

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Spokane Regional
Solid Waste System

(509) 625-6580
www.solidwaste.org

Fall 2011



Get involved with the 2011 America Recycles Day poster contest!



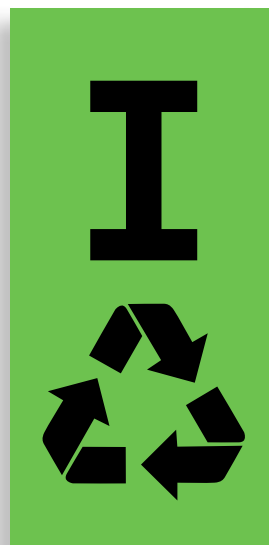
Last year's calendar theme was "Recycling: It's the Right Thing To Do!"

The Spokane Regional Solid Waste System invites kindergarten through eighth grade students to enter our America Recycles Day 2011 student poster contest. Posters must be drawn horizontally or "landscape" style on 8.5-by-11 inch paper and should present an aspect of the America Recycles Day theme, "I Recycle, Do You? Get Involved." Judging will be based on appropriate use of the theme, originality, and artistic ability.

Students may enter as individuals, or teachers may submit entries from their classes. The student's name should not appear on the front of the poster. A release form must be completed and attached to the back of each poster. Information packets have been sent to area schools. For a copy of the release form or for other information, call the Recycling Hot Line, 625-6800, or visit www.solidwaste.org.

All entries must be received by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2011, at the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System office. Bring the poster or mail it flat to: SRSWS Poster Contest, 221 N. Wall Street, Suite 410, Spokane, WA 99201.

The posters of 30 finalists will be displayed on the second level of River Park Square from Thursday, Oct. 27 through Thursday, Nov. 17. The finalists will be recognized by the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, Nov. 15, at 5:30 p.m., during a special ceremony at the lower level of the Spokane County Public Works Building, 1026 W. Broadway. A reception will follow. Fifteen winning entries will be published in the 2012 "Spokane Recycles" calendar.



America Recycles Day
NOVEMBER 15

AmericaRecyclesDay.org

Stop by for some earth-friendly play!

Come play with us at Mobius Kids on the lower level of River Park Square, 808 W. Main in Spokane, on Friday, Nov. 11, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. We'll make recycled paper, explore a worm bin, sort trash, and much more! Regular museum admission charges will apply.



Fall Compost Fair coming up

Establishing and maintaining a home compost pile is surprisingly easy! In return for a little effort, you'll reap rich organic matter to use as soil enhancement in your yard and garden. To help you get started, the Spokane Master Composters/Recyclers are sponsoring the annual Fall Compost Fair at the Finch Arboretum on Saturday, Oct. 15, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Attendees will learn how to turn yard and garden materials into compost while reducing their garbage disposal costs. The Fair is being held in conjunction with the Fall Leaf Festival.

The Master Composters/Recyclers will host a variety of hands-on demonstrations, including a "hot" compost pile and a worm bin complete with little red wigglers turning food scraps into fertilizer. Participants will learn about the types of materials used in composting, how to build and turn a compost pile, and how to choose the right compost bin. Residents must arrive by 1:30 p.m. to complete all of the activities by the 2 p.m. closing time.

The Fall Compost Fair is free and open to the public. Spokane County attendees (with identification verifying residency) can receive a free plastic compost bin after completing the various composting activities. There is a limit



The day was cool and clear for the Spring 2011 Compost Fair. Over 700 people showed up to learn all about home composting.

of one bin per household. The bins are provided by the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System and the Washington State Department of Ecology. Master Composters/Recyclers is a volunteer program sponsored by the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System.

The John A. Finch Arboretum is located at 3404 W. Woodland Blvd., at the intersection of Sunset Highway and "F" Street in Spokane.

For more information on the Compost Fair, call the Recycling Hot Line at 625-6800.

Lighting the way to a better environment

If you're an Avista residential electric customer, you have or will soon receive in the mail a Lighting Efficiency Kit that includes eight compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). When you equip your light fixtures with these energy-savers, you can look forward to many years of service from them. Perhaps you already have replaced incandescent light bulbs in your home with CFLs and are appreciating the benefits. But CFLs, as well as fluorescent tubes, do burn out eventually, so Avista and the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System want to encourage you to dispose of them by recycling in a manner that is safe for you and the environment.

Many people are not aware that CFLs and fluorescent tubes contain a small amount of mercury. When the lights end up in the garbage, they often break. The mercury can then leach into water sources and, subsequently, the food chain. According to the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, the mercury in a single CFL is enough to contaminate 7,000 gallons of water!

There are numerous sites in Spokane County that have free recycling programs for used CFL and fluorescent tubes from residences:

- Waste to Energy Facility, 2900 S. Geiger Blvd., at the Household Hazardous Waste shed
- North County Transfer Station and Recycling Center, 22123 Elk-Chattaroy Rd., at the Household Hazardous Waste shed
- Valley Transfer Station and Recycling Center, 3941 N. Sullivan Rd., at the Household Hazardous Waste shed
- Clark's Recycling Westside Center*, 1730 W. Sinto Ave.
- Du-Mor Recycling*, 6004 N. Perry St.
- Earthworks Recycling*, 1904 E. Broadway Ave.

Manufacturers and other organizations may offer free mail-back programs for your CFLs, as well. Some home and garden stores, such as Home Depot, Ace Hardware, and Lowe's, will let you turn in your used CFLs at no cost. Check with your waste hauler to see what kind of services they may offer to recycle your CFLs and fluorescent tubes.

You can also call the Recycling Hot Line at 625-6800 for referrals to programs that accept used CFLs and fluorescent tubes from businesses and institutions.

For information on Avista's Lighting Efficiency Kit, please visit www.everylittlebit.com.

* At these locations, there may be a fee for fluorescent tubes.

Safe CFL storage

To save your CFLs until you're ready to recycle them, you can make your own bulb carrier out of a used six-pack beverage carrier with some padding, such as scrap paper or newspaper, in each slot.





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If you were going to make only one change this month, we have a great idea—capture all of your aluminum cans for recycling!

Aluminum beverage cans are one of the easiest containers to recycle in America. Every curbside and drop-off program accepts them. Where recycling containers are found in public spaces, like hotel lobbies, airports, malls, or bus stations, aluminum cans are almost always accepted for recycling there, too. In 2010, Americans recycled nearly 56 billion aluminum cans. That's a huge number and represents 58.1% of the cans used. However, with such easy access to recycling for these cans, why isn't that number even higher?

There are many great reasons to recycle aluminum cans. A new aluminum can has 68% total recycled content, so the markets for aluminum cans are healthy and the cans are being used to make new aluminum. In addition, making aluminum from recycled beverage cans creates only 5% of the greenhouse gas emissions and uses only 5% of the energy when compared to making aluminum from raw materials. Aluminum is infinitely recyclable, so today, 75% of the aluminum ever smelted is still in use.

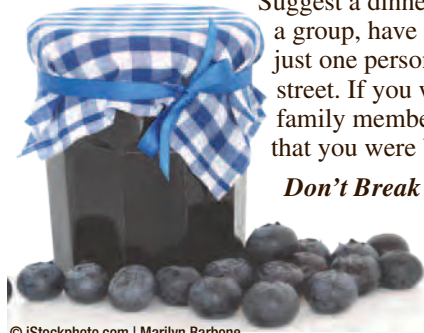
The next time you finish a drink, think about that can. Don't litter it! Don't toss it in the trash! Recycle it! Capture all of your cans—we know you "can" do it! Learn more about aluminum can recycling at www.recyclecansnow.com.

Green Gifts for a Happier Holiday

Would you like to make your holiday season a little less stressful and turn it a brighter shade of green? Would you like a season that focuses more on your relationships than your stuff? We have some advice that will help.

Making a List and Checking It Twice: Write down all of the names of people for whom you normally buy gifts. Is there someone on the list that you'd like to see more often? Instead of giving a gift, make arrangements to get together. Could someone on your list use company throughout the year? Avoid buying a gift and, instead, promise a monthly visit. Do you have adult family members on the list?

Suggest a dinner together in lieu of gifts, donate to a charity that you select as a group, have a "white elephant" gift exchange, or draw names and buy for just one person. Remember, in most relationships, gift-giving is a two-way street. If you want to change the rules this year, communicate with friends and family members about your ideas and suggestions. They will probably be glad that you were brave enough to bring it up!



© iStockphoto.com | Marilyn Barbone

Don't Break the Bank: Decide how much you plan to spend on holiday giving. Once you have a total, estimate a budget for each person on your list. Remember that the little extras, such as stocking stuffers and accessories, can add up. As you begin to shop, keep track of your receipts. Periodically evaluate how much you're spending compared to the budget that you developed.

Priceless: Consider gifts of yourself and your time. These gifts improve your relationships, cost nothing, and create no waste. For example, you could offer to visit a friend and bring all the fixings for a homemade dinner—and then make it together. You might schedule a game or movie night for family or friends. You could offer to babysit for an evening or even a weekend. No children in the family? Offer to pet sit or house sit. Volunteer to clean up the yard in the spring or mow the lawn. The possibilities are endless.

Made With Love: Another way to give of yourself is to put your skills to work by making homemade gifts. If you preserve food or jams, give some away as gifts. Record a CD or DVD of a child's performance or an "interview" that gets the child talking about friends, school, and activities, and send the recording to a far-off relative. Refresh a family memory by making your brother the cookies that Grandma used to bake. Decorate an old picture frame with fishing lures and add a photo of you and your grandpa fishing together. Put your old jewelry, clothes, and hats into an unneeded suitcase to create the perfect dress-up chest for a child. We're sure you can think of many other ideas that reflect your own hobbies or honor the skills that a family member or friend passed along to you.



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Experience the Drama: Do you have friends or relatives who love a certain sports team but don't go to games very often? Give them tickets! Not a sports fan? Give tickets to a concert or play, a movie gift card, a museum membership, or park passes. If you have a friend who is interested in learning something new or becoming an expert on a favorite hobby, offer to pay for a class.

Know Thy Recipient: Waiting until the last minute to shop can lead to breaking the budget and choosing less-than-perfect gifts. When you are out of time, anything near a checkout seems "good enough." However, a good-enough gift is likely to be unused. At best, it will be returned, re-gifted, sold, or given away. At worst, it will be forever unused and, eventually, thrown in the trash. Knowing what a friend or family member likes and dislikes, as well as knowing sizes and other essentials, can lead to thoughtful gifts that don't waste your time and money or end up as trash. If you don't have time to find a gift that will reflect the recipient, give a gift card instead.



Wrap It Up: Remember to wrap without waste. Reuse last year's paper (and save this year's for next year). Choose reusable gift bags. Decorate boxes that you use each year for the same person. Use fabric scraps, magazine pages, colorful brochures, or old maps to create unique wrapping "paper."

FAST FACTS

Greenest on the Gridiron

This fall, colleges and universities across the U.S. will be competing in the Game Day Challenge. Each participating school designs a waste reduction plan for one 2011 regular season home football game and then measures the results. Schools can collect common recyclables, such as paper, beverage containers, and cardboard, as well as food for donation and composting. The amount of waste generated and recycled will determine which school is the greenest on the gridiron.

Last year, more than 75 colleges and universities took part in the Game Day Challenge. During the challenge, the participating schools kept 500,000 pounds of waste out of landfills, preventing greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to taking 180 cars off our roads for a full year.

If you enjoy fall sports, concerts, or festivals, be sure to look for and use recycling bins. If you are managing events, please be sure to include recycling in your plans.



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Old bags with new purpose

We've all been there. One day you are at the store and realize that your favorite reusable bag, the one you've had for the past several



years which has been with you through rain and shine, has a rip that is beyond your ability to repair. Never fear! ChicoBag has partnered with The Grateful Thread to accept

old reusable bags and put them to a new use. Bags that can be repaired will be given to families who can't afford to purchase reusable bags. Bags that can't be repaired will be turned into useful new products, such as beautiful hand-woven rugs.

You can mail clean, old reusable bags to this address: ChicoBag Company, c/o Zero Waste Program, 13434 Browns Valley Drive, Chico, CA 95973.

Learn more at www.chicobag.com/t-repurposing_program.aspx.

Simplify, simplify!

In *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau wrote, “Our life is frittered away by detail. . . . Simplify, simplify.” Watch a few minutes of cable TV and you’ll discover that Thoreau has thoroughly modern counterparts. Do a little channel surfing and you’ll find shows devoted to clearing out the clutter, ranging from simple organizing tricks to professional clean-outs.

While most of us will never appear on a television show about hoarding, many of us have more clutter than we wish we had. Whether it is a jam-packed clothes closet or a cabinet that is bursting at the hinges, devoting some time to decluttering, organizing, and donating or selling what you don’t need can be a refreshing experience for your spirit as well as your space.

In *The Joy of Less, A Minimalist Living Guide: How to Declutter, Organize, and Simplify Your Life*, Francine Jay compares decluttering to dieting. You can go for the short-term fix, begin to feel deprived, and relapse, or you can transform your relationship with stuff. She advocates for making conscious decisions about what you buy, what you have, what you keep, and what you release. In other words, she focuses on making the long-term change.



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In a chapter entitled, “Trash, Treasure, or Transfer,” Jay begins with trash—things that are clearly garbage or are outdated and can be recycled, like newspapers and magazines. The treasure pile will contain those things that you want to keep. However, she cautions that your treasures need to add either beauty or function to your life. Finally, in your transfer pile, you include all of the perfectly usable things that you no longer want or need. As she puts it, “In here belong all those perfectly good items that are no longer good for you.” Your transfer pile will include items that you plan to give away and those you hope to sell.

Thoughtful decluttering can also lead to less impulse shopping. When you declutter, you often find things that you “had to have” and, yet, never used.

You don’t have to spend much time at a thrift store to know that you are not alone. Many of the items donated or resold each year aren’t just like-new, but are brand-new.

Rather than fritter your life away with details, or spend all of your time at home moving stuff to find what you’re looking for, simplify. And when you simplify, share. Many items that are no longer good for you would be very good for someone else.

Image courtesy of Jenna Isaacson

Reuse is big business



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Reuse has environmental, social, and economic benefits. The environmental benefits are clear—when we reuse, no new materials are harvested, mined, or manufactured. Reusing leads to less air and water pollution. In addition, reused items may be transported shorter distances to the end user.

In terms of social benefits, reuse provides usable goods to people and organizations with limited means. Many reuse centers take part in job-training programs and provide employment for adults with disabilities and at-risk youth.

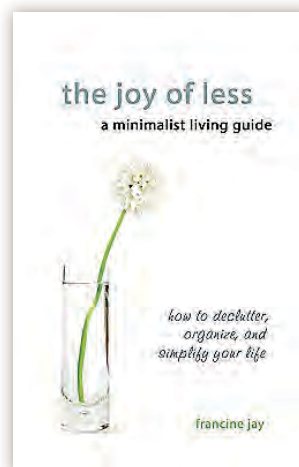
You might, however, find the economic benefits most surprising. Reuse creates jobs, encourages local business activity, and, of course, lowers disposal costs. Nationwide, reuse is a more than \$14.1 billion industry. Depending on the product, reuse creates 30 to 300 times more jobs than disposing of the same material on a ton-per-ton basis. At the low end, wood pallet repair creates about 28 jobs per 10,000 tons of material, whereas landfilling creates only one. At the high end, computer reuse creates 296 jobs per 10,000 tons of material.

ALL THRIFTY STATES



Jenna Isaacson is a woman on a mission. Her goal is to promote secondhand shopping. A self-proclaimed “thrift store addict,” Isaacson is on a massive road trip, traveling the United States on what she terms “a visual journey through America’s collective closets.” She isn’t investigating actual closets, of course. She’s stopping at a thrift store in every state. Learn more about Jenna’s mission at www.allthriftystates.com.

Read More About It



The Joy of Less, A Minimalist Living Guide: How to Declutter, Organize, and Simplify Your Life by Francine Jay

Live More, Want Less: 52 Ways to Find Order in Your Life by Mary Carlomagno

Organized Simplicity: The Clutter-Free Approach to Intentional Living by Tsh Oxenreider

QUOTES REQUOTED

Just by simply choosing healthful options every day, you can make a world of difference. You can improve your own health and the health of the environment. It’s just like choosing to change your lightbulbs or draw your drapes. Just like choosing to drive a greener car. Just like choosing to recycle and buy recycled. Just like choosing to reduce your energy needs and get your energy from greener sources. Just like choosing to eat locally grown, organic food. It’s all about choices. And you’ve got the power to choose.



Ed Begley, Jr.
Living Like Ed

Team Scrappy a big hit at Pig Out in the Park!

Spokane Regional Solid Waste System (SRSWS) added another aspect to the food waste collection program with the introduction of Team Scrappy at Spokane's popular Pig Out in the Park food and music festival over Labor Day weekend.

Members of Team Scrappy – SRSWS staff members and volunteers from the Master Composters/Recyclers program – were on hand throughout the event to help attendees “scrape the plate” after they finished dining, separating meal leftovers and food-soiled paper from non-recyclable items such as plastic service ware and utensils.

Reaction by the crowd of nearly 90,000 gourmands to Team Scrappy's presence was very positive and enthusiastic. Said one diner, “I think it's phenomenal—an awesome idea!” By the end of the six-day event, 2,100 pounds of food scraps and paper had been collected—over 1 ton.

These compostable materials were then delivered to Barr-Tech, an organic waste processing facility near Spokane, where they are being composted into a rich soil amendment that can reduce the need for chemical fertilizers in gardens.

After this successful debut, Team Scrappy now has plans to appear at other events and festivals in the Spokane area.



SRSWS staff members proudly representing Team Scrappy at Pig Out in the Park were (from left): Kris Major, Ned Duffy, Suzanne Tresko, Kristen Johnson, and Ann Murphy.



Tour schedule to change

Because of staffing changes, tours of the Waste to Energy facility at 2900 S. Geiger Blvd. will not be offered from November 2011 through February 2012. This includes walk-in tours that were previously offered on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Tours for groups of 10 or more will still be scheduled according to staff availability. Call 625-6521 to schedule a group tour. Walk-in tours will resume March 1, 2012.



Holiday tree-cycling

Fresh-cut holiday trees free of ornaments, lights, tinsel and flocking can be disposed curbside in Clean Green carts or garbage carts or next to the garbage carts. All trees that are discarded, either as Clean Green or garbage, must be cut into less than 6-foot lengths. Before setting out your tree, please call your garbage hauler because collection details, fees and tree preparation requirements may vary.

Bare trees, cut into less than 6-foot lengths, may also be dropped off at the Waste to Energy Facility, the North County Transfer Station or the Valley Transfer Station at Clean Green.



E-Cycle Washington weighs in

The Washington State Dept. of Ecology recently announced a milestone in the E-Cycle Washington program—over 100 million pounds of various electronic devices have been recycled in the state during the last two and a half years.

Since January 2009, this manufacturer-funded program has accepted TVs, monitors, and computers for recycling and reuse. And beginning this year, e-books and e-readers, such as the Amazon Kindle, the Barnes & Noble Nook, and the Sony Reader, are included in that program. Several locations around Spokane County are participating in



the E-Cycle program, including most Goodwill and Salvation Army stores. Staples, Office Depot, Best Buy, and Target also accept electronic recyclables, although they are not part of the E-Cycle program.

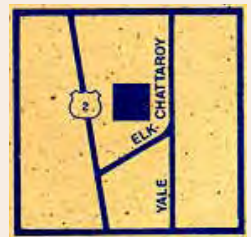
Other electronics (computer peripherals, music players, cell phones, game consoles, and DVD players) are often accepted as well, but you may be charged a fee for these items. You should call ahead to any of these locations to be certain that your electronics will be accepted and to ask about fees. Get more information by visiting www.ecyclewashington.org.

System facilities serve all county residents

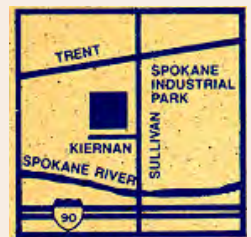
All Spokane County residents may bring trash, recyclables, Clean Green (including food scraps and food-soiled paper), and household hazardous waste to any of the three Spokane Regional Solid Waste System facilities. All facilities are open seven days a week, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding major holidays.



Waste to Energy Facility
2900 S. Geiger Blvd.
(West of Spokane, across from the Washington State Patrol)



North County Transfer Station
22123 Elk-Chattaroy Rd.
(Intersection of Elk-Chattaroy Rd. and Hwy. 2)



Valley Transfer Station
3941 N. Sullivan Rd.
(South of Trent Ave., across from Spokane Industrial Park)

For information on curbside recycling and area buy-back centers, please visit our website at www.solidwaste.org and click on “Recycling” in the left-hand menu bar. You can also call the Recycling Hot Line, 625-6800, for information.



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Master Gardener Program

Want to share your green thumb with others? Now's your chance! The Washington State University Master Gardener Program is now accepting applications for the 2012 class. You'll learn sustainable horticulture practices and diagnosis skills through online training modules and a series of classes. Much of the training is held at the WSU Agricultural Extension, 222 N. Havana St. in Spokane. The fee for training is \$200, plus an additional \$75 fee paid directly to WSU for the online training. You'll be required to volunteer 40 hours a year after completion of the class. Although the program is vigorous, your plants and community will benefit from it!

The Master Gardener Program is offered only in even-numbered years and space is usually limited, so don't miss your chance! Application deadline is Oct. 31, 2011. For more information and the application, visit <http://www.spokane-county.wsu.edu/spokane/eastside/> or call 477-2181.

WASTE TO ENERGY REPORT CARD

Working Together!

April – June 2011

<p>Garbage In 70,607 tons disposed</p> <p>66,953 tons processed at WTE Facility</p> <p>2,370 tons of ferrous metal recovered from the ash for recycling.</p> <p>20,591 tons of ash disposed at Rabanco</p>	<p>Electricity Generation 42,727 MWh produced</p> <p>7,370 MWh used to run the facility</p> <p>35,357 MWh sold to Puget Sound Energy</p> <p>Notice of Violation None</p> <p>Revenues after Electricity Transmission Expenses \$2,179,398</p>
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We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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