

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Solid Waste District of  
LaPorte County

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

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Fall 2007



## To catch a thief...

How sad it is that this notice must be printed. People are stealing from recycling bins. There is no easy way to say it. The worst part of this theft is that it can net the guilty party or parties time in jail and/or a \$1,500 fine. Please don't think that bins are not being watched. Good people who recycle faithfully have called us. Recycling drivers have called us.

Who is to blame? Dishonest people, of course.

Our good recyclers put their bins full of washed recycling at the curbside by 6 a.m. so the drivers can empty them. Caring

people do this to help the program, which helps the environment, which helps the earth.



How disheartening it is to receive a phone call from these same caring people telling us that they have watched others drive up to their home and empty their recycling bins into a truck, car, or van.

Our District Board passed two enforceable Resolutions (095-1 and 095-2), both of which give

the police, upon our request, the right to arrest anyone caught stealing from recycling bins. The Resolutions also cover

illegal dumping in the same bins. After arrest, these people can be jailed and/or fined. Is it worth a \$1,500 fine to steal from your neighbors? We would hope not.

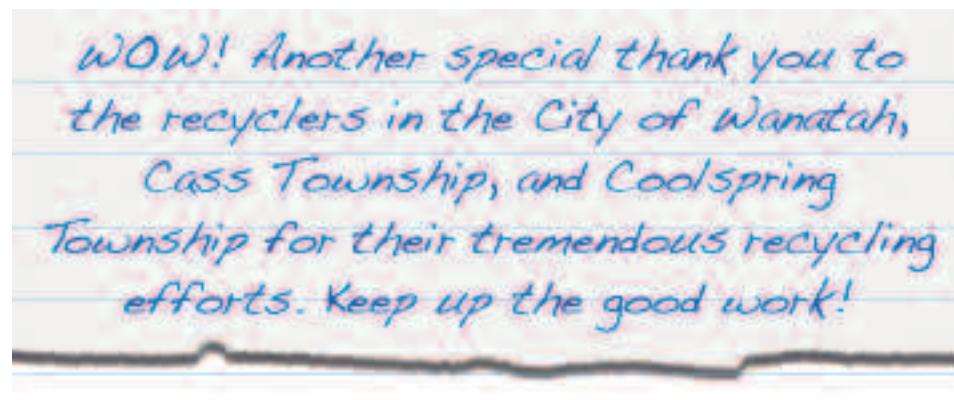
We sincerely wish to thank, in print, all the fine members of law enforcement from every department in LaPorte County for assisting us when we call. Without their help, this crime—and a crime it is—could continue.

Do your part, please. If you witness anyone other than the recycling driver removing anything from any curbside bin OR 30-yard drop-off container, please write down a description of the vehicle and a license number, if possible, and call

us. We will protect your name while we handle the situation with the fine officers' help.

On August 9, 2007, our Recycling Coordinator personally witnessed a man putting a large non-recyclable item in the 30-yard container behind our office. When she stopped her car and told him the item was not recyclable, his response was, "Oh, I know that, I'm taking it out." Ten minutes later, our Executive Director checked the bin and the item was stuffed inside. Lying and stealing seem to be running parallel here.

Remember, in the big picture, you are only stealing from yourself.



## Recycling routes running later

Just another recycling reminder for all. We have always requested that recycling bins be curbside by 6 a.m. Most folks do exactly that, and it is appreciated. Please don't change your habit!

A new addition to this rule has come to light. Because of the volume of recycling, some routes are running as late as 8 o'clock in the evening. If your recycling bin has not been emptied, please do not take it back into your home at 5 o'clock. It would be terrible if the driver arrived after you had done so and there was nothing to pick up.

Drivers cannot return to routes where bins have been taken in at 5 p.m. or not put out on time. We appreciate your help with this matter.

Also, the drivers are reporting that when they run many roads they witness people putting recycling bins out AFTER the truck has gone through. These same people then call the office and tell us they

have been missed. Please, HAVE YOUR BIN OUT AT 6 A.M. Just because your recycling used to be picked up at 2 p.m. does not mean that is when your bin goes out. Routes are often run by different drivers who take them in a different order, arriving at your house at different times of day. The drivers keep time sheets listing what time they run each area and road. We keep track of these hours.

If your bin was out on time and left out until late evening and you have truly been missed, please call our office the next morning. We can't fix a problem promptly if we don't know about it. Be sure to visit our

website, [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com), to print a recycling calendar if you don't already have one. The calendar for 2008 will be on the site by the end of December.

Those who call to report a missed pickup a week after the fact must wait until their next collection.



## Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk



The smell of fall is in the air. Sadly, I'm not referring to the crisp air and apple pie. The smell becoming too familiar is neighbors burning leaves. What bothers me is there's no reason for this harmful practice. Harmful? Yes! Harmful because it can start a fire; harmful because it can cause a person with asthma to become ill; and harmful to our very environment. Burning leaves emit noxious fumes. Because we offer a FREE yard waste drop-off on Zigler Road and charge only a small amount for truckload quantities at the Westville Correctional Facility, it's difficult for me to accept these bad smells of fall.

And, of course, if you add the smell of burning tires and garbage (against the law, of course), this mix can make many ill. Why not think about this? We hold two Tire Collections every year, and you are always welcome. Burning is not the answer for any of us.

You may think all I do as Director is sit and type memos (my staff is laughing as I type this). Not true at all. I spend time out of the office tending to a myriad of things. One is to help monitor our 30-yard recycling bins. During one of these inspections, I noticed someone had thrown fluorescent bulbs into the container. Luckily, the bin had just been emptied, so I was able to retrieve them and give them to our HHW Coordinator, Tom Buford, for proper disposal at one of his Household Hazardous Waste Collections. These bulbs do NOT belong in a recycling bin, as they contain mercury and lead. We will accept these tubes/bulbs at the office five days a week. Tom continues to hold monthly HHW Collections from March through early November here in LaPorte County. It makes me wonder just how much easier we can make it. I can't think of anything. If you have suggestions, drop me a line and share them with me.

Thanksgiving and Christmas are fast approaching. So, until next time, have a wonderful holiday season. Take care of not only you and yours, but our environment, as well.

The deeds we do today earn us our tomorrows.

Clay

# 10 Tips for **GREENER** gift-giving

As the holiday season approaches, you may feel that you've entered the realm of science-fiction. News reports will talk about "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday," and you may begin to wonder if aliens are due on the planet. Never fear, these news reports are talking about shopping, not space invasions!

Black Friday, so dubbed because it helps put retailers "in the black" for the year, is the day after Thanksgiving. Often referred to as the busiest shopping day of the year, the Friday after Thanksgiving finds shoppers at stores before sunrise on a spending spree. Black Friday is no longer a one-day affair, with many of the special deals continuing on Saturday and Sunday to create "Black Friday Weekend." According to the National Retail Federation, 140 million shoppers hit the stores for Black Friday weekend 2006, doling out an average of \$360.15 each.

Cyber Monday comes the day after Black Friday weekend as kids head back to school and adults head back to work. As adults log onto the Internet Monday morning, the carts at online retailers begin to fill up. Last year, 60.7 million Americans planned to shop online on Cyber Monday, a day which features sales and specials, as well as offers for free or reduced shipping. Cyber Monday isn't the biggest Internet shopping day of the holiday season, but it garners the most attention.

The reason for all the attention? Last year, Americans spent \$457.4 billion (yes, billion!) on the winter holidays. This total included gifts, cards and stationery, wrapping paper and ribbon, food and beverages, party supplies, indoor and outdoor decorations, and more. Of this total, about \$1,200 per household was spent on holiday gifts.

In the weeks leading up to this frenzied shopping season, take some time to reflect on the holiday season you'd really like to have. Remember last year when you spent January and February paying off credit cards? How about the lines at Customer Service returning what you

didn't want? Or what about the two weeks when all of the opened presents sat in the dining room because you had nowhere to put them? Remember trying to figure out what to do with your old stuff that was still usable but now replaced with something almost exactly the same, just newer?

The holiday season leaves behind a lot of waste—usable items that have been replaced, packaging materials, wrapping paper and cards, and unwanted items. Your holidays can be thoughtful without being wasteful. Before you start shopping for gifts, consider our tips for a greener and, we hope, happier holiday season:

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



- lieu of gifts, donate to a charity that you select as a group, have a "white elephant" gift exchange, or draw names and buy for just one person.
2. Make a list of everyone to whom you plan to give a gift—and check it twice.
3. Decide how much you plan to spend, both total and per person. Remember the little extras that can add up, such as stocking stuffers. As you begin to shop, keep track of your receipts. Periodically evaluate how much you're spending compared to the budget that you made.
4. Consider gifts of yourself and your time. These gifts improve your relationships, cost nothing, and create no waste. You might offer to drive an older relative on errands once a month. Or, maybe you could wash your Mom or Dad's car monthly. The possibilities are endless—lawn mowing, babysitting, watching movies together. Offer yourself, your presence, and your help.
5. Shop for unique reused gifts. Vintage clothing, funky antiques, or used books or CDs are a great place



## Did you know?

During 2006, the typical gift giver spent \$2,643 on gifts and \$78 on cards, wrapping paper, and accessories. These included gifts for holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries, as well as thank-you gifts to hosts, house-warming presents, friendship tokens, travel souvenirs given to others, and more. Gift shopping constitutes about 10 percent of all consumer retail purchases.

Source: "The Gifting Report 2007," Unity Marketing



to start. Be sure you know the person's size or taste, since secondhand stores and antique shops may not accept returns.

6. Pick up consumables. Food, fruit, and candy are popular gifts and much-appreciated by the recipient. Coffees and teas also make great gifts.
7. Make gifts. Homemade gifts are a perfect way to honor what someone has taught you. For instance, give a handmade scarf to the aunt who taught you to knit. Glue fishing lures, bobbers, or weights to an old, battered picture frame and include a photo of you and your grandpa fishing together. Refresh a family memory by making your brother or sister the cookies or candy that Mom or Grandma used to make at the holidays.
8. Cheer on the home team by giving tickets to sporting events. Support the arts with museum passes or theater tickets. Give movie gift certificates to the movie buff in your life.
9. As you shop, carry your own reusable bags. Pull out your canvas bags and throw them into your car. Rather than dealing with lots of plastic shopping bags when you get home, you can begin sorting and wrapping.
10. Remember to wrap without waste. Reuse last year's paper (and save this year's for next year). Choose reusable gift bags. Decorate boxes that you use each year for the same person. Use fabric scraps, magazine pages, colorful brochures, or old maps to create unique wrapping "paper."

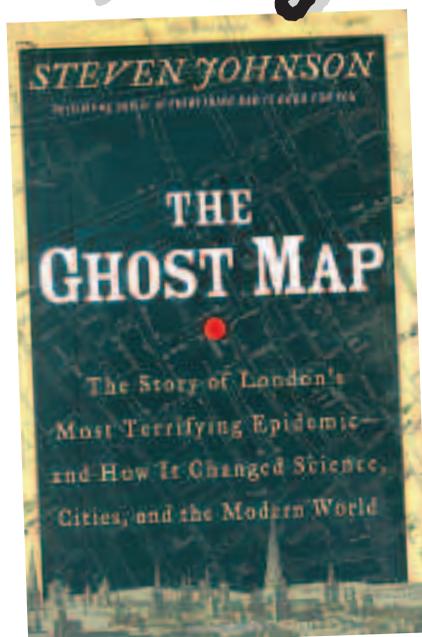


## QUOTES REQUOTED

We're reminded a hundred times a day to buy things, but we're not reminded to take care of them, repair them, reuse them or give them away.

Michael F. Jacobson  
Center for the Study of  
Commercialism

## The Ghost Map



Trash collection and wastewater treatment have come a long way—and our cities, suburbs, and countrysides are healthier for it. If you're wondering just how far we've come, pick up a copy of Steven Johnson's book, *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World*. This book chronicles a cholera outbreak in London in 1854 that killed 10 percent of a substantial portion of the city in less than 10 days.

To learn more about the book, watch an interview with Steven Johnson on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=3P8shnNEXb4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3P8shnNEXb4).

Whatever you're reading, remember to look for used books at garage sales, used bookstores, and online. Or, visit your library and borrow the book!

## Learn more! Do more!

**Holiday Survival Kit, a part of the New American Dream's Simplify the Holidays program:**

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

**42 Ways to Trim Your Holiday Wasteline:**

[www.use-less-stuff.com/ULSDAY/42ways.html](http://www.use-less-stuff.com/ULSDAY/42ways.html)

**Reducing Holiday Waste, tips from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:**

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

**Waste Reduction for Holiday Waste from the Greening Schools project:**

[www.greeningschools.org/resources/view\\_cat\\_teacher.cfm?id=122](http://www.greeningschools.org/resources/view_cat_teacher.cfm?id=122)

# RecycleMania hits college campuses

After the first of the year, the competition will leave the playing fields and enter residence halls and dining facilities as colleges and universities once again take part in RecycleMania.

This competition to see which school can recycle the most is a fun way to promote recycling and waste prevention on campus. "Colleges are naturally competitive with their rivals," said Rob Gogan, Recycling and Waste Manager at Harvard University. "RecycleMania hitches the recycling and conservation bandwagon to that powerful energy."

An annual event supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WasteWise program and the National Recycling Coalition's College and University Recycling Council, RecycleMania invites colleges and universities to compete to see which can collect the largest amount of recyclables per capita, the largest amount of total recyclables, or the least amount of trash per capita, or have the highest recycling rate for various materials. Participating schools report their results weekly, and winners are recognized in several categories.

During 2007, 201 colleges and universities in 42



states and the District of Columbia took part in RecycleMania. More than 2.2 million students and 500,000 faculty and staff members participated. By the end of the 10-week competition, the schools had collected 41,370,000 pounds of recyclables. Cal State San Marcos was Grand Champion, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University took home the Per Capita Classic, and the University of Texas at Austin won the Waste Minimization prize. Rutgers University was crowned Gorilla for collecting the largest total for recycling—a whopping 2,742,869 pounds. Four schools were recognized for collecting the most per person in a single materials category, including paper, cardboard, bottles and cans, and food service organics.

RecycleMania began in 2001 as a friendly competition between Ohio University and Miami University of Ohio. The goal of RecycleMania then and now was to raise awareness about campus recycling programs and improve participation—especially in residence and dining halls.

Registration begins in October for the 2008 competition. For more information about RecycleMania, visit [www.recyclemaniacs.org](http://www.recyclemaniacs.org), or visit RecycleMania's MySpace page, [www.myspace.com/recyclemania](http://www.myspace.com/recyclemania).

Registration begins in October for the 2008 competition. For more information about RecycleMania, visit [www.recyclemaniacs.org](http://www.recyclemaniacs.org), or visit RecycleMania's MySpace page, [www.myspace.com/recyclemania](http://www.myspace.com/recyclemania).

*Across the country, students promote campus-wide recycling with banners, posters, collages, and art walls. This banner was created by Rice University's Student Recycling Council.*



*Before a Miami University football game, students decorate a truck to promote recycling.*



*To promote RecycleMania on campus, students at Bowdoin College in Maine dressed the part of recyclable containers.*



In 2006, Americans recycled 51.9 billion aluminum beverage cans, a rate of 51.6 percent of all the beverage cans used. Although this rate has held steady for the past three years, it is far lower than it was in 1992, when the recycling rate for cans peaked at 67.9 percent. However, what it really means is that we are still trashing nearly half of all the aluminum cans used in this country.

There's really no excuse for us to be throwing away half of our cans. Aluminum beverage cans are widely accepted in recycling programs. Aluminum is a valuable recyclable—worth about four times as much as the next most valuable recyclable. Aluminum is also endlessly recyclable—your entire aluminum can will be made into a new can. What's more, it will be back on store shelves as a new can in as little as 60 days.

Aluminum recycling saves a great deal of energy. According to the Aluminum Association, throwing away a single aluminum can is like pouring out six ounces of gasoline. For every 21 cans you throw away, you are wast-

ing the equivalent of a gallon of gas. That means we could have saved the equivalent of about 2.3 billion gallons of gasoline if we had recycled the 48.9 billion cans that were thrown away last year. That's a lot of energy that went to waste!

Recycling aluminum creates far less pollution, too. Making aluminum from used cans generates about 95 percent fewer emissions than using virgin materials.

Aluminum beverage cans are easy to recycle. After you've finished enjoying your beverage, simply rinse the can with a small amount of water, turn it upside down to drip-dry, and put it into the closest recycling container. If you can't rinse the cans, don't worry. Just turn the can over and shake out the last few drops of liquid. If you're on a picnic or tailgating at a game and there is no recycling container nearby, put the cans into a bag or box in your car or van and recycle them at home.

On average, each American uses 350 cans per year. Try to capture all 350 of those for recycling!

## Think before you buy

The Center for a New American Dream wants you to be a conscious consumer by thinking before you buy and evaluating your intended purchase. To help you do this, the Center has created a "wallet buddy" which holds a credit, debit, or gift card. The buddy is designed to make you stop and think as you pull out your card to buy something new.

The buddy includes several questions, such as:

- Is this something I need?
- Do I already own something that could serve the same purpose?
- Can I borrow one, find one used, or make one instead of buying new?
- Was it made with environmentally preferable materials?
- Will it serve more than one purpose?
- Can I recycle or compost it when I'm done with it?
- If I'm still not sure, can I wait a month before deciding to buy it?

These questions can help you save money and make wise buying decisions, as well as reduce the amount of waste that you must reuse, recycle, or dispose.

Download the instructions and pattern to create your own wallet buddy at [www.newdream.org/walletbuddy.pdf](http://www.newdream.org/walletbuddy.pdf). Remember to print the pattern for your buddy on the back side of used paper!

For more information about the Center for a New American Dream, visit [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org).

# WHAT'S UP?

## Tire and White Goods Collection Day



That's right—our Tire and White Goods Collection takes place on Saturday, October 13 at the Fairgrounds. This is our final collection for 2007. There is a small charge for this collection. If you have questions, please call our office at 326-0014 and speak with Susan. This is a safe and easy way to dispose of those unwanted appliances and old tires. We look forward to seeing you at this very popular event.

Our next collection will be in the spring; we try to schedule this event in May, but availability of the lot is always a determining factor.



**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](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com)

Copyright© 2007

The Solid Waste District of LaPorte County and Eco Partners, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

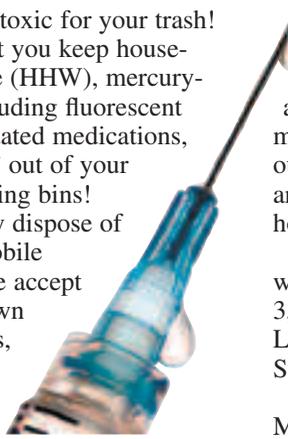


PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER  
70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS  
CONTENT, USING SOY INKS

# Too toxic to trash

Some wastes are too toxic for your trash! Please make sure that you keep household hazardous waste (HHW), mercury-containing items including fluorescent tubes and bulbs, outdated medications, and medical “sharps” out of your trash cans and recycling bins!

You can properly dispose of these items at our mobile HHW collections. We accept automotive fluids, lawn and garden chemicals, household cleaners and solvents, pool chemicals, hobby



chemicals, and *oil-based* paints and related home improvement products, as well as mercury and mercury-containing devices, outdated or unneeded medications, and “sharps” used for your in-home medical care.

Our last collection for 2007 will be held Saturday, November 3, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2, LaPorte.

HHW collections will begin again in March of 2008.



## Fall leaves — friend or foe?

The way some people act, you'd think that fall leaves were dangerous. These folks rush out to remove the leaves from the lawn and shortly thereafter haul them from the property. However, fall leaves aren't the enemy. In fact, these leaves can be friends to your lawn, garden, and soil, recycling this year's summer beauty for the good of next year's healthy plants.

Don't send your fall leaves away. Instead, use them in your yard. Here are some of the ways to put leaves to good use:

- Use your mulching mower to shred the leaves onto your lawn. The small

leaf parts will decompose by spring, but, in the meantime, they will protect your grass roots from harsh temperatures and provide some valuable nutrients to your lawn. If you don't have a mulching mower, you can simply remove the bagger attachment on your mower and insert the chute cover (a safety device that covers the hole where the bagger normally attaches). You may have to go over the leaves more than once to get them small enough. Your lawn

should look “dusted” with leaves, but not buried in them.

- Rake a layer of leaves onto your garden or into your flower beds. Or, pick up leaves with your bagging lawn mower and put these shredded leaves in a layer onto gardens and flower beds. Whether the leaves are whole or shredded, the layer should be no more than 2 or 3 inches thick. These leaves will serve as a mulch, protecting helpful insects, bacteria, and fungi from the colder winter weather and keeping moisture in the soil for your spring plants. In the spring, mix the decomposing leaves into the soil to fluff it up with organic matter.
- Compost your fall leaves. Creating compost is easy. Heap materials in a pile, or place them into a compost bin. Mix together “brown” and “green” organic waste. Browns include fall leaves and brush trimmings. Greens include fresh grass clippings, vegetable and fruit scraps, fresh plant trimmings, cut flowers, coffee grounds and filters, tea bags, and rotting fruits or garden vegetables. Keep your materials about as moist as a wrung-out sponge. Turn or stir your materials regularly over the next few months. Your finished compost will look like crumbly soil.
- Deliver your leaves to the Solid Waste District of LaPorte County Yard Waste Drop-Off Site (see box).



## Free drop-off for yard waste at District site

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' long and 12" 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 can 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, 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).