginning January 1, Californians will get more cash back for their aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage containers.

Assembly Bill 3056, signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on September 30, raises the amount of California Refund Value (CRV) consumers receive at recycling centers to a nickel for containers less than 24 ounces and a dime for containers 24 ounces and larger. For at least six months, the amount of CRV consumers pay at the store will remain four cents on smaller containers and eight cents on larger ones.

"Californians have demonstrated a tremendous commitment to the environment through their beverage container recycling efforts over the past two decades," said Bridgett Luther, director of the state Department of Conservation, which oversees the bottle and can recycling program. "By approving this legislation, the governor maintains his commitment to the environment and puts money back in the pockets of consumers."

Since AB 2020 established the state's recycling program in 1986, more than 160 billion aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage containers have been recycled

in the state. In 2005 alone, Californians recycled an all-time record 12.4 billion beverage containers, 61 percent of the 20.5 billion that were purchased in the state.

"If we add in the containers that will be recycled in 2006 to all those that have been recycled since the program began, we'll have enough to fill up all lanes of Interstate 5 with a wall of bottles and cans 14 feet high the entire length of the state," Luther said.

Nevertheless, billions of bottles and cans also end up in landfills each year.

"When people fail to recycle, it's not just

(Continued on Page 4)



Starter Kit available to businesses

A recent recycling innovation from the Department of Conservation is the free "Recycling Starter Kit" available to businesses, schools, gyms, and office buildings. California businesses interested in starting a beverage container recycling program can receive the Recycling Starter Kit by ordering online at www.bottlesandcans.com or calling 1-800-RECYCLE.

Treasure from trash

Across the country, artists are taking trash and turning it into treasure. From New York City, where Justin Gignac collects trash from sidewalks and subways, to California, where San Francisco's Solid Waste Transfer Station and Recycling Center hosts Artists-in-Residence, creative people are taking what we discard and turning it into art.

Metalsmith Harriete Estel Berman, who lives and works in San Mateo, California, uses tin packaging to create colorful teacups. Berman writes of her work: "Like recurring conversations with friends over cups of tea or coffee, this work reflects the consuming conversation of our consumer society. The recycled tin containers used to construct this work are diverted from a destiny as trash, revitalizing the mundane into the extraordinary."

To see Berman's teacups and other art, visit <http://harriete-estel-berman.info/>.

San Francisco Recycling and Disposal is home not just to a transfer station and recycling center, but also to an art studio and several artists each year. Artists are invited to work in residence at the center, using found materials as the raw materials for their art. Exhibits have featured trees made from Styrofoam blocks; sculptures made from scrap metal, wood, and even golf clubs; old photographs and old books used as the canvas for mixed media creations; and much more. The Artist-in-Residence program began in 1990. For more information or to see the work of artists who have been part of this program, visit www.sunsetscavenger.com/AIR/.

Meanwhile, across the continent in

New York City, artist Justin Gignac is picking up trash from the streets, sidewalks, and subways, combing Yankee Stadium, and haunting conventions. After capturing theater tickets, broken bottles, hand-written notes, and more, he sorts the trash and arranges it in clear plastic boxes, documenting when the garbage was "picked." He has even created special edition boxes to commemorate events such as New Year's Eve in Times Square. For more information on Justin's work, visit www.nycgarbage.com/.

These are just a few of the artists creating treasure from trash. Whether your taste in art tends toward the fine or the functional, there is probably an artist creating treasures you would love from the found.



Photo courtesy of Harriete Estel Berman

Images courtesy of Justin Gignac



Kim Weller created "Friendly Fire" as an Artist-in-Residence.

Photo courtesy of Norcal Waste Systems, Inc.



Are you WasteWise?

WasteWise is a free, voluntary partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through which organizations reduce their waste, improving their bottom line and the environment. WasteWise is flexible, allowing partners to choose waste reduction programs designed to meet their needs. All organizations—including large and small businesses; non-profit organizations; and federal, state, local, and tribal governments—are eligible to join.

To achieve their waste reduction goals, WasteWise partners have access to these great resources:

- The WasteWise Technical Assistance Team
- The WasteWise Helpline, a toll-free service
- The WasteWise Website, including special "members-only" sections

- Partner forums, grouping businesses and institutions by sector for peer-to-peer support and information sharing
- Personalized Climate Profiles to calculate a "climate footprint" and report results in real-life equivalencies (such as number of cars removed from the road or tree seedlings planted)
- Fact sheets and publications by industry sector
- Awards and recognition programs

Begun in 1994, WasteWise now has more than 1,900 partners and endorsers nationwide. Since the program began, WasteWise partners have reduced more than 124 million tons of waste.

For more information about WasteWise, visit the website, www.epa.gov/wastewise; e-mail ww@erg.com; or call 1-800-EPA-WISE (372-9473).



Source: EPA's WasteWise Program, www.epa.gov/wastewise

In 2006, two partners were inducted into the WasteWise Hall of Fame: Guardian Automotive – Ligonier Plant and Constellation Energy/BGE. At the same time, 37 other partners received awards and honorable mentions for their outstanding efforts. Here are four examples of the winning partners' achievements:

- Constellation Energy increased its ash recycling rate from less than 10 percent to more than 50 percent over the last 10 years.
- Eastern Illinois University donated 615 tons of boiler ash to improve traction on snow- and ice-covered roads.
- Amgen donated 19 tons of leftover food to a local food bank.
- Kitsap County, Washington piloted an unwanted mail and fax waste reduction program, collecting more than 1,200 pieces of unwanted mail and 1,000 unwanted faxes.

QUOTES REQUOTED



On Spaceship Earth there are no passengers; everybody is a member of the crew. We have moved into an age in which everybody's activities affect everybody else.

Marshall McLuhan,
1911–1980
Media Critic and Author

The composting cafeteria

What will customers think of compostable plastic plates, bowls, cups, and cutlery? Can this biobased cafeteria ware be successfully composted with food scraps, leftovers, and outdated food? These are some of the questions that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency set out to answer during a pilot project at the USDA's

employee cafeteria. During this three-month pilot program, the cafeteria switched from regular plastic service ware to biobased, compostable plastic ware. Also, in the food preparation areas, compostable organic wastes were separated from non-compostable waste. In the lunchroom, employees sorted compostable and non-compostable waste into clearly marked containers.

By the end of the pilot program, nearly 33,500 employees had been served. Fewer than one-half of one percent of

the patrons made negative comments during the program. In fact, more complaints were received after the pilot was over when traditional polystyrene products were reintroduced.

The compostable materials were taken to a USDA research facility. A total of 11,370 pounds of compostable cafeteria materials, which included about 10,935 pounds of food and 435 pounds of biobased cafeteria ware, were delivered to the facility. This material was mixed with 168 cubic yards of leaves and grass for composting. Only 20 pounds of non-compostable plastics had to be screened from the compost, a contamination rate of less than 0.18 percent.

The finished compost was used in gardens outside the same USDA building where the lunches had been served.

This project showed that biobased plastics in a large-scale cafeteria can and do work. Some challenges remain, of course. For instance, the number of biobased

food service products available is still somewhat limited, and, as a result, the prices are higher than comparable non-compostable polystyrene and other plastic products. However, as more facilities experiment with compostable food service ware, more products will become available and prices will come down.

Biobased plastics are made from renewable farm commodities, such as corn, soybeans, or grasses. Traditional plastics are made primarily from petroleum byproducts.



Read more about it!

Learn more about biobased products and their uses at these websites:
www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/plants/pdfs/cafereteriaware.pdf
www.biobased.oce.usda.gov/fb4p/
www.bpiworld.org

What's waste got to do with it?

If you read, listen to, or watch the news, you've heard a lot lately about "climate change." The climate change to which these reports are referring is the warming of Earth's atmosphere that has resulted because "greenhouse gases" are absorbing and holding more heat.

Without greenhouse gases, we'd be in a lot of trouble. The average temperature of the Earth without greenhouse gases would be a chilly -2 degrees Fahrenheit. Instead, we enjoy a balmy 57 degrees Fahrenheit. Clearly, we need some greenhouse gases. But as with so many things in life, there is too much of a good thing.

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, human activities—from deforestation to the burning of fossil fuels—have increased the production of greenhouse gases, leading to a 1 degree Fahrenheit increase in the Earth's average surface temperature in just 100 years. A rise of even a few degrees in the Earth's average temperature may lead to more frequent and intense storms, flooding of low-lying areas, changes in regional weather patterns, and an increase in infectious diseases carried by pests such as mosquitoes.

This not-so-desirable climate change will not easily be reversed, but our actions do and will make a difference—for better or worse. Reducing your waste, recycling, and composting are three simple steps that will reduce the production of greenhouse gases and help slow climate change. Here's how:

- Using less, reusing items that have already been produced and shipped, and recycling all save energy. When we use less energy, we burn fewer fossil fuels and emit less carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, into our environment.
- Reusing and recycling paper products allows more trees to remain standing. Standing trees absorb carbon dioxide, a process called "carbon sequestration." Carbon dioxide being held by trees isn't being released into the atmosphere.
- Composting yard trimmings and food discards releases fewer greenhouse gases, specifically methane, than landfilling the same materials.

To help measure the effects of waste reduction and recycling, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency commissioned the study, "Solid Waste Management and Greenhouse Gases: A Life-Cycle Assessment of Emissions and Sinks" (Updated October 2006 and posted at www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/

waste/SWMGHGreport.html). The study evaluated 16 types of waste materials, including common household containers, papers, and yard trimmings. The results? Waste prevention (using less and reusing more of what we already have) generally provides the greatest climate benefits and contributes the least to negative climate change. Recycling and composting are the next best approaches.

To learn more, visit www.epa.gov/climatechange.



► Increasing our national recycling rate by just 5 percent could have the same, positive effect on greenhouse gas emissions as removing nearly 8 million cars from our roadways for an entire year!

Rate Your Reduction

Read each statement and rate your actions on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always).

I read labels and follow instructions carefully when using lawn and garden chemicals.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

I give away or sell clothes that my family no longer needs.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

I clean up household spills with rags and then wash them for reuse.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

I carry a reusable bag, such as a canvas tote, to hold library books and retail purchases.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

I purchase recycled-content printer paper.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

I recycle all of my beverage bottles and cans—even those I finish away from home.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

I replace burned-out incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Always

Add together the numbers from each of your answers. Here's how you rate:

- 35: You are a waste reduction machine!
- 25-34: You have a reduce-reuse-recycle routine. Keep up the good work!
- 20-24: You're on the right track. Remember that good habits take regular practice!
- 15-19: Set your sights a bit higher. A little improvement will go a long way.
- 7-14: Resolve to turn one of your "nevers" into an "always." We know you can do it!

WHAT'S UP?



Residents can take household hazardous waste and electronic waste, including televisions, to the County of Orange Hazardous Waste Collection Centers. The County operates four permanent collection centers. One of these 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.oclandfills.com.



What your business wastes and how waste is handled can impact your supply needs, purchasing costs, employee health and safety, regulatory compliance, customer relations, and the bottom line. The City of Irvine offers technical assistance to businesses, including waste audits. For more information, contact the Irvine Recycles Hotline at 949-724-7669.



We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

**The City of Irvine
P.O. Box 19575
Irvine, CA 92623
(949) 724-7669**

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



This program is brought to you by Waste Management and the City of Irvine and made possible by a grant from the California Department of Conservation, Division of Recycling.

Copyright© 2007

The City of Irvine and Eco Partners, Inc.
All rights reserved.

**PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER
70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS CONTENT,
USING SOY INKS**

Time for "tree-cycling"

Did you know that for every Christmas tree harvested, two to three seedlings are planted in its place the following spring? Each year, about 30 million trees are cut, meaning that 60 to 90 million seedlings will be planted at tree farms next spring.

If your family enjoys the tradition of a cut tree, be sure to recycle it after the holiday season.

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 6 feet 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 multi-family residents with bin service may want to inquire with your 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 December 26th through January 13th. Multi-family residents can take



their trees to Sunset during the following hours: Monday to 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.

Paper progress

On average, every American uses more than 663 pounds of paper each year. There were two pieces of good news during 2005, the most recent year for which we have complete data. First, Americans used 2.3 percent less paper than the previous year. Second, we recycled 51.5 percent of the paper products that we used.

According to the Paper Industry Association Council, more than 36 percent of the fiber used to make new paper products in the United States comes from recycled sources. Recycled-content paper (the new paper made from used and recovered paper) creates less air pollution, reduces water pollution, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and reduces the volume of wastewater when compared with making the same type of paper directly from trees. Higher levels of recycled-content increase these advantages. For instance, 100-percent recycled-content paper offers more environmental advantages than 30-percent recycled-content, but both are better than virgin paper.

Let's work together to continue to make improvements:

- Use less paper. Don't print e-mail messages; instead save them in elec-

tronic folders in your e-mail program. Choose to use both sides of paper. Reuse the back side of paper that has printing on only one side. Save and reuse shipping boxes, gift boxes, packing paper, and wrapping paper.

- Recycle your office or school papers at work, school, and home. You can recycle printer/copier paper, envelopes, folders, cardstock, mail, catalogs, magazines, newspaper, paperboard (such as gift and cereal boxes), and corrugated cardboard. Residents with curbside recycling service can commingle these paper products in their carts with other recyclables.
- Seek out and buy recycled-content paper and paper products. Paperboard, corrugated cardboard, and newsprint generally contain a higher level of recycled content than other papers. Help improve markets for our higher-grade office papers by buying post-consumer recycled-content copier and printer paper, notebooks and notebook paper, and stationery.

Refund Value program (Continued from Page 1)

a waste of CRV," Luther said. "It also means lost energy savings, because recycling saves energy, and those valuable raw materials for manufacturing are tossed away forever."

When AB 2020 passed in September of 1986, there was no incentive to recycle bottles and cans other than the "scrap value" recycling centers were willing to pay. CRV was introduced in 1987, which allowed Californians to collect one cent for each beverage container recycled. In 1988, Californians recycled 6.1 billion CRV containers.

CRV later increased to 2.5 cents on containers less than 24 ounces and 4 cents on containers 24 ounces and larger. From 1991-2003, Californians averaged more than 10 billion recycled CRV containers per year. When CRV increased to 4 cents (8 cents on larger containers) in 2004, the number jumped to 12 billion recycled.

Most beverages packaged in glass, aluminum, and plastic—such as soft drinks, water, beer, sports drinks, juices, and coffee and tea drinks—are included in the CRV program. Notable exceptions are milk, wine, and distilled spirits.

Californians have several convenient options for recycling and redeeming CRV bottles and cans, primarily through neighborhood curbside programs and the approximately 2,100 certified recycling centers and drop-off and collection locations throughout California. To find the nearest certified recycling center, visit www.bottlesandcans.com or call the Department of Conservation toll-free hotline, 1-800-RECYCLE.

All aspects of the state's beverage container recycling program are paid for with unclaimed refunds of CRV beverage containers, at no cost to the state's general fund.

materials exchange program, CalMax. For details, visit www.ciwm.ca.gov/ CalMax/.

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

The tricks of the trade

A materials exchange can help you get usable items out of storage, keep them from disposal, and save money. With a materials exchange, you can buy, sell, or trade industrial process wastes, byproducts, surplus raw materials, chemicals, off-specification products, and packaging.

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. 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.

Here are some tips and tricks for a successful trade. First, provide a complete and accurate description of the material available or wanted. Second, be sure to categorize the material correctly. Third, provide the exact amount of material that is available or wanted. Fourth, clearly state any special con-

siderations or requirements, such as the physical state of the material, contaminants present or allowable, packaging, or shipping expectations. Fifth, include whether this material is available or wanted one time or on an ongoing basis.

The California Integrated Waste Management Board operates a statewide

