

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Solid Waste District of LaPorte County

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

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Summer 2009



Mother Goose Has Returned

No, we are not telling a nursery rhyme; it's the truth. Our wonderful Compost Goose has returned for the third year and has made her nest at the top of a compost pile. We are not sure if it's the area or the consideration shown by Project Coordinator Joe Jokantas and crew that keeps her returning every year to her Compost Condo, but she must like the accommodations.

As in the past, Joe and the men are careful not to disturb her nest. Work goes on as usual, but everyone works around her compost pile. When the eggs hatch, Mom

and Dad Goose take the "kids" and walk them around the Compost Site while allowing them to swim in the mud puddles. The family stays at the site until they are ready to move on, and then, with no warning, the whole family disappears.

We all wish them well and hope they return next year.

Don't forget our super compost is available for sale at the Westville Compost Site. If you have any questions, call Joe at 785-2511, Ext. #4935. Remember to use the # sign before the extension or your call will not go through.



Field Days

Our Education Coordinator, Nancy Gibson, assisted by Michelle Buford and Pauletta Schuster from our office, presented a "how to" event at the Annual 5th Grade Field Days at Luhr Park during early May. The turnout was wonderful and the weather cooperated nicely for this outdoor teaching experience.

Children and teachers from area schools were transported in for this fun-filled week of environmental information.



Our staff members assisted the children in making recycled flower pots from newspaper. Each child went home with the pot he or she made holding a freshly planted flower for Mother's Day.

This event has always been fun for the children. Plus, it puts recycled newspaper to a good *reuse*. Our goal, as always, is to teach the children as much as we can about all phases of the recycling process. Nancy and her crew did a fine job passing that message on to children and teachers alike.

Photos courtesy of Pauletta Schuster



Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk



Is it just me, or has anyone else noticed how well we are doing with participation in the recycling program? As I drive back and forth from work or to community functions, I see so many of the bright blue toters sitting curbside, lined up like soldiers ready to do battle against the mounds of material that could end up in a landfill. Once the material is collected, it goes first to separation and then moves on to a processing facility and finally to an end user. Some of your recycling could be contained in the very paper you are now reading or in the soda pop or water bottle that quenches your thirst, so you can sing the praises of recycling.

I won't bore you with the numbers from our program yet; I am saving the grand totals for year-end in our winter issue. However, I can tell you that recycling figures have risen another 20% and are still climbing. This year's figures will surprise you, I'm sure.

I would like to give a special congratulatory shout out to the group of very dedicated students and their sponsor, whom I met this spring—South Central High School's P.H.A.I.L. (Peers Having An Impact on Life) Club and their sponsor, Mary Ellen Ward. They organized a pill collection in their community, applied for a grant, organized a location and date, and did all the advertising, plus arranged for the proper authorities to be present to collect the medications. These fine students collected over 35 pounds of outdated or unused medications and got them disposed of safely and according to all legal guidelines. The high school students were on hand to distribute "thank you" packets, also. Way to go, South Central—we hope other high schools follow your example.

Clay

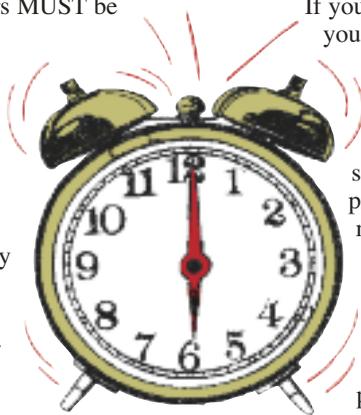
The national recycling rate at 30% saves the equivalent of more than 5 billion gallons of gasoline, reducing dependence on foreign oil by 114 million barrels. This figure could be even higher!

Toters are to be used for RECYCLING ONLY—that means no yard waste, junk, garbage, or paint cans!

6 a.m.!!

Some things never change

Your new recycling toters MUST be at curbside by 6 a.m. on pickup day, the same as always. The recycling trucks now have GPS trackers, so we get a printout of what time each truck was on each road. The GPS system records the location every two minutes, and we can check truck locations from our computers, too. In addition, drivers are now keeping track of addresses that do not have a recycling bin at curbside when they run the road.



If you feel you have been missed, you must contact our office no later than the next morning after the miss; only then can we help you. Waiting a week to call makes it impossible to rectify the situation properly because trucks have moved on to other routes.

Please remember the 6 a.m. rule—it hasn't changed, even if your recycling container has. To keep the recycling fee low and provide good service, we must all work together. Thank you to all the great recyclers in LaPorte County!

What will you carry?

As a result of the recession, conspicuous consumption is out and frugality and conservation are in. However, as we learned with last year's high gas prices, once things are back to normal, our new-found habits don't always last.

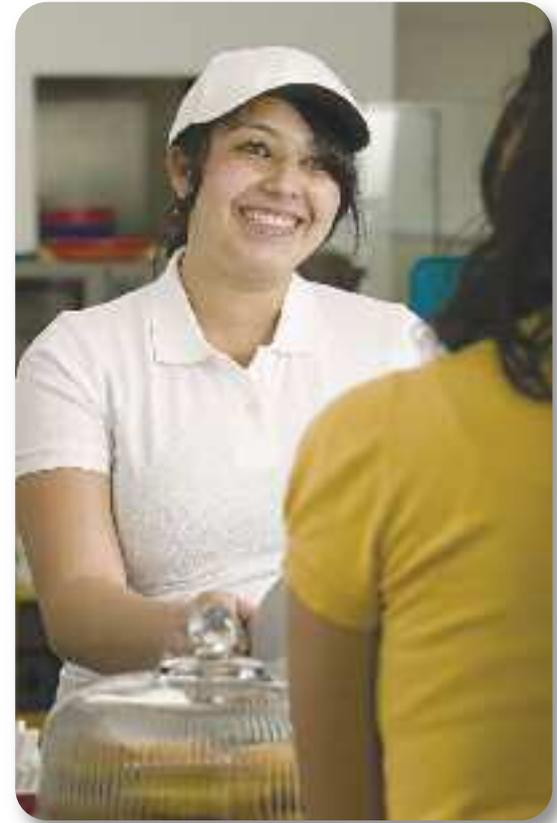
As some bright spots begin to appear on the economic horizon, now is a great time to think about your habits, both new and old. What changes have you made? Which will you keep? Which will you give up to return to "normal"? As you are asking yourself these questions, remember that waste reduction, reuse, and recycling, like water and energy conservation, are great habits even when times are good.

Here are some habits that you and your family can carry into the future:

- Carry a list when you shop. Evaluating what you have and making a list of what you need will help you "use up" what is in your house. This reduces waste, especially of food, and saves you money.
- Carry in your own shopping bags, refillable water bottles, and reusable coffee mugs. Eliminating unneeded packaging waste helps keep store costs lower and reduces litter and waste.
- Carry out your bank receipts, food orders, and more. Rather than heading to the drive-through and idling your vehicle, wast-

ing fuel and creating air pollution, stop, park, and walk. You'll get a bit of exercise, see people, save energy, and probably won't spend any more time.

- Carry over last year's supplies. Clean out last year's backpack for school. Organize your office and school supplies, using what you have before buying additional items.
- Carry forward items you no longer need, donating or selling usable goods to someone who can use them. Maybe you have a set of towels that doesn't match your new bathroom paint. Do you know a student heading off to college or a young adult moving into his or her own place? Offer them those usable linens.
- Carry away recyclable and recycled-content products from the store. While you are shopping, select items in containers that can be recycled in our local programs (called "pre-cycling" because you are planning ahead to recycle). Also, look for recycled-content products. Recycling markets have been hard hit by our economic downturn, so be sure you are closing the loop and buying items made from recyclables whenever possible.
- Carry your recyclables home. If you are out and don't see a recycling bin, take your containers and paper products home for recycling.
- Carry on. The key to good habits is keeping them up.



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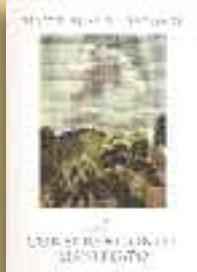
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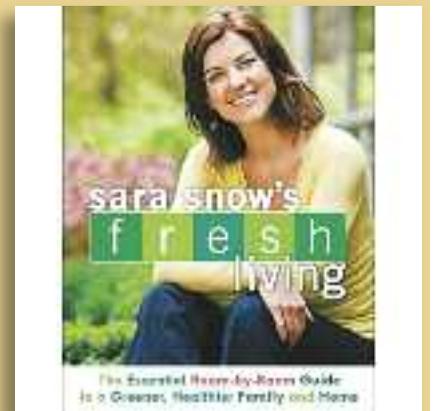
Read more about it!

A Conservationist Manifesto by Scott Russell Sanders (Indiana University Press, 2009)



"My Year Without Spending" by Angela Barton – www.myyearwithoutspending.blogspot.com

Sara Snow's Fresh Living: The Essential Room-by-Room Guide to a Greener, Healthier Family and Home by Sara Snow (Bantam Books, 2009)



The Simple Living Network – www.simpleliving.net

To Buy or Not to Buy: Why We Overshop and How to Stop by April Lane Benson (Trumpeter, 2008)

Shop smart

When you plan ahead and shop smart, you can green your home and our planet and keep more green in your wallet, too! The phrases hidden in this puzzle will give you tips for making better use of what you already own and shopping smart for what you need.

Find these phrases (look up, down, backward, forward, and diagonally):

- Bring your own bag
- Buy recycled
- Clean out closets
- Inventory pantry
- Make a list
- Organize
- Plan ahead
- Sort what you have
- Shop reused
- Use refillables

G H A A D G R R B X L G E Z I N A G R O
 P B V E G Y Z D C V X K G W B W Q E C W
 B P U M N D O G A N A A K I H W K S L I
 N E S A E A J J E G E M J Z S I Y H E U
 I X E K N V H O O A Q Q K R W D X O A G
 N Z R E C W A H H B Y F W S Q T K P N Z
 V E E A W Q Z H T N I T N J V P C R O Z
 E N F L A R G M U W U U Q P G J W E U W
 N L I I D E N P X O G M S D F P K U T Z
 T Z L S A G T K A R Y E B A N M P S C R
 O P L T E J F X F U Z T P U R S M E L F
 R Z A Q H Z E A F O T P A T A D G D O U
 Y T B R A O V F L Y Q E J H J U G M S G
 P G L K N E M A A G T V J D W W K I E G
 A M E B A A O Z O N B L Q W J T W G T K
 N B S D L M I B O I T H V G Z I R R S F
 T F S S P R Z X A R Z I G U F P I O K G
 R T G S W Q T Y C B D Q C F X U P D S G
 Y T J D W Z K W Q K F I Q W W F W P R G
 D E L C Y C E R Y U B Q F F D U D N B P

Judging the book by its COVER

Covering topics from adhesive notes and batteries to wrapping paper and yoga mats, *The Green Book* by Elizabeth Rogers and Thomas M. Kostigen describes the “big picture” and then offers “little things” that you can do to make our planet a better place. In addition, each chapter offers three “simple steps” you can take to reduce your waste, conserve water, and save energy.

With chapter subtitles like “The Family Vacation That Ate the Planet” and “I Can’t Hang Out With You Because I Have to Call, Text, IM, and E-Mail My Friends All Day,” you’ll be entertained as you learn facts that will amaze your friends and relatives. For instance, reusing



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paper clips could save American businesses \$1 million each year. In Las Vegas, a single 300-room hotel goes through 150,000 small plastic bottles of shampoo per year. By carrying your own refillable shampoo bottles, you benefit from bulk pricing and wipe out waste. Eliminating “phantom” electricity usage by putting electronics and small appliances on power strips and turning them all the way off when not in use could save \$5 billion in electricity each year. There are hundreds of tips on items in use at home, work, school, and more in categories ranging from technology and travel to shopping and sports.

The book includes about 50 pages of Internet resources by category and material.

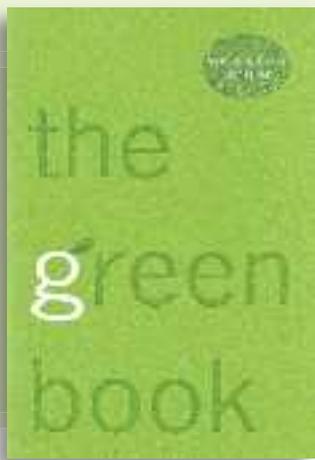


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Add surfers to the list of sports enthusiasts who are recycling. ReSurf Recycling, founded by Joey Santley and Steve Cox, is taking old and broken surfboards. Most of the boards are pulverized and used as filler material in asphalt and concrete mixes and other products, such as fireproof roofing tiles. However, some of the boards are now used to create new polyurethane “blanks,” the foam that is shaped to create a new surfboard. Recently, they also began recycling neoprene wet-suit production scraps, turning them into yoga mats.

ReSurf joins other sports equipment makers in recycling: Necky, which makes recycled kayaks; Wilson, which produces the Rebound basketball from recycled rubber; Nike, which turns worn-out athletic shoes into Nike Grind track and playground surfaces; and Fair Trade Sports, which makes recycled footballs, basketballs, soccer and rugby balls, and more.

To learn more about surfboard recycling, visit www.resurf.org.



Home: The Big Picture

“On average, you create 4.5 pounds of trash every day. Over the course of your life, that will total six hundred times your average adult weight . . . in garbage. Broken down, your torso would be paper. One leg would be yard trimmings, the other food scraps. One arm would be plastic with a rubber hand. The other would be metal with a wood hand. Your head would be glass, and your neck would be all the other stuff. In the end, we will each leave a ninety-thousand-pound legacy of trash for our grandchildren.”

From Chapter 1, The Green Book

A virtual arts and crafts fair

Are you an artist or crafter? Would you like to turn some of your creations into cash? Check out Etsy.com, an online marketplace where you can buy and sell “all things homemade.” The site features art, bags, candles, ceramics and pottery, clothing and scarves, furniture, holiday items, housewares, jewelry, knitting and needlecraft, paper goods, quilts, toys, woodworking, and more. If a craftsperson makes it, it is probably for sale at Etsy.

This is one of the largest online person-to-person sales sites for arts and crafts. Etsy has more than 250,000 artists and craftspeople displaying items, about 2.3 million members who may browse and buy, and about 10,000,000 unique visitors to the site each month. Total sales of

handcrafted goods through the site in 2008 were \$87.5 million. Currently, more than 3.6 million items are listed for sale.

For artists and crafters, the cost to advertise items on the site is minimal—20¢ per item for a four-month listing. When items are sold, the company collects a 3.5% commission on the sale.

To buy arts and crafts on Etsy, you need an account, which may be set up at no charge. You can search by category, by location, by color, by era (called “Time Machine”), and more. Like eBay, items that you purchase will be shipped directly to you by the seller.

To learn more about selling or buying products through Etsy, visit www.etsy.com.



Photos courtesy of Etsy.com

FAST FACTS

- 67% of Americans believe that even in tough economic times, it is important to purchase products with environmental benefits.
- 51% are willing to pay more for these products.
- 77% agree that they can make a positive difference by purchasing products from environmentally responsible companies and are actively seeking information to verify green claims.
- 40% of consumers regularly buy environmentally friendly cleaning products.

Source: 2009 BBMG Conscious Consumer Report: Redefining Value in a New Economy

Everyday environmentalists

America’s solid waste industry collected and processed more than 63 million tons of recyclables in 2007 and more than 22 million tons of yard and food waste for composting. It is facts like these that have led the industry group, the National Solid Wastes Management Association (NSWMA), to kick off the “Environmentalists. Every Day.” campaign. Our nation’s 386,000 waste and recycling haulers and processors help keep our recycling, composting, and disposal programs moving forward, working as partners with local government and private businesses.

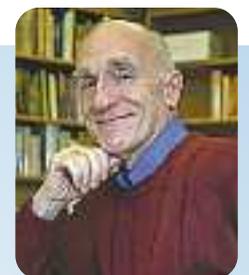
The NSWMA is also the sponsor of the “Slow Down to Get Around” campaign, which encourages drivers of vehicles to be more careful around waste and recycling trucks. Many accidents occur when motorists try to quickly pass slowed or stopped collection vehicles.

To learn more about the solid waste industry, visit www.EnvironmentalistsEveryDay.org.

QUOTES REQUOTED

In order to live, we must use the earth—but we should not use it up. . . . We must conserve the minerals we mine and the products we manufacture, recycling them as thoroughly as a forest recycles twigs, leaves, fur, and bone.

Scott Russell Sanders, 1945–
Writer and conservationist



WHAT'S UP?

The Lake Michigan Districts Household Hazardous Waste Mobile Collection Program accepts lawn and garden chemicals, automotive fluids, oil-based paint and related products, and mercury-containing items, such as fluorescent tubes and bulbs and thermostats, for proper disposal.

Here in LaPorte County, the remaining collections will be held as follows:

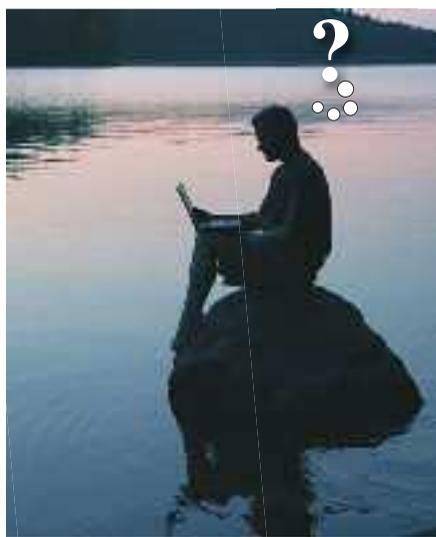
- Saturday, August 1, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. – LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 West State Road 2, LaPorte
- Saturday, September 26, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Kabein Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall, Michigan City
- Saturday, October 17, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. – LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 West State Road 2, LaPorte

For more information, call 219-326-1425 or 1-800-483-7700. Or, visit our website, www.solidwaste-district.com, and click on "Household Hazardous Waste."



Fun Facts

1. What does the word *Xeriscape* mean?
 - A. No landscaping at all
 - B. Landscaping with drought-resistant plants, which can save up to 54% of the water used for a garden
 - C. Landscaping with your own homemade mulch and compost
2. What should you do with plastic six-pack rings before recycling?
 - A. Tie them into bows.
 - B. Stuff them into a plastic jar.
 - C. Snip them to avoid any danger to wildlife if the rings would blow out of the recycling bin.
3. Name the three major pollutants found in automobile exhaust.
 - A. Carbon monoxide, lead, and nitrogen oxide
 - B. Carbon dioxide, lead, and mercury
 - C. Carbon monoxide, mercury, and nitrous oxide
4. What human desire contributes most to pollution?
 - A. The desire for beauty
 - B. The desire for convenience
 - C. The desire for truth
 - D. The desire for youth
5. What is the ideal temperature at which to set your water heater?
 - A. 100 degrees – No one will be scalded at your house.
 - B. 180 degrees – Your showers will always be hot.
 - C. 130 degrees – Anything below that does not kill bacteria.



Answers: 1 B; 2 C; 3 A; 4 B; 5 C

E-cycle your electronics



FREE E-cycling is convenient and available year-round to LaPorte County residents! You can drop off computers, monitors, electric typewriters, printers, fax machines, copiers, stereos, televisions, VCRs, DVD players, telephones, laptops, cell phones, adding machines, zip drives, palm pilots, keyboards, mice, hard drives (erased, please), calculators, scanners, electronic games, microwaves, power supplies, battery backups, etc.

We are accepting these items from Monday through Friday at two locations: 1027 Hitchcock Road in Michigan City and the LaPorte County Highway Department, 1805 West 5th Street, LaPorte. Hours may vary, so call us at 326-0014.

This site is monitored on a daily basis and is for the convenience of **LaPorte County residents only.**

Businesses, industries, and schools cannot utilize this drop-off because of limited space in the gaylords and trailers. However, businesses, industries, non-profits, institutions, and schools can drop off electronics at ICRI. Their new location is 1095 N. 50 E in Chesterton, and the new phone number is 219-688-3938. You must place a phone call to ICRI prior to drop-off at their facility.

Seven steps to garage sale success



Now that summer is here, you might have some free time. Turn some of that into money-making time—host a garage sale! A garage sale is a great way for your family to clean up the house, clear out the closets, and cash in on some of your old and unused stuff.

Follow these steps to garage sale success:

1. Pick a date that works for everyone. If your neighborhood is planning a sale, do it the same dates as your neighbors because you'll get a lot more traffic.
2. Sort your stuff. Make sure that all of the parts are together for games and small appliances. Wash old clothes and toys.
3. Price your merchandise. Be reasonable with your prices. A relatively new DVD might be marked at half what you paid for it, but a 5-year-old DVD probably should be about 50 cents. Put a tag on every item. If some items are being sold as a group, such as a set of four plates, be sure to mark that clearly (such as "\$5 for set of 4").
4. Advertise your sale. Most devoted garage sale shoppers check the weekly ads, both in the paper and online, to find sales. Also, sale-day signs are a great way to help shoppers find your house. (Be sure to put the signs up the

Tire and White Goods Collection

On May 23, we held another successful Tire and White Goods Collection at the Fairgrounds. This was the first collection this year; the second will be on October 17, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m., at the Fairgrounds.

It always surprises us how many fine LaPorte County residents bring items to us. We know the program generates plenty of tonnage that might otherwise end up where it shouldn't, so we are always pleased to see so many cars and trucks.

If you missed this event, we hope to see you in the fall.



5. Be prepared on sale day. Have change ready, especially small bills and coins. Provide used grocery and shopping bags so that your shoppers can easily carry away their new treasures.
6. At the end of the day, box up unsold items and donate them to a local charitable organization.
7. Count your money and enjoy!



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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