

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Solid Waste District of  
LaPorte County

(219) 326-0014  
(800) 483-7700

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Winter 2006



Welcome, City of LaPorte!

## District picks up collection for City of LaPorte recyclables

In the past, the City of LaPorte had a separate curbside recycling program that was not part of the Solid Waste District of LaPorte County's program. However, as of early January, the Solid Waste District will be including the City of LaPorte in the District's recycling program.

From now on, all residents will be recycling the same materials at the curb and will be provided with every-

other-week set-out. Starting on Monday, January 2 for City of LaPorte residents, recycling will continue on the regular schedule—*NO changes in pickup days*. When your bin is delivered, it will contain a 2006 recycling calendar and instruction sheet.

For more information about our program, visit our website, [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com), or call us at 326-0014 or 1-800-483-7700.

Set out by 6 a.m.!

### Tips for tremendous recycling



1. Curbside collection is scheduled every other week. If you lose track of your recycling week, simply visit our website. Not only can you find your week, but you can schedule regular e-mail reminders so that you won't forget in the future.
2. On your recycling day, be sure that your red or blue recycling bin is clearly visible from the street. Your bin signals the driver to stop. Remember—no bin, no pickup.
3. On your collection day, have your recyclables at the curb by 6 a.m. Don't guess when the truck will come by—just get your bin to the curb by 6 a.m.!
4. Recycle these materials:
  - Glass food jars, juice, pop, soda, and water bottles, beer and wine bottles
  - "Tin" (steel) food cans, aluminum beverage cans, and bi-metal cans
  - All plastics with the chasing-arrows recycling symbol and marked with a number code (#1-#7)
  - Newspapers plus any inserts, tabloids, or small flyers that originally came with the paper
  - Catalogs
  - Phone books
  - Magazines
  - Cardboard boxes torn down in 2-inch strips
  - Stationery and copy paper
  - Cereal and snack boxes
  - Pizza boxes

## Tree-cycling time

By Pauletta Schuster

Do you still have to dispose your LIVE Christmas trees? The Solid Waste District of LaPorte County is accepting LIVE Christmas trees at our Zigler Road Drop-off Site, which runs along the east side of the LaPorte County Fairgrounds, just past the grandstand on the west side. The Drop-off Site is open 7 days a week during daylight hours. Be sure to remove all ornaments and lights from your tree, as well as the stand, before dropping it off. Please do NOT put it into a plastic bag.

In a national survey, 93 percent of consumers who used a live tree did the right thing by recycling their tree in some type of community program. Artificial trees will last about six years in your home, but for centuries in a landfill.

Live Christmas trees can be recycled and used for:

- Mulch
- Trails
- Beachfront erosion prevention
- Lake and river shoreline stabilization
- Wildlife habitats
- Potpourri — Remove and crumble dry needles, mix with cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, and Christmas scent. Add 1 cup of water to 1/4 cup of potpourri and heat.



## Events provide regularly scheduled recycling and disposal for problem wastes

Dates will be set for our 2006 events soon. Watch for details in the newspaper, look for our spring newsletter in April, check our website ([www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com)), or call our office at 326-0014 or 1-800-483-7700.



Tire and White Goods Recycling Days are held each May and October. During 2005, we recycled 145.33 tons of tires and 45.3 tons of white goods (large, household appliances).



Last June, residents dropped off 66.65 tons of electronics, including computers, televisions, and related equipment. Our annual electronics recycling collection is held during the summer.



Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collections are scheduled monthly from March through October. During the HHW drop-off events, residents can safely dispose of lawn and garden chemicals, household cleaners and solvents, oil-based paint and related products, batteries, mercury, medical "sharps" (lancets and syringes), expired medications, and more. During 2005, we received about 48.63 tons of HHW, all of which was recycled or safely disposed.

Look for curbside recycling program results for 2005 in our spring newsletter!



# 10 Tips for a “New and Improved” Year

It's the time of year when we're thinking about making things better—ourselves, our families, our homes, our work. As you're making your resolutions, consider these 10 tips:

1. Before you buy, ask yourself: Do I need this? Do I already have something like this? What will I do with this when I no longer need it?
2. Spend more time with family and friends and less time shopping. And, yes, that means putting down the catalog and surfing past Internet stores, too!



3. Start your exercise or other self-improvement program on borrowed or shared equipment. If you stick with the program or hobby, you can purchase your own supplies and equipment, if you need them, later.
4. Shop used first. Whether you're buying books, DVDs, videos, CDs, toys, games, jewelry, exercise equipment, furniture, or cars, make “used” your first choice. In most cases, you'll find items that are serviceable and less expensive. In some cases, you'll find items that may have been pre-owned but are actually brand-new.
5. Take toxics off your shopping list. Start by choosing biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products and selecting only latex paints for home improvement projects.
6. Know what can be recycled locally. If you don't know what you can recycle, contact us to find out!
7. Once you know what is recyclable, shop with recycling in mind. For instance, if grape jelly is available in both a recyclable and non-recyclable container, choose the recyclable container.
8. Commit to recycled-content products. Successful recycling programs depend on having manufacturers use your recyclables. Manufacturers won't use recyclables to make what people won't buy. Look for polar fleece made from recycled soft drink bottles. Select recycled-content carpet. Buy the paper with a phrase such as “post-consumer recycled-content” printed on the wrapper.
9. Share more of yourself with others this year. Volunteer more time. Give away more old, but still usable, stuff.
10. Relax and enjoy your life. Find a book you own but haven't read; curl up on a Saturday and read it! Watch a movie in your collection that you have never had time to watch. Pull out the stationery that a friend gave you three birthday's ago and write a letter.



## “ROAD TO FORTY” IS ALSO ROAD TO RECYCLING

On February 5th, football fans and curious commercial watchers will be experiencing the first Super Bowl to take place on a recycled field. Ford Field in Detroit will host the first-ever Super Bowl played on FieldTurf, a multilayered system that uses shredded rubber from used tires and old athletic shoes along with sand to create a cushiony playing field. The field, which was installed when the stadium was built in 2002, is made from 25,000 used tires. (When you see that black “spray” coming out of the field after hard contact, you're seeing the crumb rubber and sand.)

Other recycling at Ford Field that you'll see only if you're a ticket holder includes recycled glass in the terrazzo floors and toilet stall partitions made from recycled plastic soft drink bottles.

If you're enjoying Super Bowl XL at home or with friends, be sure to include recycling in your party plans. Have a recycling bin for beverage containers. Reduce waste by purchasing snack food in bulk packages. And opt for reusable and washable napkins, plates, and silverware.

Go recycling! Go team!

## On the trail of trash

Did you ever think about following your trash? Probably not, and neither did journalist Elizabeth Royte—that is, until Earth Day 2002 when she joined volunteers who were picking up floating garbage in her hometown, Brooklyn, NY.

That boat ride with all of its visible trash led her to think about all of the “invisible” trash that we dispose each day. She writes: “You can't live in New York or any big city and not be aware that vast tonnages of waste are generated daily.... But most of the time that reality is virtual, because somehow our unwanted stuff keeps disappearing. It moves away from us in pieces—truck by truck, barge by barge—in a process that is as constant as it is invisible.”

After this, Royte became increasingly curious about what happened to the 1.31 tons of waste that she created each year. (*BioCycle* magazine and Columbia University's Earth Engineering Center estimate that on average each American generated 1.31 tons of waste in 2003.) Rather than simply wonder, she began to research.

First, she began separating and weighing her own household trash. On her first day, her three-person household tossed 7 pounds, 9 ounces of mixed waste. From

there, her research took her out of her home, around the city, and across the country where she met trash collectors, rode trash trucks, visited landfills, explored recycling centers, and more. The result of her efforts is the book, *Garbage Land: On the Secret Trail of Trash*, which was published by Little, Brown and Company in 2005.

In *Garbage Land*, Royte makes visible the invisible—the trash we throw away, the packaging we recycle, and even what we flush. Her conclusion? In her last chapter, “The Ecological Citizen,” she writes: “Our trash cans, I believe, ought to make us think...about the enormous amount of material and energy that goes into the stuff we use for an instant and then discard. Garbage should worry us. It should

prod us. We don't need better ways to get rid of things. We need to *not* get rid of things, either by keeping them cycling through the system or not designing and desiring them in the first place.”

Rather than offering specific solutions, the book offers information and insights. Royte's goal is not to tell us what to do or exactly how to do it, but rather to help us to come to the conclusion that we ought to do something. What that something is, she leaves to her readers.



## Seeking solutions?

Helen Spiegelman and Bill Sheehan offer several proposals for reducing the amount of waste we generate and improving the way we handle it in “Unintended Consequences: Municipal Solid Waste Management and the Throwaway Society.” This paper can be downloaded at [www.solidwastemag.com/PostedDocuments/documents.asp](http://www.solidwastemag.com/PostedDocuments/documents.asp). (Scroll down to “June/July 2005: Related Reports and Articles” and click to download the full report.)

To read even more about these issues, check out the Winter-Spring 2005 special edition of the *Journal of Industrial Ecology* at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?type=5&tid=1704>. Focused entirely on consumption and industrial ecology, this issue explores what we produce, what we buy, whether our manufacturing processes and shopping habits are sustainable, and more.

Photos courtesy of Chris Jordan Photography



## Looking for beauty in unlikely pieces

Photographer Chris Jordan has also been trailing our trash, in shipping ports, industrial yards, and waste processing facilities. His photographs, which are gathered in the exhibit “Intolerable Beauty — Portraits of American Mass

Consumption,” capture what our consumer habits leave behind.

To learn more about Jordan's art and to see more of the images from his show, visit [www.chrisjordan.com](http://www.chrisjordan.com).



## Another benefit of recycling



According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, recycling is one of the most effective ways for individuals and communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Greenhouse gases have a “heat-trapping” effect on our atmosphere. While heat-trapping may sound pretty good during the winter, the long-term and year-round effects are a concern.

Here are some of the ways that recycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions:

- When fewer materials are landfilled, total methane production decreases. Methane, which is considered a greenhouse gas, is produced when organic materials decompose in a landfill.
- When paper products are recycled, fewer trees are cleared from forests and tree farms. The trees that are left standing capture carbon dioxide,

another greenhouse gas, and hold it where it is being used by plants rather than affecting the atmosphere.

- Creating new products from recyclables requires less energy than making the same products from virgin materials. By decreasing energy use, we lower greenhouse gas emissions from power plants by burning fewer fossil fuels.

As you can imagine, *reducing* our waste by purchasing and using less and *reusing* what we already have decrease greenhouse gas emissions even more!

For more information, visit the U.S. EPA’s global warming site, <http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/content/index.html>. You can also access the site by going to [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) and clicking on “Global Warming.”

## Rescuing one box at a time

Have you ever thought, “I ought to start a business doing that”? Marty Metro thought that and did—founding UsedCardboardBoxes.com. The company’s motto is “Rescue, Resell, Recycle.”

The company partners with retailers to collect and warehouse used but undamaged boxes. Customers can order boxes online and, in some locations, receive them within 24 hours. The used boxes are generally sold for about half of the original retail price of a new box. If the request cannot be filled by UsedCardboardBoxes, the customer is redirected to other sources.

For more information, visit [www.UsedCardboardBoxes.com](http://www.UsedCardboardBoxes.com) or call 1-888-BOXES-88.



## QUOTES REQUOTED

“The great thing in this world is not so much where you stand, as in what direction you are moving.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1809–94  
American physician, author, and poet

## Money



## in the bank

Whether you’re choosing supplies to use at home, to run an office, or to get you through the school day, you can reduce your waste. You’ll also reduce your costs. Here are some ideas to help keep your money in the bank:

- Use both sides of the paper. You don’t expect to read a book or magazine printed on the front side only, so why print anything else that way?
- Go without. When you have a choice between a paper form and a paperless online option, opt for the computer keyboard rather than pen and paper. If you are in charge of surveys, registrations, or order forms, create paperless forms.
- Need handouts? Before you copy, take a head count or get a good esti-

mate of the number of people who will be in attendance.

- Eliminate unneeded printing. Save paper by bookmarking websites and storing e-mails in electronic folders.
- Reuse computer disks, including old floppies, if you still use them, and rewritable CDs and DVDs.
  - Buy refillable pens and mechanical pencils to reduce waste. Refills are also cheaper than new pens and pencils.
  - Choose remanufactured (or refilled) toner cartridges, which cost less and provide the same amount of ink.
  - Check your supplies before you shop. If you keep pens, pencils, markers, paper, paper clips, toner cartridges, post-it notes, and tape refills organized, you will know what you have and what you need, avoiding unnecessary purchases.
  - Avoid the “brown bag,” and pack your lunch in a reusable bag or box. Encourage others to do the same.



## FAST FACTS

- In September, the BIC corporation announced that it had sold its 100-billionth—yes, that’s 100,000,000,000—disposable ballpoint pen. According to the company, the pen has sold on average 57 times a second since 1950, when it was introduced.
- The average office worker uses 10,000 sheets of copy paper each year—that’s about five sheets every working hour!



# WHAT'S UP?

Homeowners may now pick up compost and mulch at our Westville Facility. Mulch is \$6.50 per cubic yard, and compost is \$10.50 per cubic yard. Colored mulch is NOT available for sale. We also offer animal bedding at \$6.50 per cubic yard.

We haven't forgotten our businesses either. Businesses can buy mulch and compost from us at the Westville Facility, as well as doing their tipping (organic waste drop-off). If small items are being dropped off, such as brush, leaves, grass, and/or trees UNDER 30" diameter, the tipping fee is \$5.50 per cubic yard. For larger items, such as trees OVER 30" diameter and CLEAN stumps, the tipping fee is \$7.90 per cubic yard.

Our Westville Facility hours are:

- Winter — Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Spring/Summer/Fall — Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 1:30 p.m..
- April through October ONLY — every Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

For additional information, call the facility at 219-785-2511, extension #4935 (you must use the # sign), and ask for Joe.



**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

We are also available to speak to your club or organization about solid waste, waste reduction, recycling and composting.

**Solid Waste District of LaPorte County**

**2354 North U.S. Highway 35  
LaPorte, IN 46350**

**(219) 326-0014  
(800) 483-7700**

**www.solidwastedistrict.com**

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

# Do some good!

## Recycle your old cell phone

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 156 million Americans now use cell phones, including 20 percent of all teens. On average, Americans replace their cell phones about every 18 months, resulting in 125 million that are "retired," or discarded, each year.

Although today's cell phones weigh only a few ounces each, these phones contain a long list of potentially hazardous metals and chemicals, including those found in the circuit boards (see inset), in the displays, and in the rechargeable batteries. For this reason, unneeded and unusable cell phones should be recycled, recapturing the usable parts and ensuring reuse of the potentially hazardous components. Like other electronics, cell phones don't belong in our landfills.

If you are a cell phone user, follow these simple guidelines to reduce your waste:

- Keep your cell phone longer. When you select a new phone, choose your features and style carefully so that you can keep it in service as long as possible. Also, think twice before you upgrade. Ask yourself, "Do I need a new phone?"
- Recharge your batteries properly for a longer life. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully. If your battery wears out and can no longer be recharged or hold its charge, replace only the battery (rather than

replacing the phone).

- Donate your phone for reuse or recycling when you no longer need it. Don't throw the phone into your family's "junk drawer." If you recycle the phone as soon as you are finished using it, chances are better that its parts and batteries will be able to be reused without a lot of reprocessing.

To help residents recycle cell phones and accessories, as well as other small electronics such as PDAs and hand-held devices, digital cameras, pagers, beepers, and two-way radios, we accept them at our Electronics Recycling events (held once each summer).

In the meantime, if you're interested in a better future for your old cell phone, you may want to consider these collection programs:

- [www.recyclewirelessphones.com](http://www.recyclewirelessphones.com)
- [www.collectivegood.com](http://www.collectivegood.com)
- [www.charitable recycling.com](http://www.charitable recycling.com)

When you recycle your cell phone through these programs, you're doing the right thing, as well as doing a good thing!



The "circuit board," which is located in the handset of the cell phone, constitutes the brains of the phone. Circuit boards are made from mined, raw materials including copper, gold, lead, nickel, zinc, beryllium, tantalum, coltan, and other metals. The manufacturing of these boards requires crude oil for plastic, and sand and limestone for fiberglass. Many of these materials are known as "persistent toxins" and can stay in the environment for long periods of time, even after disposal.

*Source: "The Life Cycle of a Cell Phone," U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/pdfs/life-cell.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/pdfs/life-cell.pdf)*

## Solid Waste District Staff

Lynn K. Waters, Executive Director  
 Carol A. Trost, Controller  
 Michelle M. Buford, Financial Clerk  
 Pauletta S. Schuster, Executive Secretary  
 Nancy K. Gibson, Administrative Assistant / School Recycling Programs  
 Susan Bortell, Recycling / Public Education Coordinator  
 Tom Buford, HHW Coordinator (Direct Phone: 326-1425)  
 Joseph D. Jokantas, Project Coordinator, Westville Compost Site  
 (Direct Phone: 785-2511, #4935 — *must dial pound sign before number*)  
 Dewey Briggs, Mechanic/Operator

## District Board of Directors

Commissioner William Hager	Councilman Charles Lungren
Commissioner Marlow Harmon	Mayor Chuck Oberlie
Commissioner Barbara Huston	Councilwoman Ann Spevak
Mayor Leigh Morris	

*District Board meetings are scheduled the first Monday of the month at 1:30 p.m. The meetings are held at the LaPorte County Complex. Room number is listed on the sign board inside the Complex. Members of the public are welcome and invited to attend.*

## Citizen's Advisory Committee Members

Juli Charlesworth	Dennis Nichols
Ted Daube	William R. Pahs
James Irwin	Dick Reel
James Kintzele	John Thomson
Karen Kleist	Daniel Tompkins

*Citizen's Advisory Committee meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 3:30 p.m. at the Solid Waste District Office. Members of the public are welcome and invited to attend.*



## Did you know?

Once trash is buried in a modern landfill, it sits there for a very long time. Modern landfills are made to keep as much rain-water as possible from flowing down into the waste. As a result, most items don't begin to rot right away. In fact, scientists who have dug up old landfills found 50-year-old newspapers that could still be read!

## Buy, sell, or trade

The Indiana Materials Xchange can help your business get rid of packaging materials, manufacturing scrap, off-spec products, byproducts, and more—without sending them to a landfill. You also might be able to find items that you're seeking at a low cost or close to home. For details, visit the online exchange at [www.in.gov/idem/imx/](http://www.in.gov/idem/imx/).