

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Solid Waste District of  
LaPorte County

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

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Fall 2006



## Recycling stickers available

You all know how our recycling program works. We ask you to use the bin we provide. If you have additional recycling, we ask that you mark the additional container with the word RECYCLING in large letters to make it easy for the drivers to see.

Because these recycling rules seem to be problematic for some folks, we now have in our office FREE bright, large, clearly visible stickers for your extra containers.

These 8 1/2-by-11 inch "peel and stick" labels have a white background with the word RECYCLING printed in red letters. All you need to do is stop by and pick some up for your use. Because this is being done on a trial basis, the present stickers are not totally waterproof (to keep cost to a minimum), so they will not last forever. If we find these are the help we hope them to be, we will reprint them in vinyl. Please remember to have the stickers face the street when you put your recycling at curbside. Also, these stickers do NOT mean that you don't have to use



your recycling bin from us. Please use your red or blue recycling bin as your primary container!

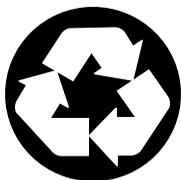
So, please do your part and stop by our office any weekday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to pick up your stickers.

## Are you ready to recycle?

Did you know that, nationwide, we recycle about 24 percent of our trash and compost another 7 percent? That means we are keeping almost 31 percent of our trash out of landfills and other disposal facilities. That's great news!

Of course, recycling depends on each one of us. For recycling to continue and to grow, we each need to do our part. We need to buy products in recyclable containers and packaging. We call this "pre-cycling" because it is planning ahead to recycle. Then, we need to collect our empty and clean recyclables. We refer to this as "recovery." And finally, we need to buy new products made from recyclables, called "buying recycled."

You can buy recycled when you shop. To find recycled-content products, check the labels. Many products made from recyclables will have the recycled-content symbol (shown here) or phrases such as 100% Recycled Paperboard, Post-Consumer Recycled Content, Recycled Content, or Remanufactured. If you look, you'll be able to find recycled-content paper, pencils, fleece vests and jackets, exercise mats, glass tiles, greeting cards, and more. Some products are almost always



made from recycled materials, including aluminum and steel cans and cardboard boxes.

So get ready—and recycle!

### Recycle all of these materials in your curbside bin!

- Glass Food Jars
- Juice, Pop, Soda, and Water Bottles
- Beer and Wine Bottles
- "Tin" (Steel) Food Cans
- Aluminum Beverage Cans
- Newspapers with inserts/flyers
- Glossy Catalogs
- Phone Books
- Magazines
- Cardboard Boxes (torn into 2-foot strips)
- Stationery and Copy Paper
- Cereal and Snack Boxes
- All Plastics marked #1-#7\*

\*Please note: We do NOT accept plastic bottles that held hazardous chemicals, such as motor oil or solvents. We also do NOT accept plastic children's toys, plastic furniture, etc.

## Mercury's Flight Stopped in LaPorte County



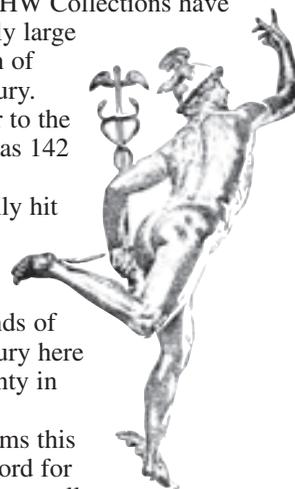
In mythology, we have come to think of Mercury as the god with wings on his heels. Well, on Saturday, August 5, our Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator, Tom Buford, clipped 'ole Merc's wings!

We're not suggesting the Roman god stopped at the collection; we're saying the chemical named after him did.

Buford's HHW Collections have been consistently large in the collection of elemental mercury. His record prior to the August event was 142 pounds.

Buford really hit the jackpot when he and his team collected 170 pounds of elemental mercury here in LaPorte County in August.

Buford deems this to be both a record for his program in one collec-



tion and one of the largest EVER in the State.

"Elemental mercury is a toxic substance that can attack the central nervous system. It's extremely hazardous to young children whose systems are not fully formed," said Buford with concern.

According to Buford, "Just 3 grams of mercury (contained in approximately six mercury thermometers) can contaminate a 60-acre lake."

Buford went on, "170 pounds of elemental mercury could contaminate Lake Michigan. That's why I am pleased that the gentleman who brought the properly contained mercury to us for disposal was really paying attention. I sincerely thank him, as should all LaPorte County residents, for RETHINKING enough to be concerned. That man can be assured that his mercury was contained for handling and its end source was secured according to all state, federal, and local laws and regulations."

Let's all work on continuing to keep mercury "grounded" in LaPorte County.

## My slip is showing

In the last issue of "One Man's Trash..." I committed an error.

In the article on our Compost Facility, the prices for compost and mulch were INCORRECT. A change had occurred during the time our paper was being printed, and there was no way to change the error.

I apologize for the inconvenience my error may have caused for any LaPorte County resident. The new and correct pricing appears on our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com.

Susan Bortell  
Recycling Coordinator

# 10 Tips for a happier holiday season

Beginning with fall football bashes and continuing until Valentine's Day, fall and winter are a time for festivals, parties, family gatherings, and holiday celebrations. This means more food, more gifts, and more stuff. Here are some tips for a greener, cleaner, and perhaps happier holiday season.

1. Plan your parties with care. Get an accurate head count so that you can prepare enough food, but not too much. If you need help with your calculations, use the party food and beverage calculators at [www.greatpartyrecipes.com/partyfoodplanning.html](http://www.greatpartyrecipes.com/partyfoodplanning.html). At the end of the party, send leftover food home with guests in clean, reused containers.
2. Steer clear of disposables whenever possible. There's no need to stock up on paper tablecloths, paper plates, plastic cups, and plastic flatware. Use your own washable tablecloths, napkins, dishes, glassware, and silverware. Don't have enough on hand? Purchase low-cost extras at secondhand stores, borrow from friends or relatives, or rent what you need.
3. Resist the temptation to buy unneeded extras. Your guests will probably enjoy a New Year's Eve party just as much without the plastic party hats. In fact, they may enjoy it more! If you decide to buy decorations for one of your parties, ask yourself: Will I be able to use these decorations again later? Do I have room to store them? If you answer yes, then shop and enjoy. If you answer no, step back and think about whether you really want them after all. You can create your own decorations with things you already have. Tape together old calendar pages for your New Year's Eve table. Grab footballs and create a pigskin centerpiece for your Super Bowl party.
4. Make it easy for guests to recycle at your parties. Put a recycling bin or container right next to each trash can.
5. Reduce, reuse, and recycle while you travel. On car trips, pack your own sandwiches and healthy snacks, and bring drinks in reusable or recyclable containers. Many Interstate rest areas have recycling drop-off bins. If you don't see them, simply keep your containers in a bag or box and recycle them when you arrive at your destination or back at home. On plane trips, look for recycling bins for newspaper and beverage containers in airports. Remember to pack your carry-on bags so that you aren't standing at security throwing things away. Many items that used to be OK in carry-ons are now banned and must be placed into checked luggage. If you haven't flown in a while, check the current guidelines at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov).
6. Take a long, hard look at your gift list. In some cases, you may be exchanging gifts with people out of a sense of obligation. If you are close to these people, discuss a non-gift alternative, such as doing something fun together in the spring, meeting once a month to catch up, or donating your time together to help someone in need. If people still want something to unwrap, talk about drawing names for a gift exchange. Not close enough to have this discussion?
7. Give gifts that are thoughtful. A thoughtful gift doesn't have to be expensive and it doesn't have to be brand-new, but it does need to show that you care about the recipient and the things that make him or her happy. For instance, a movie fan with a collection of old westerns may love to have a used DVD of a hard-to-find classic. For a music buff, a gift certificate from an online music store may be the ideal gift. For the person who has everything, the best gift may be a donation to an organization he or she cares about.
8. Wrap gifts with old maps, colorful magazine pages, fabric scraps, or reused paper and gift bags. Or, better yet, make the wrapping part of the gift. For a gardener, put a trowel and seeds into an empty flower pot—just add a reused ribbon and the gift is "wrapped." Reuse the fronts of last year's holiday or birthday cards as gift tags.
9. Declare a "Buy Nothing Day" (or two)! Devote this day to family and friends. Bake cookies, make your favorite appetizers, or pop some popcorn. Watch the bowl games. Learn new board games. Have a movie marathon. The official "Buy Nothing Day" is the Friday after Thanksgiving, which is November 24 this year. However, you can make any day into a "Buy Nothing Day."
10. Enjoy your time with family and friends! Get-togethers should make everyone feel more connected, rather than more rushed.



## worth noting

Recently, Random House became the first major U.S. publishing company to commit to using a substantial amount of recycled paper in its books. The publisher has set two goals: 10 percent recycled-content paper for its "glossy" titles, such as cookbooks and art books, by 2008, and 30 percent recycled content in all other books by 2010. Because Random House holds about 13 percent of the adult book market, these measures equate to preserving more than 550,000 trees each year.

According to the Green Press Initiative, which campaigns for more recycled paper in books and other printed materials, Random House is the first major publisher to join around 100 smaller companies that have already made the move to recycled-content paper.

## Trade the stuff you're done with for stuff you want!

That's the motto of Zunafish, a new website devoted to helping people trade DVDs, CDs, paperback books, video games, VHS tapes, and audiobooks. If your media collection has grown too large or if you never did like a few of the CDs or DVDs you've ended up with, this is a great way to trade them for classics, favorites, or simply items that are new-to-you.

At this site, you post your list of items that you would like to trade. Someone makes an offer for one of your items and you go to his or her list to find something you want. If you find something and agree to the trade, you each pay Zunafish \$1 and they provide you with the mailing labels. You are each responsible for postage to ship your traded items.

For details, visit [www.Zunafish.com](http://www.Zunafish.com).

## Seasonal Suggestions

### Gift Rapt

[www.grist.org/news/maindish/2005/11/22/giftguide/index.html](http://www.grist.org/news/maindish/2005/11/22/giftguide/index.html)

### Give More with Less

<http://eartheasy.com/give-menu.htm>

### The Great Green Gift-Giving Guide

[www.nrdc.org/cities/living/ggift.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/cities/living/ggift.asp)

### Green Up Your Get-Togethers

[www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/504-green-up-your-gettogethers.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/504-green-up-your-gettogethers.html)

### Holiday Lights: LED and Fiber Optics

[www.energyideas.org/documents/factsheets/holidaylighting.pdf](http://www.energyideas.org/documents/factsheets/holidaylighting.pdf)

### Low-Impact Travel Tips

[www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/304-lowimpact-travel-tips.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/304-lowimpact-travel-tips.html)

### Reducing Holiday Waste

[www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/specials/funfacts/winter.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/specials/funfacts/winter.htm)

### Tips for a Cleaner, "Greener" Holiday

[www.informinc.org/greener\\_holiday.php](http://www.informinc.org/greener_holiday.php)

### Tips for Reducing Holiday Waste

[www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=1110](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=1110)

### What Matters to You this Holiday Season?

[www.newdream.org/holiday/](http://www.newdream.org/holiday/)

## QUOTES REQUOTED

Source Reduction is to garbage what preventive medicine is to health.

William L. Rathje, PhD

Born 1945

Director of the Garbage Project

Author of *Rubbish!: The Archaeology of Garbage*



Credit: Alan Levenson

# The same dress, every day, FOR A YEAR!

Alex Martin in a “one-woman show against fashion” designed a little brown dress—and then proceeded to wear it every day from July 7, 2005 to July 7, 2006. During the course of that year, she created an online journal and posted pictures.

Martin, who is a dancer and artist, set out to wear her little brown dress for a year to make a comment about consumerism and its affects on women in particular. She writes at her website, “I challenged myself to reject the economic system that pushes over-consumption, and the bill of goods that has been sold, especially to women, about what makes a person good, attractive and interesting. Clothes are a big part of this image, and the expectation in time, effort, and financial investment is immense.”

Of course, she washed the dress. She also layered it with other clothing that she already owned, most of which had been purchased used. She did spend about \$20 extra on clothes—for sweaters from Goodwill during a cold spell.

To read and see more about Martin’s adventures in the little brown dress, visit <http://littlebrowndress.com>.



Photos courtesy of Alex Martin

## Be well

When children headed back to school this fall, they may have noticed some changes, including vending machines with healthier selections and soft drink machines now holding only water, milk, and juice. These changes are designed to provide students with healthier options and to reduce their school-day intake of high-calorie, low-nutrition snacks and drinks. At the same time, students may have more recreational time and may be invited to participate in fitness activities, such as walking clubs.

The reason for these changes is a new federal law requiring all public and private schools that offer a federally funded school meal program to have a wellness policy in place that addresses both nutrition and physical activity. These plans outline food guidelines in the lunchroom and in classrooms, make suggestions for activities that get kids moving during class time and in between, and encourage

families and staff to exercise more and eat better.

This is good news for students’ health, but it may also be good news for our waste stream. For instance, an apple with its compostable organic core leaves behind a lot less waste than the sticky paper and plastic wrappers from cupcakes. Healthier packed lunches from home often use more washable containers and contain fewer pre-packaged foods. Plus, adding fitness time is adding “no waste” time to the school day. In some schools, gardening and composting will help teach students about science, health, fitness, and nutrition.

For more information, visit [www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org](http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org) or [www.ecoliteracy.org](http://www.ecoliteracy.org).



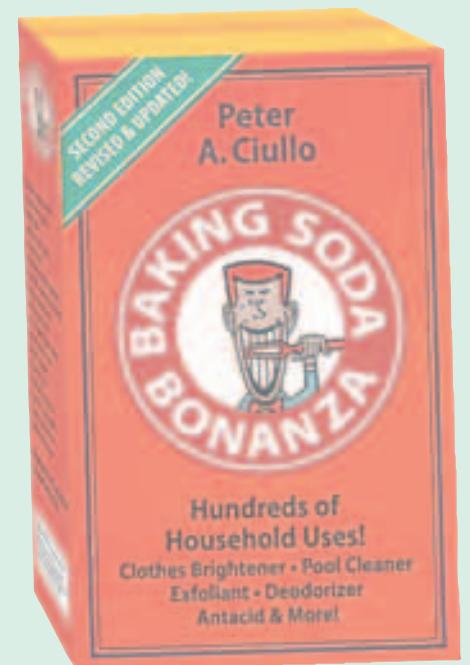
## Pack healthy, low-litter lunches

Do you “brown-bag it”? If so, a lunch bag full of heavily packaged and heavily processed food may not be the best choice for your body or our environment. Instead, pack a healthy lunch in reusable containers. Here are some tips:

- Choose a small canvas bag, lunch box, or insulated lunch tote.
- If you need to keep food cold, freeze water in a reused bottle to make an “ice pack.” (Be sure the bottle has been thoroughly cleaned and fill it about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with water. Put the lid loosely onto the bottle and freeze it upright. Screw the lid on tight before putting your “ice pack” into your lunch bag.)
- Use your own washable, reusable containers, such as plastic containers that you previously purchased. Or, save and wash the tubs that hold sour cream, cream cheese, or butter.
- If you plan to heat something in a microwave, be sure to put it into a microwave-safe plastic or glass dish. The microwave is no place for your reused plastic containers—save them for the cold food!
- Pack healthy foods that don’t need a container, such as oranges, apples, plums, and bananas.
- Pack foods you like in amounts that you will eat.
- Put your drink in a refillable bottle or opt for a recyclable drink container. (Be sure to recycle it!)
- Don’t forget a cloth napkin and reusable flatware.



## Baking Soda Bonanza



Peter A. Ciullo’s revised and updated second edition of *Baking Soda Bonanza* should have been called “1,001 Uses for Baking Soda” because that’s what the book contains. In addition to an interesting and highly readable history of baking soda (yes, it is interesting!), you’ll find tips for using baking soda to cook, clean, soothe, deodorize, and much more! The book even includes 56 pages of recipes. Look for a copy of this book at the library or your favorite used bookstore.

# Last chance for 2006

## Final mobile collection for household hazardous waste set for October 21st

Our final mobile household hazardous waste collection will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 21 at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds. Household hazardous waste will be accepted only during these hours.

You and your family will be able to drop off a variety of household products, such as cleaners, automotive fluids, oil-based paints and stains, pesticides, waste fuels, and mercury-containing items. Because of the chemicals they contain, these

products cannot be disposed with household trash.

Remember—latex paint is NOT hazardous, so it cannot be dropped off at these mobile collections. Remove the lid from the can, dry out the paint with *clay* cat litter, and place it with your household trash for disposal.

For details, call Tom Buford at 1-800-946-4449 or 219-326-1425.



## Re-leaf

The trees are changing colors. The leaves are about to fall. You know what that means—the chores are about to begin! Here are some reuse ideas:

- Using a mulching mower, shred leaves and let them stay on the grass. The shredded leaves will provide a protective winter cover and decompose by spring. If you have a lot of leaves, you'll need to mow often during the weeks with the heaviest leaf-fall.
- Use your mower to pick up leaves. Simply attach the bagger and collect the leaves. Your mower will shred the leaves as it picks them up, creating a great mulch. Put the leaf mulch on your garden or flower beds, around trees, or on paths.
- Pick up shredded leaves with the mower or rake up whole leaves and add them to your compost pile.
- Collect your leaves and drop them off at the District's Yard Waste Drop-Off (see box at right).



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

The Yard Waste Drop-off is for **residents only**. It is not open for business or industry.

**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 Material** — 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 Material** — 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 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 or 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. For information about purchasing this compost, visit [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com).

## Readymade

Do-it-yourselfers and crafters will love *ReadyMade*, a magazine devoted to transforming trash into treasures. Each issue features project ideas that take items you have—or can easily and cheaply get—to make everything from bed platforms to bulletin boards.

If you're looking for creative reuse ideas, look for *ReadyMade* at the library or share a subscription with a friend.

If you are interested in a book full of ideas, check out *ReadyMade: How to Make (Almost) Everything: A Do-It-Yourself Primer* by Shoshana Berger and Grace Hawthorne (Clarkson Potter, 2005).



## Don't burn your fall leaves!

Leaf burning releases harmful pollutants into the air. In fact, smoke from just five pounds of burning leaves creates a full pound of pollution. Leaf burning can create health hazards for children, the elderly, and people with breathing difficulties. Burning can also put nearby properties at risk. Be a good neighbor—don't burn your leaves!

### 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.

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CONTENT, USING SOY INKS

# Tire and White Goods Recycling Day

On Saturday, October 14 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., residents will be able to drop off tires and white goods (large appliances) for recycling at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds. This is our second and last collection for 2006, so if you have white goods or tires to recycle, do it now!

To help offset the costs of recycling these items, some fees do apply. For details about the fees, please visit our website, [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com), or call our office at 1-800-483-7700 or 219-326-0014.

No large tire loads will be accepted until a count has been completed and the charge is applied.

We'll see you at the Fairgrounds!

