

A Quarterly Newsletter Of

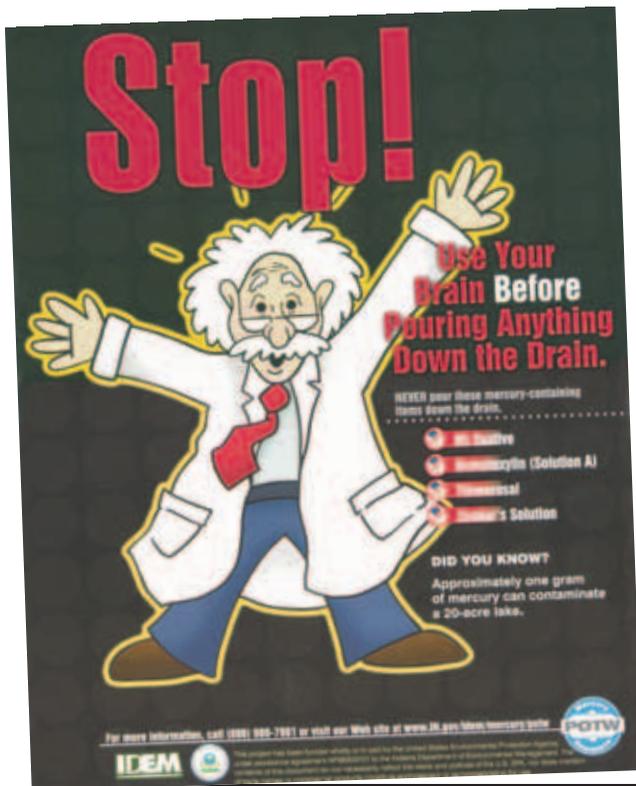


Solid Waste District of
LaPorte County

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

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Spring 2006



Use your brain!

As long as your household drains are working, you probably don't give them much thought. However, what you flush or pour down your drains matters. Municipal wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are designed to handle human wastes and dirty water from normal household activities, such as showering, bathing, doing laundry, or washing dishes. When other items, such as hazardous chemicals, go down the drain, they can interfere with the treatment process or pollute our ground and surface waters. That's why you need to think before you pour anything down the drain!

Don't pour these items into household drains:

- Mercury, including spilled mercury from broken thermometers and elemental mercury
- Household chemicals, such as cleaners, poisons, pesticides, automotive fluids, and paints
- Medications
- Fats, oils, and grease from food preparation

Mercury, mercury-containing products, household

chemicals, and medications are accepted at our Mobile Household Hazardous Waste Collections. Mobile collections will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on these Saturdays:

- March 25 at LaPorte County Fairgrounds
- April 22 at Michigan City Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall
- June 3 at Michigan City Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall
- July 8 at Michigan City Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall
- August 5 at LaPorte County Fairgrounds
- September 23 at Michigan City Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall
- October 21 at LaPorte County Fairgrounds

Fats and oils are not accepted at these mobile collections. Fats and oils should be placed into a plastic or glass container with a screw-on lid and disposed with your household trash.

For more information, contact our office at 1-800-946-4449 or 219-326-1425; visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com; or visit the State's website, www.useyourbrain.IN.gov.

What can I deliver to the Mobile Household Hazardous Waste collections?

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| • Aerosols | Household | Thermostats | Solvents | • Waste fuels |
| • Automotive supplies | • Corrosives | Other mercury containing items | • Pesticides | Diesel |
| Antifreeze | • Expired medications | • Outdated medications | Fungicides | Gasoline |
| Oils and other fluids | • Mercury-containing products | • Paint and related products | Herbicides | Kerosene |
| • Batteries | Fluorescent tubes | Oil-based paint* | Insecticides | Other flammable liquids |
| Automotive | Thermometers with silver bulbs | Thinners | Other poisons | |

*Bring **oil-based paint ONLY** to the mobile collections! **NO latex paint is accepted at these events!** Remove lids from latex paint cans; add a cup of cheap, CLAY cat litter; allow to dry and harden; and dispose of with your regular garbage (leave lids OFF cans).

eScrap takes center stage



e-Scrap

This year, Hoosiers will discard about 1.2 million computers and televisions, plus plenty more cell phones, PDAs, hand-held games, and other handy electronic devices. Hiding inside these electronics are at least five toxic materials that

have at least eight adverse health effects.

During normal use, these toxic materials are encased inside and doing their jobs—without putting you at risk. However, when electronics are discarded and smashed or crushed, the toxic materials can escape. That's why discarded electronics, called "eScrap," are a concern.

You can reduce the risks of eScrap by taking these simple steps:

- Think before you buy. Manufacturing a single desktop computer and 17-inch monitor uses 1.9 tons of materials



and consumes 81 percent of the energy that the product will use during its entire life cycle. Be sure that you are buying something that you need and will use.

- Reuse your own equipment for as long as possible. Reselling or upgrading computers uses five to 20 times less energy than even recycling.
- When equipment is no longer up to date enough to be useful, try to reuse some of the parts, such as memory chips. Or, if you have a working printer, turn down the "free" printer when you buy a new computer.
- Recycle your outdated equipment. Not only does recycling ensure that the hazardous components will be handled properly, it also puts the usable components and chemicals back to work.

On Friday, May 12 and Saturday, May 13 at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds, we'll host our annual eScrap recycling collection event. We'll be accepting obsolete computers, monitors, telephones, VCRs, copiers, radios, pagers, printers, CD players, computer paraphernalia and components, electronic games, FAX machines, TVs, modems, electronic typewriters, and similar items. For details about this collection event, call 219-326-0014 or 1-800-483-7700 or visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com.

For more information about eScrap, visit Indiana's new website, www.eScrapIndiana.org.



Hey, businesses!

Did you know that if you discard more than 7 to 8 computer monitors a month, you are considered a regulated generator of hazardous waste? Find out how to properly dispose of your business electronics by visiting www.eScrapIndiana.org.

10 Tips for a better Earth Day and a better year for the Earth

On April 22, 1970, school children, college students, parents, business people, elected officials, and more came together in the largest demonstration ever held in America—Earth Day. The brain-child of Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, Earth Day was planned as a “teach-in” about the environment for members of the U.S. Congress.

However, word spread. By Earth Day, 20 million Americans joined together in our nation’s capitol, at city halls and county courthouses, and in their own neighborhoods to say, “Let’s do something to clean up pollution!” Some 20 years later, American Heritage Magazine referred to the first Earth Day as “one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of democracy.”

Earth Day didn’t stop on April 22, 1970. In the years that followed, government, business, and private citizens worked together to clean up our air, land, and water. What we learned on Earth Day is that one day isn’t enough—it takes a long-term commitment to make our world a more livable place.

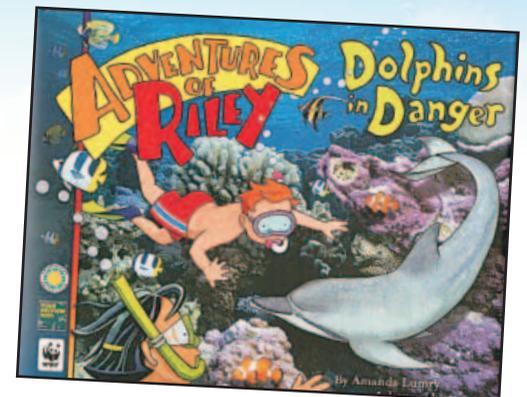
This Earth Day, recommit yourself to actions that will make our communities and our planet more pleasant places for all of us to live, work, and play. Here are some of the ways you can make it a better year:

1. Know more about what is happening in our community. Read the paper (and our newsletter, of course!). Listen to local news on the radio or TV. Use the Internet to find local events. Attend public meetings. Whenever you get the chance to vote, do it.
2. Take walks and get to know our community. While you’re out, pick up litter that you see. If your dog joins you, be sure to pick up after your canine companion. Your dog wants to be a good neighbor, too!
3. Volunteer outdoors. You might mow the lawn for an elderly neighbor. You might pick up litter at a park or playground. You could help out at a local event. Get outside and enjoy our natural world.
4. Reduce, reuse, and recycle! Eliminate waste by buying less stuff that you don’t really need. Avoid excessively packaged items. Say “no thanks” to store bags whenever possible. Carry your own refillable coffee mug. Use your stuff until it wears out.



Buy used items. Sell or donate usable stuff that you no longer need. Know what, where, and how to recycle.

5. Waste less food. Plan meals so that less moldy or spoiled food has to be thrown away. Finish the leftovers. Don’t buy ingredients that will sit unused on your kitchen shelves.
6. Electronics surround us. Keep yours in business as long as possible. Don’t purchase new items on the spur-of-the-moment. Take a good long look at your needs and evaluate your options before making your selection. Then maintain your equipment carefully. Follow instructions for cleaning and battery care. To keep your equipment in use as long as possible, update software and services, upgrade memory, or add accessories, as needed. And remember to look for energy-efficient equipment by seeking items with the “Energy Star” certification.
7. Become a greener gardener. Smaller grass lawn areas mean lower water bills, decreased maintenance, and less waste. Replace lawn by planting more trees, native or low-water-using plant materials, and ground covers. Reduce your use of chemicals by fertilizing only when your plants and soil really need the boost and by learning to use “Integrated Pest Management” to control weeds and bugs. (Reducing your purchase and use of chemicals can also reduce the amount of hazardous waste that you need to dispose.) Mulch and compost.
8. Learn more about the world in which we live. Take a close look at the non-fiction videos at the library. Read a book about science or nature, plants or animals, politics or policy. Remember *National Geographic Magazine*? It still publishes great articles about our world and the people, plants, and animals that populate it. Plus, the photography is better than ever. Pick up a copy at the library, a newsstand, or a used bookstore.



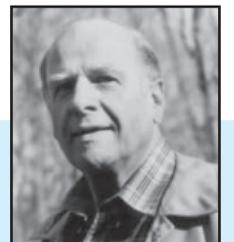
9. Touch the future—teach a child. Author Amanda Lumry is writing a series of books for children in kindergarten through third grade. This series, *The Adventures of Riley*, combines stories about Riley and his family with facts and photos about the real places featured in each story. By learning about these places, children learn about the plants, animals, and peoples who live there. So far, five *Adventures* have been published and 10 more are planned.
10. Don’t keep your Earth Day commitments a secret. Tell your friends and family about your new habits.

What is Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated pest management (IPM) starts with knowing your plants and their pests. This means regular monitoring and good record-keeping to determine if and when action is needed. When pests are present in numbers that could result in damage to plants, a variety of methods are used, beginning with those that are most benign and least expensive. With IPM, chemical pesticides are a last resort.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/ or www.epa.gov/pesticides/food/ipm.htm.

QUOTES REQUOTED



“Earth Day worked because of the spontaneous response at the grassroots level. We had neither the time nor resources to organize 20 million demonstrators and the thousands of schools and local communities that participated. That was the remarkable thing about Earth Day. It organized itself.”

Gaylord Nelson, 1916–2005
Founder of “Earth Day”

Think about it!

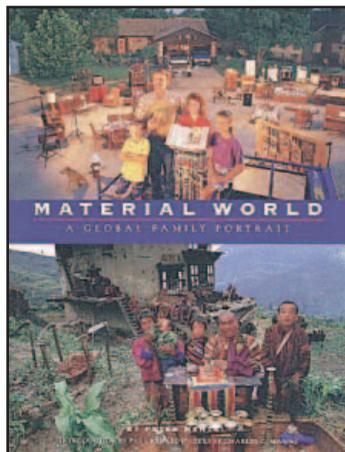
A disposable, carry-out coffee cup weighs about one ounce. If you drink two carry-out coffees every day, each week, all year long, you throw away 728 ounces of coffee cups—that’s 45.5 pounds of trash!



We're living in a material world

What if you took all of your possessions and put them into your front yard? That's the question photographer Peter Menzel asked himself. It's also the question which sent him to 30 different countries to meet and photograph one "average family." The result of this search was the book, *Material World: A Global Family Portrait* by Peter Menzel and Charles C. Mann, which was originally published in 1994.

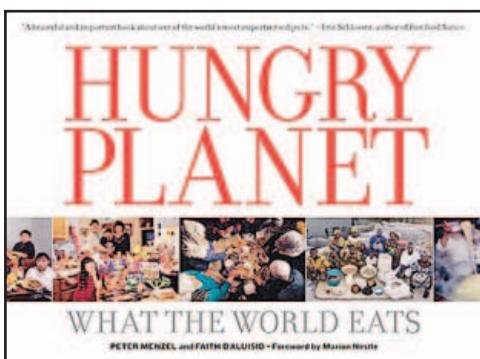
Each family portrait pictures the family outside their home with all (or almost all) of their possessions. The possessions are not stacked to the side but are displayed in such a way as to be integrally part of the portrait, as though these things are precious members of the family. The text describes the family and



their lifestyle. Sidebars offer background on the countries in which they live. The differences between countries are, of course, striking and at times surprising.

If you enjoy *Material World*, take a look at the new book, *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats* by Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio (2005). This book also profiles 30 families around the world. However, instead of their possessions, *Hungry Planet* features their diets and pictures them in the marketplaces and with their food-stuffs.

Both books make you think about what we have, what we need, what we want, what we save, what we waste, and what all of this might mean to the global family.



No Waste Like Home

clean up
clear out
save money



Rather than searching for survivors or looking for the winner of a race, reality TV viewers in Britain are watching host Penney Poyzer expose the habits of some very wasteful families in "No Waste Like Home." With a combination of shock, shame, and wit, Poyzer teaches the families to clean up, clear out, and save money in the process. Her tips focus on reducing, reusing, and recycling waste; saving energy; cleaning with non-toxic cleaners; and selecting eco-friendly products. That's our idea of a great reality show!

Read Poyzer's tips at www.bbc.co.uk/homes/tv_and_radio/nwlh_index.shtml.

Worth Noting

Preparing for Prom — On average, American teens spend \$300 to \$500 each on prom attire, accessories, and events. Renting, borrowing, or buying used or vintage outfits could significantly reduce this cost. In 2004, Nina Sysko, a high school senior from Maine, created her own low-cost prom dress—from discarded Starburst candy wrappers.

Olympian Efforts — One of the missions of the Olympic Games is the "Promotion of Sustainable Development." For the 2006 Winter Games in Torino, this resulted in eco-friendly buildings in the Olympic Village, recycling at events and facilities, and tree-planting to offset carbon dioxide emissions, as well as other efforts.

Trade-ins welcome — Readers are hooking up on the web to trade used books. Several websites are catering to readers who would like to trade used books (mostly paperbacks) rather than buying and selling them. The largest of these boasts more than 300,000 available titles. If you'd like to become a book trader, visit one of these sites: www.paperbackswap.com, www.frugalreader.com, or www.titletrader.com. You might also want to set up a swap among your friends, family members, or neighbors.

Garden Gadgets

Would you like to create better garage storage? How about some festive outdoor lighting for your garden? Want to welcome your fine, feathered friends? Get on the Internet and go to www.care2.com/channels/solutions/home/456 to find the instructions for "Five Cool Make-It-Yourself Garden Gadgets."

The web page actually offers these six project ideas with complete instructions:

- Lanterns made from glass baby food jars
- Bird feeder and sanctuary using an old birdbath
- Birdseed catcher made from an old doormat
- Tool storage chest made from an old

filing cabinet

- Dahlia tuber holder made from plastic strawberry flats
- String caddy made from a plastic detergent bottle

Do you notice what these projects have in common? That's it. They are all made from reused and found materials. Your own recycling bin or a neighborhood garage sale could become the source of the raw materials that you need for these and other projects.

All of these ideas and many more are published in the book *Great Garden Gadgets: Make-It-Yourself Gizmos and Projects*, edited by Fern Marshall Bradley and Christine Bucks (Rodale Press, 2001).

A flurry of flip-flops



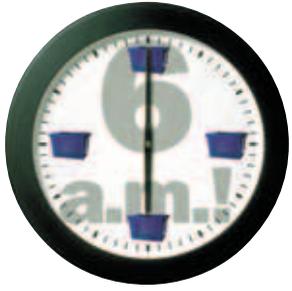
Bitters Company is taking the sandal scrap from the cutting room floor of flip-flop manufacturers and turning it into colorful floating key chains, crates, barrels, and doormats.

As you know, flip-flops are basically foot-shaped. However, these shapes must be cut from rectangular sheets of colorful plastic, much as you would cut cookies from rolled-out dough. If you've ever made cut-out cookies, you know that a lot of un-cuttible scrap is left behind. Some of the plastic chunks being left behind during flip-flop fabrication are being used by Bitters Company to create these unique crates, key chains, barrels, and mats.

The Bitters Company's use of flip-flop scrap is what we call "pre-consumer recycled content." Pre-consumer waste is industrial scrap that could not be turned into the intended product. Cut ends of plastic, fabric, or paper are good examples of this waste. We refer to it as "pre-consumer" because no one like you ever purchased and used this portion of the raw material. In other words, it was discarded before it got to the consumer.

In addition to these pre-consumer flip-flop products, Bitters Company also makes several items from post-consumer waste, including bowls made from the steel in used 55-gallon drums and from old magazines. For more information, call toll-free 1-866-664-2488, e-mail info@bittersco.com, or visit the website, www.bittersco.com.

WHAT'S UP?



Do you sometimes forget to set out your recyclables because you get mixed up on the collection week? We can help. Our new online Curbside Recycling Calendar does more than just list the curbside schedule. Now, you can sign up to get automatic e-mail reminders of any event, including your curbside recycling dates.

Simply go to our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com, look for the "Need a Reminder?" section, and click on "Check It Out." (Or, click on "Calendar" on the main page.) Then, just select the month, date, and event, and you're in! You'll just need to type in your e-mail address. You can get a reminder for as many events as you want!

Please remember that your recyclables need to be at the curb by 6 a.m. on your collection day. Recyclables are not always collected by the same drivers or on exactly the same route. The only way to ensure that your bin won't be missed is to have it at the curb by 6 a.m. Also, be sure that your bin is clearly visible. Your bin is the driver's notice to stop.



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

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Opportunity Candle

If you're looking for a unique and thoughtful Mother's Day gift, consider the "Opportunity Candle." At ARC of Wabash County, people with disabilities are creating environmentally friendly, refillable Opportunity Candles.

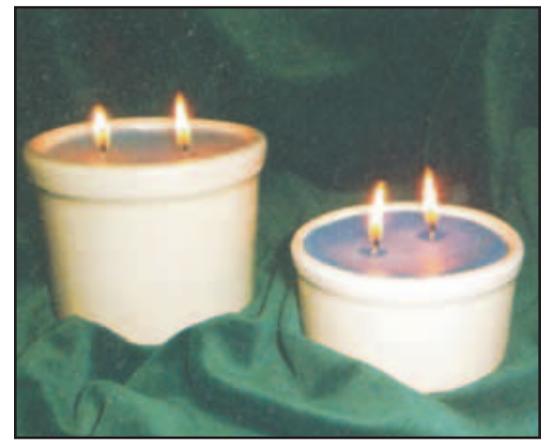
These candles, which are made from 100 percent vegetable-based wax, are placed into natural clay crocks with a two-wick system to burn evenly and cleanly. Then the candles are boxed into reused boxes.

The crocks are clay-colored, but the candles that fill them come in five

colors and scents, including "Hot Apple Pie" (brick-colored) and "Forget-Me-Not" (dark blue). The empty crocks can be cleaned and reused because they are oven, microwave, and dishwasher safe. Or, they can be returned to ARC for refilling with a new candle.

Located in Wabash, IN, ARC empowers and supports people with disabilities, making it possible for them to actively participate in the life of their community.

To learn more about Opportunity Candles or to request an order form, call ARC at 260-563-8411.



Tire and white good collection in May

Residents will be able to drop off **tires and white goods (large appliances)** for recycling on Saturday, May 20 at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Gates close at 2 p.m. and rules are strictly enforced.

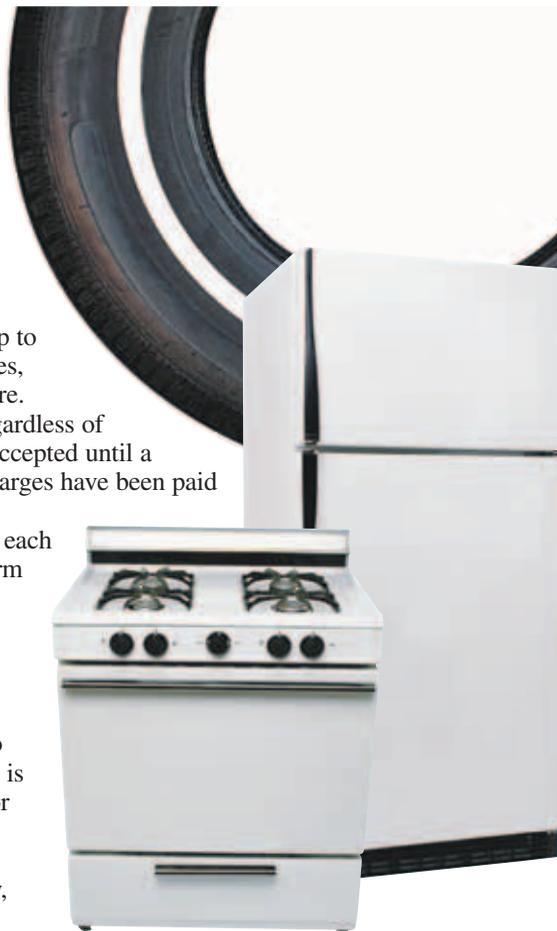
There will now be fees charged for this event. There will be attendants available to receive payments and issue receipts.

There is no charge to drop off up to 10 car tires. For more than 10 car tires, there will be a cost of 50 cents per tire. Oversized tires will cost \$2 each, regardless of number. No large tire loads will be accepted until a full count has been taken, and the charges have been paid on-site.

There will be a charge of \$2 for each microwave, water heater, camper/dorm refrigerator, window air conditioner, humidifier, and dehumidifier. There will be a \$5 charge for each washer, dryer, refrigerator, freezer, stove, or central air conditioner.

The District reserves the right to refuse any loads. This drop-off event is for residents **ONLY**. No businesses or industries may drop off items.

There will be another Tire and White Goods Collection on Saturday, October 14.



Recycling is great for your grass, too!

Recycling isn't just for bottles and cans! You can also recycle your grass clippings, but you don't have to rinse them and carry them to the curb!

When you mow, just let your clippings drop back onto the lawn instead of bagging them. You can do this by using a mulching mower or by taking the bagger attachment off your regular mower. If you remove the bagger, be sure to insert the "chute cover," the safety device that covers the hole where the bagger would go.

During the spring growing season, you may have to mow a bit more often. However, each time you mow, it will take about 1/3 less time.

Grass clippings are mostly made up of

water and nitrogen, so they are good for your lawn. In addition, clippings also serve as "mulch" for your grass, reducing evaporation and lowering the soil temperature.

Grasscycling reduces our need for landfill space. During the growing season, as much as 20 percent of our household waste might be yard trimmings. Don't put your yard trimmings to waste this year! Grasscycle. You'll save bags and time—and have a healthier lawn to show for it.

If you'd like to learn more about grasscycling, mulching, or composting, call our office at 219-326-0014 or 1-800-483-7700, or visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com/education/how_to.html.

Everything you need to know about the Yard Waste Drop-off

Location — North end of Zigler Road (runs along the east side of the LaPorte County Fairgrounds), just past the grandstands on the west side

Site Hours — Daylight hours, 7 days a week

Accepted Materials — Leaves (whole or shredded), chipped wood, clean lumber (no nails), grass clippings, yard trimmings and brush, branches up to 6 feet long and 12 inches in diameter, pine needles and pine cones, corn stalks, bark, and sod with no more than 4" of dirt.

Preparation of Materials — Special kraft paper leaf bags, which may be purchased at local grocery and hardware stores, may be used. If material is transported to the site in plastic bags, **THE PLASTIC BAGS MUST BE EMPTIED, AND THE PLASTIC BAGS MUST BE TAKEN HOME WITH YOU.** Plastic bags do NOT decompose.

Unloading — Residents bringing items to the site must provide their own labor for unloading.

Prohibited Materials — Construction debris, rubble, wooden skids, wire, nails, rope or twine, glass, metal objects, plastics (any type, including plastic trash bags and Styrofoam), treated or painted wood, plywood, particle board or other non-organic materials may NOT be disposed of at the site nor mixed with acceptable materials.

Final Destination of Materials — All yard waste is transported to the Indiana Department of Corrections Facility at Westville to be turned into compost.