

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Spokane Regional
**SOLID
WASTE
SYSTEM**

(509) 625-6580

www.solidwaste.org

Winter 2009



Hot Off the Presses

Spokane Recycles Calendars Available!



The America Recycles Day Poster Contest finalists were all smiles as they proudly displayed their artwork. Finalists were recognized during the November 18 meeting of the Spokane County Commissioners and treated to a reception afterwards.

Our annual "Spokane Recycles Poster Contest" brought in over 500 entries from 17 schools, 25 individuals, and a campfire group. Every student who entered the contest deserves special recognition for their efforts. The optimism and insight of our youth reinforce our belief that the "cycle" truly does start with each one of us. Congratulations to all who participated. We are proud of your efforts.

From the many great choices, we are forced to choose just a limited number of winners each year. Here are the 2009 finalists:

- **Betz Elementary, Cheney:** Allison Janes, Grade 3; Logan Kendall, Grade 3
- **East Farms Elementary, Otis Orchards:** Ellie Reavis, Grade 5
- **Hallett Elementary, Medical Lake:** Emma Ransom, Grade 5; Jeremy Ryan, Grade 5
- **Hamblen Elementary:** Amy Cantrell, Grade 4
- **Indian Trail Elementary, Spokane:** McKenzie Elliott, Grade 6
- **Logan Elementary, Spokane:** Tryston Williams, Grade 5
- **Moran Prairie Elementary, Spokane:** Vineha Malireddi, Grade 3; Lily Shelton, Grade 3

- **Orchard Center Elementary, Spokane Valley:** Meggan Kathman, Grade 5; India Wells, Grade 2
- **Pioneer School, Spokane Valley:** Amy Bethmann, Grade 2; Anoop Chandra, Grade 4; Connor Gilbert, Grade 5; Shannon Hamilton, Grade 2; Becca Laseur, Grade 1; Kohl Lazanis, Grade 4; Evelyn Rowe, Grade 1
- **Salnave Elementary, Cheney:** Sarah Hagedorn, Grade 3
- **Spokane Valley Seventh Day Adventist, Spokane Valley:** Bethany Williams, Grade 6; Kayla Matheson, Grade 5
- **St. Aloysius Catholic School, Spokane:** Joey Kincanon, Grade 7; Chayla Mauss, Grade 6; Natalie Morales, Grade 7; Scott Rowland, Grade 8; Vanessa Santorsola, Grade 8; Laura Stockton, Grade 6
- **St. Mary's Catholic School, Spokane Valley:** Grace Kienbaum, Grade 3
- **Wilson Elementary, Spokane:** Evan Cox, Grade 5

For additional information, contact the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System Hotline at 625-6800 or www.solidwaste.org.

Choose Reusable!

Grocers with stores in Spokane County and the Washington Food Industry have introduced a new program to encourage and increase the use of reusable shopping bags throughout Spokane County.

"We are excited that our grocers have taken these important steps toward curbing the use of disposable paper and plastic bags," said Spokane City Council Member Richard Rush, who has worked closely with the grocers



on this project. "Instead of the ubiquitous 'paper or plastic' question, I want the standard to become 'your bag or mine?'"

The City is assisting with this effort by including information on the program with other recycling messages offered by the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System. The System has been working hard to increase recycling in the community via a media campaign entitled, "The Cycle Starts With You." Citizen response to the campaign has been very positive.

Finally! Recycle Your TVs, PCs, Laptops, and Monitors for FREE!

Effective January 1, households, schools, small businesses, small governments, and non-profit organizations may drop off electronics (e-waste) for recycling—FREE OF CHARGE. This includes televisions, desktop computers, laptop computers, and monitors.

This new program is the product of an e-waste reduction initiative designed to reduce electronic waste throughout Washington State. The new *E-Cycle* Washington program requires electronics manufacturers to pay for the recycling of computers, monitors, laptops, and televisions. Costs related to handling and transporting these items will be divided among the major U.S. producers of these electronic items. How much each producer pays will be based on the company's statewide product sales and the rate at which their products are being recycled.

Eleven Goodwill sites in Spokane County and the Salvation Army on North Division are accepting televisions, desktop computers, laptop computers, and monitors. Most likely, another five or six drop-off locations will be

added in Spokane County in the near future. This is a permanent program, so there is no need to rush to collection sites. Sites will be open and available to accept products throughout 2009 and beyond. Visit www.discovergoodwill.org to learn more.

Electronic products contain heavy metals and other chemicals at hazardous levels that make them difficult to dispose of safely. For example, every cathode ray picture tube contains an estimated four to eight pounds of lead. Some toxic chemicals, such as mercury, are known to have neurological and developmental effects when infants and children are exposed to them in high levels. Safe and effective management of e-waste is essential for a healthy community.

For additional information, call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800 or visit the following websites:

- Washington Materials Management & Financing Authority: www.wmmfa.net
- Washington State Department of Ecology: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/e-productrecycle/

Spokane River Clean-Up



Over 4,000 pounds of recyclables, including aluminum cans and assorted metals, were collected along the shores of the Spokane River. These items are sold and recycled into new products.

On Saturday, October 4, more than 800 volunteers turned out for this year's Spokane River Clean-Up. Approximately 6 tons of garbage (12,020 pounds) and 4,101 pounds of recyclables were collected along the shorelines of the Spokane River. Great job, everyone!

In an effort to reduce the use of Code 1 water bottles, the River Clean-Up Committee provided reusable mugs that volunteers could fill with drinking water from the Water Department's water trailer.

Sponsors of the clean-up included Avista, Waste Management, Washington Trust Bank, and Wheelabrator Spokane Inc.

Be sure to mark your calendars for October 3, 2009, and plan to be at next year's clean-up! For additional information, visit www.friendsofthefalls.org.

The City of Spokane is doing its part, too. Besides promoting the use of reusable shopping bags, the City has reduced idling of City vehicles and implemented other strategies to reduce fuel use, added motorcycle and scooter parking spaces in downtown, created a downtown street tree replacement

program, and embarked on a major heating and air conditioning project in City Hall that will greatly improve energy efficiency in that building.

Great job, everyone! Keep up the good work, and don't forget those reusable bags the next time you go shopping!

Green your brain!

Are you looking for some indoor fun? Test your “green score” by playing the interactive trivia game at www.greenmybrain.com. Each question addresses an environmental problem, a solution, or an action that you can take. Answers are multiple choice. There are two levels, with level two questions being more challenging.

Even at level one, you’ll find some tricky questions, such as: “Between 1980 and 1999, the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulations on lead usage reduced lead emissions by what percent?” (The answer is 95%!) Other questions may cover more familiar territory, like this one: “Instead of buying containers for leftovers at the store, you can....” (We’ll let you figure that one out yourself!)

Whether you are a novice or an expert, you’ll have fun playing this game and will learn a lot along the way.

Players can even submit questions. Of course, the game masters do thorough fact-checking before posting submitted questions and answers.



Paper, paper everywhere

Each year, we preserve only 10% of the paper that we receive and handle. This preserved paper includes books, magazines, photographs, and filed documents. The rest of the paper is recycled or disposed. As much as 81% of this paper could be recycled, while the remainder is destroyed during use or contaminated, such as tissues. However, at present, 56% of paper is being recycled, which means we can do better.

Our paper recycling in the U.S. affects the supply of recyclable paper around the globe. America has been referred to as “the Saudi Arabia of recovered paper.” On average, Americans recycle 360 pounds of paper and paper products (such as corrugated cardboard) each year. In 2007, 54.3 million tons of paper were recovered for recycling in the U.S. This paper becomes the feedstock for paper recycling mills around the world. Just as the Middle East provides much of the

world with oil, the U.S. supplies much of the world with recyclable paper.

In a time when U.S. paper consumption has leveled off, paper consumption around the world is increasing rapidly. At present, worldwide consumption is about 440 million tons per year. However, by 2015, that number may be as high as 550 million tons, with the largest growth in China and India, the

world’s most populous nations. If the U.S. were to recycle all of the paper that is currently recyclable, we could meet nearly one-quarter of that additional demand, supplying about 25 million tons more paper to the recovery system.

But what about the non-recyclable paper—those papers that are destroyed or contaminated during use? The best option is to purchase 100% recycled-content alternatives. For instance, if every household in the U.S. purchased a single roll of 100% recycled-content toilet paper, we could save 330,000 trees.

To learn more about paper manufacturing, use, and recycling, go to INFORM’s Secret Life Series at www.secret-life.org/paper/. You’ll find a helpful video, as well as a great deal of useful information.

For more information about paper recycling, visit www.paperrecycles.org or contact our office.

What is the Forest Stewardship Council?

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, international organization which certifies forests and forest-based products. The FSC standards focus on environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable forestry management practices. The goal of the FSC is forests that conserve biological diversity, minimize logging-related pollution, improve the lives of forest workers and surrounding communities, and encourage long-term health and usefulness of the forest stock.

However, FSC certification doesn’t stop at the edge of the forest. Through a rigorous, chain of custody certification program, FSC follows the tree to sawmill, manufacturing plant, and distribution center. When a paper or building product bears the FSC logo, you’ll know that the trees used to make the product were harvested in the most sustainable way possible.

In 2008, 254 million acres of forest worldwide, representing about 7% of all forests, had received FSC certification. More than 10,000 products are FSC certified. When you shop for building products, paper, and paper products, look for the FSC logo.

For more information, visit www.fscus.org.

Forty Years Later...

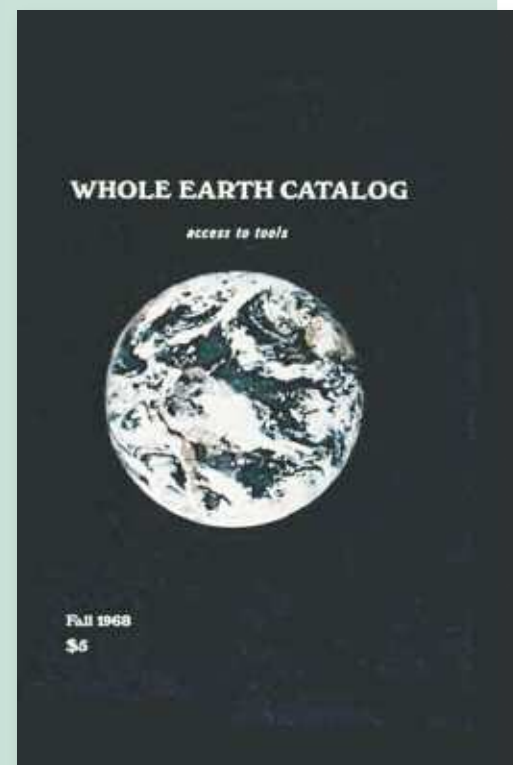
In the fall of 1968, Stewart Brand and friends published a catalog that became a sensation. The *Whole Earth Catalog*, which was only published regularly through 1972 and then periodically thereafter, is where the weekend do-it-yourselfer crossed paths with the back-to-land enthusiast.

The goal of the catalog was to provide “access to tools.” Some of these tools were products, but others were ideas, including books, journals, magazines, maps, and classes. This wasn’t a mail-order catalog, but rather, a resource on systems and technologies, companies, and products. Members of the Whole Earth team sought out and evaluated tools and ideas, providing helpful reviews for the readers. To be listed, an item had to meet several criteria, including that it was: useful as a tool; relevant to independent education; high-quality or low-cost; not already commonly known; and easily available by mail. For example, the first catalog had features on the magazine *Scientific American*, the outdoor outfitter L.L. Bean, and a Hewlett-Packard tabletop calculator.

According to Apple founder Steve Jobs, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was the forerunner of the Internet. First, the catalog actively promoted emerging technologies. Second, it encouraged thinking in terms of “systems.” And, third, it relied heavily on the collaboration of its contributors, including “user-generated content.” In other words, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was a search engine, like Google, and a blog — long before those two existed.

In 1972, the *Whole Earth Catalog* won a National Book Award for the serialized publication of Gurney Norman’s novel, *Divine Right’s Trip*. This was the only National Book Award ever given to a catalog.

If you don’t remember the *Whole Earth Catalog*, visit www.wholeearth.com, where you can see old editions online or read some of the articles.



WHAT'S UP?

Curbside Recycling Reminders: Residents no longer need to remove labels from cans, glass, and Code 1 (PETE) or Code 2 (HDPE) plastics. Catalogs can be recycled curbside, along with magazines, phone books, and newspapers. Old cell phones and chargers go in a plastic bag, along with batteries, and are placed on the top of the bin (be sure to delete personal information). A newly designed curbside bin sticker provides clearer instructions regarding acceptable materials and preparation.



Holiday Trees: Trees that are free of ornaments, lights, tinsel, and flocking can be disposed of as Clean Green. Remember to take them off the stand!

Fresh-cut holiday trees may be discarded in Clean Green yard debris carts for curbside pick-up—just call your garbage hauler for more information. All trees should be cut up so they fit inside the yard debris bin.

Trees may also be dropped off at the Waste to Energy Facility or at either of the transfer stations as Clean Green waste.

Some community groups offer holiday tree disposal services. Watch for local advertising.

Trees that are discarded with the garbage (or next to the garbage) must be cut into 6' lengths. We recommend that you call your garbage hauler first for details as collections, fees, and tree preparation requirements may vary. Call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800 for more information.



Waste Management Relocates Call Center: In early November, Waste Management of the Pacific Northwest announced plans to open a regional customer service center in Oak Harbor, Washington. Waste Management will employ approximately 120 customer service representatives to serve residential and commercial customers throughout Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The new customer service center will open in January and is expected to be fully operational by March.

"This will be a world-class call center providing service excellence to all of our customers," said Jamey Desoer, Market Area General Manager for Waste Management of the Pacific Northwest. "This change will have little affect on Spokane customers, other than to extend the hours of the Customer Service Center from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Customers will continue to make all service requests over the phone. In addition, customers can continue making payments over the phone if they choose that payment method."



12th Annual Spokane Youth Environmental Conference (SYEC): The next SYEC will be held on April 28, 2009, at Spokane Community College. SYEC is a one-day, high-energy event for students in grades 7-12, allowing them to showcase their environmental science projects. This year's conference theme is "Go Green." The deadline for preregistration is January 30, 2009. Student abstracts are due on March 27, 2009. For more information, visit www.syec.org.



Washington State Recycling Association Conference & Trade Show: The 29th Annual Washington State Recycling Association Conference and Trade Show will be held May 3-6, 2009, at the Yakima Convention Center. The theme for this year's event is "Recycling: Gateway to Green." For information on becoming a sponsor or an exhibitor, visit www.wsra.net or call 206-244-0311.

Get Ready for the Big Switch

The deadline for TV stations to change their broadcasting from analog to digital signals is February 17, 2009. Residents still have a lot of questions regarding this switch, so here is some information you might find helpful.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) statistics show that within the Spokane market, many people watch television using over-the-air antennas, rather than by a paid cable or satellite service. Many of these residents will need to take steps to ensure they can watch television after the switch.

What is digital television?

Digital television, or DTV, is an advanced broadcasting technology that is designed to improve picture and sound quality and provide more programming choices for consumers. Digital television, however, doesn't mean programs will be in high-definition.

The conversion also will free up parts of the broadcast spectrum for other uses, such as public safety or advanced wireless and broadband services.

Do I need a new TV?

Many citizens have been concerned that the change to digital TV means they have to throw away their old TV sets. That is simply not the case. Here's the skinny:

- Television sets connected to cable or satellite television service won't be

affected; you will continue to receive service as you always have.

- Digital television sets will receive the new digital signals without any change. Digital TVs usually have labels that say "integrated digital tuner," "digital tuner built in," "digital receiver," "digital tuner," "DTV," "ATSC," or "HDTV." If your TV has any of those labels, you should be fine.
- Analog television sets that receive their signal from an antenna (either rabbit ears or rooftop) will need a DTV converter box to continue to receive a signal after the switch date. (Don't forget about the TV in the garage or the bedroom that isn't hooked to the cable or satellite service.)

What about those converter boxes?

Until March 31, 2009, consumers can request up to two \$40 coupons toward digital converter boxes as part of the TV Converter Box Coupon Program set up by Congress. To request a coupon, call 1-800-DTV-2009 or visit www.DTV2009.gov.

A digital converter box essentially receives the digital TV signal, converts it to an analog signal, and then sends it to the analog TV. The boxes typically cost between \$50 and \$70 and are available at nearly any retailer that sells TVs and other electronics.

The converter boxes have various fea-

tures, but consumers may want to consider boxes with "analog pass-through" capability since many low-power TV and TV translator stations may remain in analog after Feb. 17, 2009. Also, Canada's switch to digital will happen later, so if you get a Canadian station over the air, it may continue to broadcast an analog signal for some time.

What if I get a new TV?

Remember—if you do decide to get a new TV, take your old one to Goodwill or the Salvation Army on North Division so that it can be properly recycled!

Where can I get information?

There are a number of online resources that citizens might find helpful:

- www.dtv.gov
- www.dtvtransition.org
- www.DTVAnswers.com
- www.getreadyfordigitaltv.com
- www.comcast.com/dtv



Spring Training for Master Composters



The schedule has been set for Master Composter spring training:

- Monday, March 23, 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday, March 28, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 30, 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Monday, April 6, 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Monday, April 13, 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday, April 25, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Classes meet at Spokane County Extension, North 222 Havana. The final class on April 25 will be held during the Compost Fair at the Finch Arboretum. All classes are free. Participants receive their training and materials in exchange for volunteer hours.

For additional information and registration materials, call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800.

Illegal dumping hurts the environment and your wallet

The Office of Code Enforcement handles illegal dumping complaints for the City and the County (Spokane Municipal Code 10.08.010). Examples of illegal dumping include:

- Disposing of garbage, litter, or other items in any public place, public park, or in the waters within the City limits.
- Throwing garbage or other items on private property without permission.
- Depositing garbage, litter, or other items into any garbage can, dumpster, or other receptacle located on the property of another, except for containers placed in an area and designated for public use.

If your identification is found at an illegal dump site, you can be fined up to \$1,000. When hiring someone to haul your trash away, it is important you know where the trash goes! Remember to request a tipping receipt (from the hauler) for your records. The receipt ensures that the garbage was dumped at an approved facility.

To report an illegal dump in the right-of-way, call Code Enforcement at 625-6083 or visit www.beautifyspokane.org.

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!


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WASTE TO ENERGY REPORT CARD

Working Together!



July–September 2008

<p>Garbage In 69,903.84 tons disposed 62,899.74 tons processed at the WTE Facility 1,945.49 tons of ferrous metal recovered from the ash for recycling 18,650.51 tons of ash disposed at Rabanco</p>	<p>Electricity Generation 39,753 MWh produced 7,376 MWh used to run the facility 32,377 sold to Puget Sound Energy</p> <p>Notice of Violation None</p> <p>Revenues after Electricity Transmission Expenses \$2,371,565.67</p>
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