

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Solid Waste District of
LaPorte County

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www.solidwastedistrict.com

Winter 2009



The bins are in!

Well, the new bins have arrived. They have handles, wheels, and lids—all the things residents of LaPorte County have asked for repeatedly.

Now comes the time to prove your mettle. *Fill those bins!* Become the recycling guru of your street. Make Mother Earth proud. Prove to your kids what heroes you are. Encourage neighbors to join you in recycling. Make a real difference.

These are not idle platitudes—it IS up to you. We can provide the bins, the pickup service, and the telephone informational help when you need it, but we can't force people to collect their recyclables and fill their bins. They should be willing to do it on their own, but what happens?

Perhaps the main question is WHY isn't everyone recycling? Everyone pays for it. Everyone has a bin. Everyone throughout the county has curbside pickup. Everyone takes garbage out. Why is recycling different?



You now have the container you asked for. You have curbside pickup. You have the chance to make a difference. Why not utilize all three opportunities?

Recycle your old, tired tree

Each year, Americans purchase about 25 to 30 million fresh-cut trees to decorate their homes during the holidays. The following spring, tree farmers plant two to three seedlings to replace each tree. Over the next seven years, these trees will mature and be ready for harvest.

If your family enjoyed a fresh-cut holiday tree this year, be sure to recycle it after the holiday season. By now, your tree is probably beginning to get dried out and is losing its needles more rapidly. That's a sure sign that it's time to take the tree down. Remove all the decorations, ornament hooks, lights, garland, and tinsel, as well as the stand. Then, deliver it to the District's Yard Waste Drop-Off Site, which is located at the north end of Zigler Road (runs along the east side of the LaPorte County Fairgrounds), just past the grandstands on the west side. The Site is open seven days a week during daylight hours.



(c) iStockphoto.com/Achim Prill

Fit to print

Every second in the U.S., eight printer cartridges are discarded. When these toner and inkjet cartridges go into the trash, usable toner and ink are being thrown away. In addition, the equivalent of 3½ quarts of oil per laser toner cartridge or 2½ ounces of oil per inkjet cartridge are being wasted.

However, laser toner and inkjet cartridges don't need to go in the trash. They are reusable and recyclable. Most cartridges can be reused as many as 20 to 30 times. After that, the remaining toner or ink, the plastic, and the precious metals can be recycled.

Here are some tips for reusing and recycling cartridges:

- If your printer allows you to continue printing after you receive the low-ink

warning, do so. Often you will get a low-ink warning with as much as 40% of the ink or toner remaining.

Instead of immediately changing the cartridge, wait until the printed images get lighter or fainter.

- Purchase do-it-yourself kits for refilling inkjet cartridges or recharging laser toner cartridges.
- Take your cartridges to a business that refills or recharges them and returns them to you for reuse.
- When buying replacement cartridges, choose remanufactured cartridges.
- Take advantage of mail-in or drop-off recycling programs. For a complete list of inkjet recycling drop-off locations in LaPorte County, visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com/programs/inkjet.html.

Would you like to see how inkjet cartridge recycling works? The fall edition of *The Green Guide* magazine featured a photo essay on Hewlett-Packard's inkjet recycling program. To read the essay, go to www.thegreenguide-magazine.com/thegreenguide/fall2008/?folio=2 (on the Table of Contents, click on page 82, "Photo Essay: What Happens to Recycled Inkjet Cartridges?").

Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive
Director's Desk



As one year closes and another is beginning, we reflect over the past 365 days with a great feeling of accomplishment. It makes it difficult to imagine everything we have accomplished in those past 365 days. The Solid Waste District has so many wonderful programs in place that it's hard to find a way to improve upon them. Then Susan, our Recycling Coordinator, hands me the recycling figures for 2008 which are at 57%.

In addition to the National Election, here in LaPorte County our recent local election had an amazing voter turnout—59.9% of registered voters went to vote. I believe the recyclers in LaPorte County can far surpass those figures. You now have your new 96-gallon recycling containers with wheels and a lid. Make this a bipartisan recycling year! It doesn't matter what your political leaning happens to be; we're LaPorte County, and we are all in this together.

Your efforts pay big dividends to the earth you are leaving your children. Do your part and let's watch those recycling totals topple the 50s and perhaps even the 60s. One hundred percent participation has never been reached in any other county. LaPorte was first in the state with full curbside, so let's be first with full participation. This is not some impossible dream; it happens when all of you give a full "yes we can" attitude to your recycling.

Clay

P.S. Recycling creates jobs in Indiana:
10,000 tons incinerated = 1 job
10,000 tons landfilled = 6 jobs
10,000 tons RECYCLED = 36 jobs



Have your new recycling bin at the curb, where it is clearly visible to the driver, by 6 a.m. Trouble getting up that early? Roll it out the night before! The FREE 96-gallon recycling cart provided to you by the District is the driver's marker to stop and pick up recycling at your curb.

These new bins hold about three times as much as your old bins, so all of your recyclables should fit into this bin. However, if you have more recyclables than will fit into your bin, you may use additional containers, which must be marked RECYCLING.

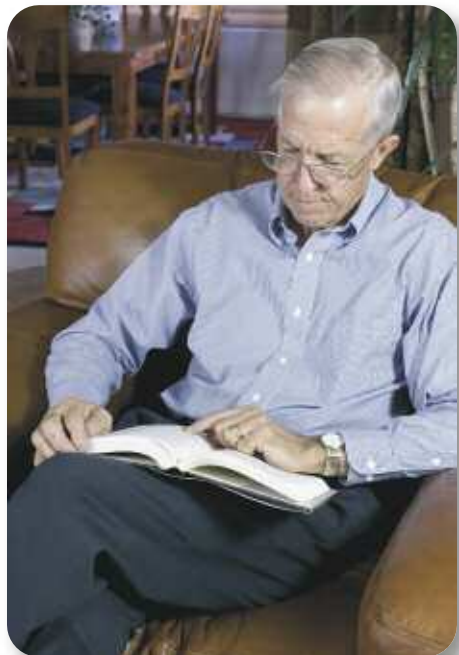
Remember—if your NEW BLUE BIN isn't at the curb, you'll have NO PICKUP! So, fill your new, free, extra-large recycling cart first, and be sure to set all of your recycling at the curb on your recycling day!

If you aren't sure which week is your recycling week, visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com. You can print a copy of the calendar and hang it near your recycling bin.

10 tips FOR A BETTER New Year

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

1. Before you buy, ask yourself these questions: Do I need this? Do I already have something like this? Do I need something new right now? Does it have too much packaging? What will I do with this when I no longer need it?
2. Stop making "wish lists." Whether you make them online, write them on a scrap of paper, or keep them in your head, wish lists keep you thinking about what you want but don't yet have.



(c) Louoates/SnapVillage.com

3. Start your exercise, weight-loss, or other self-improvement program on borrowed or shared equipment. If you stick with the program or hobby, you can purchase your own supplies and equipment later, if you need them.
4. Precycle. You do this by shopping for groceries and other products with recycling in mind. Know what you can recycle and choose products packaged in those materials. Better yet, try to buy items with no packaging whenever possible. For example, if you need a bunch of bananas or two apples, you don't need a plastic produce bag.
5. Commit to recycled-content products. Successful recycling programs depend on having manufacturers use your recyclables. If you need a new fleece vest or jacket, look for fleece made from recycled soft drink bottles. Did the dog ruin your carpet? Select recycled-content carpet.
6. Take an inventory at home. Do you have supplies for a hobby that you never started? Now would be a good time to begin. Do you have books on



(c) Monkey Business Images/SnapVillage.com

your shelf that you haven't read? Don't buy a new book—read one you already own. The same goes for movies—have you watched all of the DVDs you have at home? If not, start now.

7. Find your library card. The library is a great resource for no-cost entertainment. Look for books, magazines, CDs, movies, and more.

8. Scan your pantry shelves for food that your family won't eat. We all have canned and boxed goods that we purchased but never got around to using. Check the "use by" or "best by" dates and donate unexpired items to a local food pantry or other non-profit organization.

9. Give more of your time and talent. If you are feeling that you can't afford to donate as much money to your favorite causes, commit more of your time and energy.
10. Start thinking now about planting a garden this year. A garden can be a relaxing hobby and also a good source of food for your family. Even if you just have a small patio, consider planting tomatoes or peppers, which can grow in a pot.

For more information, visit www.newdream.org/marketplace/economy.php for The Center for a New American Dream's "Economy Survival Guide: Give Your Life a Make-Under," or call 877-68-DREAM.

Every dollar I spend is a statement about the kind of world I want and the quality of life I value.

New American Dream
www.newdream.org

“Junk” highlights plastic problem in oceans

Last summer, Dr. Marcus Eriksen and Joel Paschal set sail from Long Beach, California and headed for Honolulu, Hawaii. However, they weren't traveling on a traditional and comfortable craft. Instead, they were aboard a raft floating on pontoons made from 15,000 plastic water bottles, sitting atop a deck made from salvaged sailboat masts, and enjoying only the shelter of an old Cessna private plane's body. The raft had four sails and was able to travel about 50 miles each day. The 2,600 mile journey took nearly three months.

The raft was made from junk and christened "Junk" to shed light on an urgent marine problem—the accumulation of plastic debris, especially bottles and bags, in our oceans. Plastic debris in the oceans can harm aquatic life, choking birds, killing plankton, and releasing toxins into the water. In an area north of Hawaii, known as the North Pacific Gyre, a large whirlpool of plastic trash spins. The area is home to more plastic, by weight, than plankton, which are small drifting organisms that form the bottom of the marine food chain.

Thanks to modern technology, the mariners were able to stay on course and in touch with Anna Cummins, who provided ground support. During the voyage, they took video and blogged their journey, posting the results regularly on the Internet.

To learn more about making the Junk raft and the trip across the eastern Pacific, visit www.junkraft.blogspot.com or <http://junkraft.com>. To watch video about the voyage, go to www.YouTube.com and search for "junk raft."



Photos courtesy of YachtPals.com

QUOTES REQUOTED

Use it up,
wear it out,
make it do, or
do without.

Early American Saying

Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration



Green your brain!

Are you looking for some indoor fun? Test your “green score” by playing the interactive trivia game at www.greenmybrain.com. Each question addresses an environmental problem, a solution, or an action that you can take. Answers are multiple choice. There are two levels, with level two questions being more challenging.

Even at level one, you’ll find some tricky questions, such as: “Between 1980 and 1999, the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulations on lead usage reduced lead emissions by what percent?” (The answer is 95%!) Other questions may cover more familiar territory, like this one: “Instead of buying containers for leftovers at the store, you can....” (We’ll let you figure that one out yourself!)

Whether you are a novice or an expert, you’ll have fun playing this game and will learn a lot along the way.

Players can even submit questions. Of course, the game masters do thorough fact-checking before posting submitted questions and answers.



Paper, paper everywhere

Each year, we preserve only 10% of the paper that we receive and handle. This preserved paper includes books, magazines, photographs, and filed documents. The rest of the paper is recycled or disposed. As much as 81% of this paper could be recycled, while the remainder is destroyed during use or contaminated, such as tissues. However, at present, 56% of paper is being recycled, which means we can do better.

Our paper recycling in the U.S. affects the supply of recyclable paper around the globe. America has been referred to as “the Saudi Arabia of recovered paper.” On average, Americans recycle 360 pounds of paper and paper products (such as corrugated cardboard) each year. In 2007, 54.3 million tons of paper were recovered for recycling in the U.S. This paper becomes the feedstock for paper recycling mills around the world. Just as the Middle East provides much of the

world with oil, the U.S. supplies much of the world with recyclable paper.

In a time when U.S. paper consumption has leveled off, paper consumption around the world is increasing rapidly. At present, worldwide consumption is about 440 million tons per year. However, by 2015, that number may be as high as 550 million tons, with the largest growth in China and India, the

world’s most populous nations. If the U.S. were to recycle all of the paper that is currently recyclable, we could meet nearly one-quarter of that additional demand, supplying about 25 million tons more paper to the recovery system.

But what about the non-recyclable paper—those papers that are destroyed or contaminated during use? The best option is to purchase 100% recycled-content alternatives. For instance, if every household in the U.S. purchased a single roll of 100% recycled-content toilet paper, we could save 330,000 trees.

To learn more about paper manufacturing, use, and recycling, go to INFORM’s Secret Life Series at www.secret-life.org/paper/. You’ll find a helpful video, as well as a great deal of useful information.

For more information about paper recycling, visit www.paperrecycles.org or contact our office.

What is the Forest Stewardship Council?

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, international organization which certifies forests and forest-based products. The FSC standards focus on environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable forestry management practices. The goal of the FSC is forests that conserve biological diversity, minimize logging-related pollution, improve the lives of forest workers and surrounding communities, and encourage long-term health and usefulness of the forest stock.

However, FSC certification doesn’t stop at the edge of the forest. Through a rigorous, chain of custody certification program, FSC follows the tree to sawmill, manufacturing plant, and distribution center. When a paper or building product bears the FSC logo, you’ll know that the trees used to make the product were harvested in the most sustainable way possible.

In 2008, 254 million acres of forest worldwide, representing about 7% of all forests, had received FSC certification. More than 10,000 products are FSC certified. When you shop for building products, paper, and paper products, look for the FSC logo.

For more information, visit www.fscus.org.

Forty Years Later...

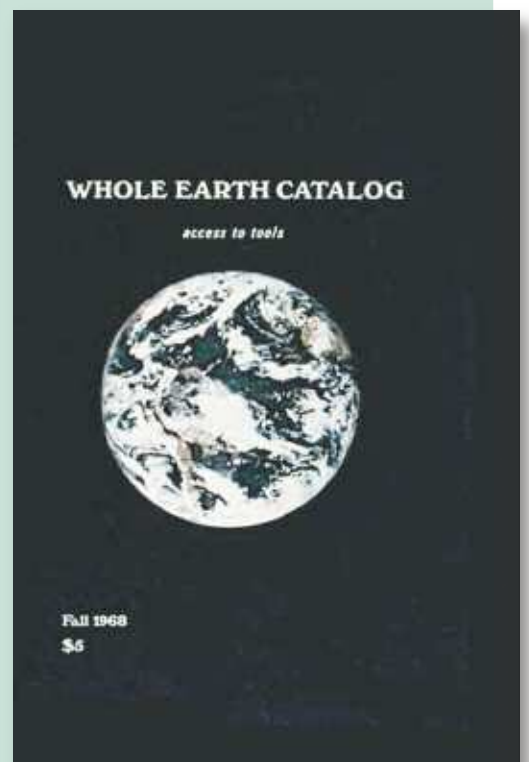
In the fall of 1968, Stewart Brand and friends published a catalog that became a sensation. The *Whole Earth Catalog*, which was only published regularly through 1972 and then periodically thereafter, is where the weekend do-it-yourselfer crossed paths with the back-to-land enthusiast.

The goal of the catalog was to provide “access to tools.” Some of these tools were products, but others were ideas, including books, journals, magazines, maps, and classes. This wasn’t a mail-order catalog, but rather, a resource on systems and technologies, companies, and products. Members of the Whole Earth team sought out and evaluated tools and ideas, providing helpful reviews for the readers. To be listed, an item had to meet several criteria, including that it was: useful as a tool; relevant to independent education; high-quality or low-cost; not already commonly known; and easily available by mail. For example, the first catalog had features on the magazine *Scientific American*, the outdoor outfitter L.L. Bean, and a Hewlett-Packard tabletop calculator.

According to Apple founder Steve Jobs, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was the forerunner of the Internet. First, the catalog actively promoted emerging technologies. Second, it encouraged thinking in terms of “systems.” And, third, it relied heavily on the collaboration of its contributors, including “user-generated content.” In other words, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was a search engine, like Google, and a blog — long before those two existed.

In 1972, the *Whole Earth Catalog* won a National Book Award for the serialized publication of Gurney Norman’s novel, *Divine Right’s Trip*. This was the only National Book Award ever given to a catalog.

If you don’t remember the *Whole Earth Catalog*, visit www.wholeearth.com, where you can see old editions online or read some of the articles.



WHAT'S UP?

Don't forget our Household Hazardous Waste Collections are shut down until March. Check with our office after February 1, 2009 or watch the paper for the 2009 collection dates and locations.



Again in 2009, we will host two Tire and White Goods Recycling Collections. These will be scheduled in May and October, as always. Check with our office after February 1 for exact dates.



Our E-cycling trailers (for recycling of electronics, including computers, TVs, monitors, keyboards, stereos, cell phones, and related items) are available to the public all year long. In Michigan City, the E-cycling trailer is located on Hitchcock Road; hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. In LaPorte, the hours are Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; the LaPorte site is located on Zigler Road at the Highway Barns. There are no holiday or weekend drop-offs at either location.



Don't forget to buy your firewood at the District's compost facility. All wood is chopped and ready to go for a warm, clean burn at a very fair price. Call Joe at 778-2511, ext. 4935, for further information and costs.



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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Fun Facts

1. What city is known as the air pollution capital of the world?
 - A. Beijing, China — Residents routinely wear face masks because the air is full of smoke and dust.
 - B. Los Angeles, California — People ride in cars rather than walk because of the poor air quality.
 - C. Cubato, Brazil — The air is so polluted, no birds or insects remain, most trees are blackened stumps, and the mayor refuses to live there.
2. How many trees would we save in the United States each week if we recycled our Sunday newspapers?
 - A. 150,000
 - B. 500,000
 - C. 1,000,000
3. In the 1920s, the federal government launched a successful program to kill all the wolves in Yellowstone Park because of their threat to the elk and deer. What has been the result?
 - A. Overpopulation of the elk herds, which depleted the vegetation that is food for other, smaller species.
 - B. Extinction of the gray wolves.
 - C. An overabundance of bears because they have no competition as a predator.
4. What is the single largest source of CFC (chlorofluorocarbon) emissions into the atmosphere in the United States?
 - A. Styrofoam container manufacture
 - B. Leaking auto air conditioners
 - C. Use of chlorine in cleaning products

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



Take 5

Have you ever tried to go an entire day without handling any paper? Can you imagine a day with no morning newspaper, no receipt for your cup of coffee, no printed reports at work, no junk mail, no bills paid, and no book or magazine at bedtime?

Paper is the medium of our lives. It is also the single largest discard in the U.S., comprising 33.9% of all municipal waste and weighing in at nearly 97 million tons per year. Fortunately, 56% of that paper, or about 360 pounds per person each year, is being recycled.

There won't be days without paper anytime soon. However, you can use paper more wisely. Rather than aim to be "paperless," plan to be "paper smart." Start with these five steps:

1. Use less paper. Rely more on electronic communications and online forms, both in your personal life and at work. Organize email messages that you need to keep in electronic folders. Add websites to your favorites list. Archive documents on your computer hard drive and on a backup medium, such as a flash drive or CD.



2. Get more use from your paper. As you've probably noticed, paper has a front and a back. Use them both! Whenever possible, select two-sided publishing. Save paper with printing on only one side to print drafts or jot notes.
3. Reuse paper and paper products. Share magazines and catalogs with friends and family members. Borrow books from the library. Save and reuse boxes.
4. Recycle more paper and paper products. Recycling paper reduces the demands on our forests and tree farms. In addition, making new paper products from recaptured paper uses less energy and less water, requires less bleach, and results in fewer toxic releases of air and water pollutants. You can recycle all of the following in your curbside recycling bin: newspapers, any inserts, tabloids, or small flyers that originally came with the paper; catalogs; phone books; magazines; cardboard boxes in sizes of no more than 2 ft. square; stationery and copy paper; and cereal and similar boxes.
5. Buy recycled-content paper and paper products. Look for recycled-content products, such as printer paper, stationery, notebooks and notebook paper, boxes, tissue products, and more.

Here it comes!

Unless you've been out of the country for several months, you've probably heard about the transition from analog to digital television (DTV) transmission. As of February 17, 2009, local television stations will no longer be broadcasting with analog signals. Instead, these free, full-power, over-the-air stations will be broadcasting with digital technology, supplying more programming options and higher quality signals. So what does this mean for you?

If you subscribe to a pay service, such as cable or satellite, you don't need to do anything. All of your TVs that are connected to this service will continue to receive local television signals. It doesn't matter whether your TVs are analog or digital. If all of your TVs are connected to the pay service, you are all set and don't need to do anything else.

If you rely on "rabbit ears" or a rooftop antenna, the type of TV that you are using will matter. You have three options:

- Check to see if your current TVs have built-in digital tuners. You can look for labels such as "Integrated Digital Tuner" or "Digital Receiver." If you can access the "extra" local channels now, your TV has a digital



tuner. Any TVs that have digital tuners will receive the signals properly after February 17, so you don't need to do anything more.

- Purchase a set-top digital-to-analog converter box for each analog TV. These boxes cost from \$50 to \$70 and are available at home electronics and appliance stores. The federal government is offering up to two coupons, worth \$40

each, to offset the cost of purchasing these converter boxes. (To request your coupons, go to www.dtv2009.gov/ or call 1-888-388-2009.)

- Buy a new TV with a digital tuner. You do not have to purchase a high-definition television (HDTV). You can purchase a standard definition DTV, but be sure that it has a digital tuner built-in.

Remember—you do NOT have to purchase a new television! However, if you do choose to buy a new TV to replace an older one, be sure to recycle your old TV. Some stores will accept old TVs when you purchase a new one. Otherwise, deliver the old TV to one of the District's E-cycling trailers.

For more information about the transition to DTV, visit www.dtv.gov, or call 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009).