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www.solidwastedistrict.com

Winter 2017

"one man's trash..."

Solid Waste District of La Porte County

Your guide to reducing, reusing, and recycling



It's in the bag

Residents brought in a record-setting number of plastic bags — more than 21,000 — for recycling during District events in November

Over the past four years, the District has used the America Recycles Day events at Al's Supermarkets to educate residents about the right way to recycle plastic bags. This year, a new event was added at the J-MARt BP in Wanatah.

"It's very important for people to know that we no longer accept loose plastic bags in our recycling program, and these events gave me a chance to explain why to hundreds of residents," said Alicia Ebaugh, the District's education and public outreach coordinator. "It's even more important that everyone knows they can bring plastic bags back to many stores to be recycled."

The District used these events to promote the fact that all Al's Supermarket locations now accept plastic bags for recycling year-round, but they can also be taken to other stores like Meijer, Kroger, and Walmart. Not only are grocery bags acceptable for recycling, but you can also include clean and dry retail, newspaper, dry cleaning, bread, produce, and other plastic bags labeled #2 and #4; plastic food storage bags; furniture and electronic wrap; and case wrap used on paper towels, diapers, bathroom tissue, and water bottles.

The sheer number of plastic bags — about 100 billion — used each year in the United States is astounding. That works out to about 308 per person, so a family of four might go through about 1,250 single-use plastic bags per year. The more than 21,000 bags collected during the District events would have been used by only about 68 residents over one year.

"We bring plastic bags home from



Educator Alicia Ebaugh and Master Recycler graduate Margaret Carson were excited to collect more than 1,000 bags at the J-MART BP in Wanatah.

pretty much anywhere we shop for food, clothes and other items. Our newspapers are often wrapped in them, and we even buy more simply to throw away," Ebaugh said. "Plastic bags may be convenient, but when our county can go through more than 34

million of them in a year, it's time to start thinking about ways to reduce the amount of waste we create."

Most of all, though, the District used these events to promote reuse, giving out about 350 reusable bags to residents in exchange for these plastic bags during the events.

"When you make the switch to reusable bags for shopping, you not only reduce waste, you reduce the amount of litter that ends up in our communities," Ebaugh said.

More people than ever before participated in the plastic bag swap events this year, which was encouraging.

"We've been educating on the proper way to recycle plastic bags — at the store — for a few years now, and many participants said they frequently bring their bags with them," Ebaugh said. "Plus, those who have gotten reusable bags are using them, reducing the number of plastic bags they are bringing in even more."

Several of the District's Master Recycler graduates also pitched in to help with the events by talking with residents and counting bags. The District would like to thank them, Al's Supermarkets for their continued partnership on these events, and other sponsors, including Keep America Beautiful, Republic Services, and the J-MARt BP.



Master Recycler graduate David Thornburg (left) speaks with WEFM's Tod Allen about recycling and waste reduction at Al's Franklin.



Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk

As the year comes to a close, people start making New Year's Resolutions. For many, the priority is to spend less money. The easiest way to do this is to reduce what we are consuming. This year, make a "Reduce-olution"! Here are some tips to help you reduce your consumption and save money at the same time:

Buy Less: This may seem like the obvious one, but put a little more thought into it. We have kitchens full of single-use gadgets and appliances. Before buying something, ask yourself two questions: "Do I really need this?" and "Do I already have something that would serve the same purpose?"

Don't Buy — Borrow: Before you buy something that you won't use often, look for somewhere you can borrow it. Get books, movies, and magazines from friends and family or the library. Share yard tools with a neighbor. Need a dress for a special occasion? Ask to look through a friend's closet, or consider renting it, as men have rented tuxes for decades.

Use Your Bags, Bottles, and Mugs:

We all do it—we keep reusable bags in our cars and then walk into the store without them. Put them somewhere you won't forget them. Maybe you could set them next to your child's carseat or beside you in the front seat. Or put your purse or wallet inside the bags so they are together. Don't just use them at the grocery store; take them along for any shopping you do. Always carry a water bottle or coffee mug with you; most places will fill your bottle or mug instead of giving you a disposable cup.

Give Up Disposables: Avoid buying bottled water. Use cloth napkins, towels, and rags in your home. Eat meals on dishes, not paper, plastic, or Styrofoam plates and bowls.

As you ring in the new year, think about what you are using and what you might be wasting. It might be time for a "reduce-olution" or two!

Happy New Year!

Clay



La Porte County Solid Waste District educator Alicia Ebaugh (left) poses with Master Recycler volunteers John Marchese and Betty Brewe among the 8,926 plastic bags they collected during an America Recycles Day event at Al's Franklin in Michigan City.

"We spend January 1st walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives...not looking for flaws, but for potential." ~ Ellen Goodman

The Zero-Waste Lifestyle

Amy: “Remember last weekend when my parents were here?”

Adam: “Yeah.” He was looking at his computer, distracted.

Amy: “We were joking about living trash free for a whole year? I think I want to do it.”

From that conversation, the Green Garbage Project was born. Over a 52-week period, Amy and Adam Korst endeavored to produce no waste destined for the landfill. In the end, they were left with a shoebox of materials which they could not reuse or recycle. It weighed about the same amount as the three pounds of waste the average American throws away for landfill disposal EACH DAY. They were surprised to learn that it wasn't that difficult and the benefits were many. They lived more simply, spent less money, and ate healthier and were generally happier. In addition, they were helping preserve natural resources and reduce the harmful effects of resource extraction, manufacturing, and transportation on the environment. So, they just kept doing it.

In her book, *The Zero-Waste Lifestyle: Live Well by Throwing Away Less*, Amy Korst shares firsthand knowledge gained from her zero-waste lifestyle. She also draws on the experience of five others, some of whom have been doing this for decades. So, rest assured, this isn't as rare as it sounds, nor is it as difficult. It is both an interesting narrative and an educational reference. Whether you read it cover to cover or keep it on the shelf as a do-it-yourself resource, you won't be disappointed.

The first five chapters cover the big picture of waste in America, as well as hands-on advice about reducing your consumption, improving your recycling, and composting your organic waste.

The author advises you to get to know people where you shop. At a grocery, she'll ask to speak to the manager and, in her words, “I introduce myself, shake their hand, and explain my lifestyle. Then I ask that person whether I can bring my own containers to the

store to buy fresh, bulk, or deli products.” She goes on to offer some sample dialogue to help the reader through the process. Then she offers this helpful tidbit: “I make sure I note the manager's name, so if I encounter a skeptical employee when I get back to the meat counter, I can say, ‘Oh, I checked with Carli, the store manager, and she said it was okay.’”

Korst encourages the reader to, “Be proud! You're making a difference. How many people can say that?” She suggests you lead by example: “Those around you see your choices and may choose to emulate them. Even if they don't, they may choose to accommodate your choices, thereby using their consumer purchasing power to buy green products.” As you research what packaging items are made of and whether or not they are recyclable in your area, she encourages you to call the manufacturers' toll-free numbers and express your interest in recyclable packaging.

Helpful tools are provided, such as a master shopping checklist to help you evaluate what you buy regularly and evaluate whether packaging associated with those items is recyclable. She also advocates that you maintain On-the-Go Kits for the car and work. The travel mug in the car kit reduces her use of disposable coffee cups, and the reusable plastic containers reduce her use of Styrofoam containers when taking leftovers home from a restaurant. Use of these kits provides her with more opportunities to share her story. When someone brings treats to work or there is an office pitch-in, Korst attends these events “with my plastic plate and utensils in hand. This often becomes a talking point among my coworkers, which is great because it helps raise awareness even more.”

In later chapters, she provides detailed instructions on reducing waste in every room of the house, as well as specific advice for kids, travel, work, holidays, and special occasions. Throughout, Korst divides her guidance into beginner, moderate, and advanced levels. Everyone will find something useful here. Once their systems were in place, Amy and Adam found no difficulty maintaining their efforts. With this book, you won't have to develop those systems from scratch.

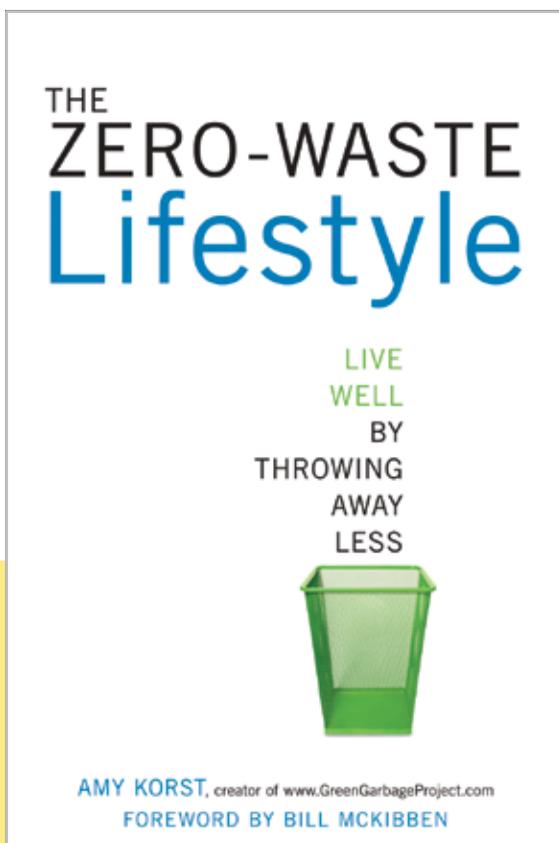
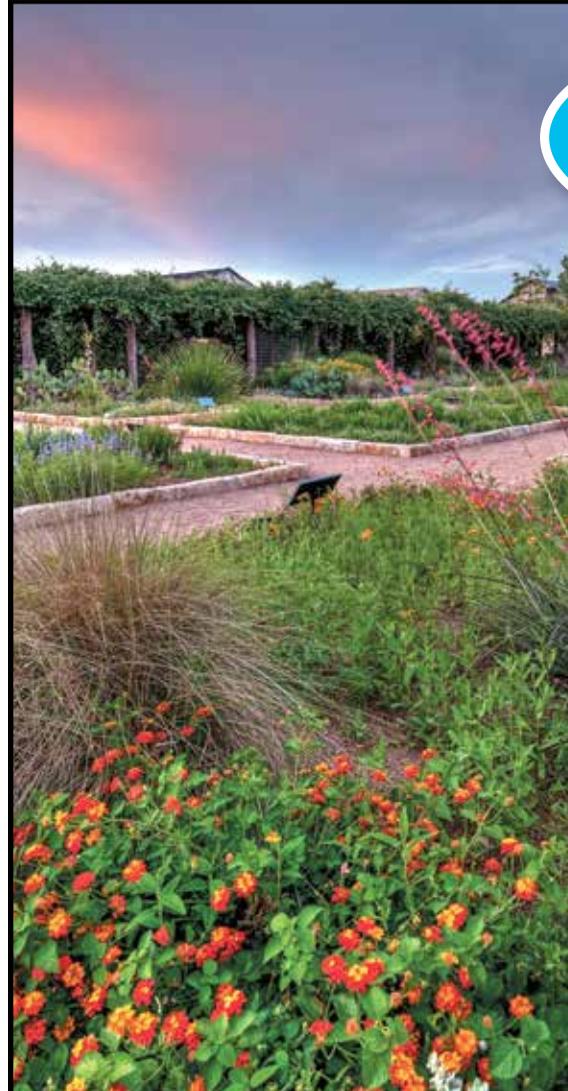


Photo courtesy of Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin



The Theme Gardens at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center are among the 12 acres of cultivated gardens and meadows on site, in addition to hiking trails.

QUOTES REQUOTED

“The environment is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share.”

Claudia “Lady Bird” Johnson, 1912-2007

Businesswoman, First Lady, and Co-Founder of the National Wildflower Research Center



Thirteen billion pounds of paper towels are used in America each year. Many times, people take multiple towels to dry their hands. If everyone gave up just one each day, we could save 571,230,000 pounds every year. So, how do we make the most of only one, or even one-half of, a paper towel? Joe Smith explains it takes two simple steps before drying: SHAKE and FOLD. After turning off the water, SHAKE the water off your hands. Next, FOLD the paper towel in half. If it is a tri-fold towel in a public restroom, open it up and fold it in half. Now wipe your hands dry! Watch Joe Smith demonstrate his one-towel technique at www.TED.com/talks/joe_smith_how_to_use_a_paper_towel.

Other ways to save paper towels include using an air dryer whenever available and using fabric towels at home, which cut down on waste, as well as paper consumption.

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Simple Tools to Reduce Food Waste

Kerry Taylor started Squawkfox.com in 2008. Covering a wide range of personal finance and investing topics, the blog offers a few effective strategies to help you save money while reducing food waste. Taylor says the average American household spends more than \$6,000 per year on food and trashes 25% of that food. So, eliminating food waste could save your family as much as \$1,500.

The first step is to identify what food you are wasting and why. Easily followed instructions, including a downloadable Food Waste Diary, can be found at www.Squawkfox.com/food-waste-diary. Taylor's food waste diary helps you record what you throw away after every meal, the reason why you threw it away, and how much is being tossed. She even wants you to write

down where the food went—compost pile, garbage disposal, trash can, or your dog's stomach. After collecting the data, Taylor encourages you to review the results and search for patterns. Recognizing the causes, such as overpouring beverages, making meals too big, or buying too many perishables at a time, can help you avoid those situations in the future.

The blog also has excellent guidelines and tips:

- Meal planning: www.Squawkfox.com/meal-planner
- Organizing your fridge: www.Squawkfox.com/organized-fridge
- Organizing your freezer: www.Squawkfox.com/freezer-organization
- 20 tasty ways to love your slighted leftovers: www.Squawkfox.com/leftovers



**A FAMILY OF FOUR SPENDS \$1500
A YEAR ON FOOD THEY DON'T EAT**

COOK IT, STORE IT, SHARE IT.
JUST DON'T WASTE IT.

SAVETHEFOOD.COM



You may already recycle your newspapers and office paper, but did you know there are many other ways to reduce or eliminate paper waste?

Reduce

- Go digital: Ask that bills be emailed to you, and subscribe to electronic versions of your favorite publications. Use email instead of printing memos, store recipes with online programs or apps instead of printing them, and use your smartphone for your calendar, grocery, and to-do lists.
- Eliminate junk mail: Call to have your name removed from catalog and other mailing lists. Check out www.Ecocycle.org/junkmail for a list of ways to stop junk mail from clogging up your mailbox.
- Invest in durables: Instead of disposable paper goods, use cloth napkins, cloth kitchen rags, ceramic mugs, and reusable plates.
- Double up: Make copies on both sides of the paper.

Reuse

- Wrap it up: Repurpose newsprint or old maps as wrapping paper, and reuse gift bags that are still in good shape.

- Remember the reverse: Use the back side of single-sided copies and envelopes as scrap paper.
- Buy recycled: Purchase recycled-content copier paper and notebooks. Don't forget to look for toilet tissue and paper towels with post-consumer recycled content, too.
- Re-read: Check out library books or buy used books instead of buying new ones.

Recycle

- Capture it all: Make sure you are recycling all of your corrugated cardboard, paperboard, office paper, magazines, and junk mail.
- Add a bin: Place recycling bins strategically in your home and workplace where you make the most paper waste. A container in the bathroom can collect tubes from empty toilet paper rolls and old magazines. A bin next to the kitchen trash can is convenient for depositing cereal boxes and junk mail. Make sure the bin is clearly marked so everyone uses it properly.
- Spread the word: Tell your school, workplace, neighbors, place of worship, and local businesses about recycling opportunities in your area.

THINK BEFORE YOU SHRED!

Shred **only** documents with sensitive information!

Shredding shortens paper fibers – recycling whole pieces keeps the fibers long, strong, and ready to be made into new paper. Improve recycling by putting non-sensitive papers straight into the recycling bin. It's easy!



For information on how to recycle shredded documents in your area, visit paperrecycles.org.

paper
recycles

Thanks!



Goodbye, foil pouches Hello, cups and contacts

District introduces two new brigades and closes an old one

Changes are on the horizon for the District's Terracycle recycling brigades for hard-to-recycle materials. The foil drink pouch brigade sponsored by Capri Sun will be discontinued at the end of 2016, but two new brigades have taken its place.

Terracycle works with more than 100 major brands in the U.S. and 22 countries overseas to collect used packaging and products that would otherwise be destined for landfills. It repurposes that waste into new, innovative materials and products that are available online and through major retailers.

Between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. each weekday, we're collecting the following items at our office, 2857 W. State Road 2 in La Porte:

- All personal care, makeup, and beauty product packaging
- All oral care products, including toothbrushes and packaging and toothpaste tubes
- Foil-lined energy, granola, and protein bar wrappers (such as Clif, Luna, Nature Valley, etc.)
- Plastic cereal bags (such as MOM's brand) and cereal box liners
- Foil squeezable snack pouches (like GoGoSqueez)
- Brita filters and pitchers
- NEW BRIGADE – Solo® cups and other #6 plastic cups



- NEW BRIGADE – All contact lenses and packaging

If you have been collecting foil drink pouches, we are no longer able to accept those. We shipped our last box from the office to TerraCycle on December 23 to ensure that it would arrive before they closed that brigade program at the end of the year. If you didn't get your foil pouches to the District in time, please discard those you've collected in the trash.

For each shipment of brigade items sent to Terracycle, the Solid Waste District receives points which will eventually be redeemed for a donation to a local youth group to pay for a recycling or environmental project. We've accumulated 15,145 points since the beginning of collections here, but we'll earn points faster if more residents participate. Start saving up these items today and bring them in!

A greener holiday cleanup



Christmas Trees

Once you remove and put away your ornaments, lights, and garland, as well as the stand, you can recycle your real, cut Christmas tree. Holiday trees are accepted at the District's Zigler Road Green Waste Site. Hours are from dawn to dusk daily. Please do not use plastic tree bags. If you do put your tree in a bag, remove it from the bag at the Green Waste Site and take the bag home to throw in the trash. If you live in a city or town, your local street department or trash hauler may pick up your tree at the curb for composting, so check with them on the schedule.

Boxes, Wrapping Paper, and More

Any usable wrapping paper, boxes, bags, bows, or tissue paper can be folded and stored for next year. If you're careful when opening presents, this should provide most of next year's supply. Torn wrapping paper, ribbons, and bows that can't be reused are trash. We do not accept wrapping paper, ribbon, or bows in our recycling program.

However, boxes beyond reuse can be broken down and recycled. Be sure to remove tissue, plastic bags, and other packing material. You can recycle shipping boxes, as well as gift boxes.

And what about the holiday greetings? Plain holiday greeting cards and envelopes can be recycled like other mail. However, if the card has buttons, ribbon, or other

decorations attached, put that one in the trash or reuse it in an arts and crafts project.

Electronics

Did someone at your house unwrap new electronics, replacing older items? Sell or donate usable and unwanted electronics. You can also recycle them, along with any electronics that no longer work, at the District electronics recycling trailer nearest you:

- La Porte County Solid Waste District, 2857 W. State Road 2, La Porte – Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday (closed holidays)
- 1027 Hitchcock Road, Michigan City – Hours: 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday (closed holidays)

You can also recycle burned-out strands of Christmas lights at the District electronics trailers. Please do not put any electronics or Christmas lights in your curbside cart.

Batteries

Many toys and gadgets require batteries, so you may go through more batteries than usual around the holidays. You can recycle spent rechargeable batteries, along with other household batteries, at 20 locations in La Porte County. For a list of battery recycling locations and to learn more about all of our great programs that can help you have a greener cleanup, visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com.



www.facebook.com/LPCoRecycling
www.twitter.com/LPCoRecycling
www.youtube.com/LPCoRecycling
 Green E-Club: <http://eepurl.com/eiyHs>



We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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Curbside Recycling Schedule

- A** City of La Porte – South of Hwy. 2 and West of Monroe (Hwy. 4); North of Hwy. 2 and West of 35
- B** City of La Porte – East of Hwy. 4 and South of Hwy. 2, including Kankakee Township; East of Hwy. 35 and North of Hwy. 2 to Brighton Street
- C** City of La Porte – East of Hwy. 35 and North of Brighton Street; Town of Westville; New Durham Estates Mobile Home Community; Cass Township; Dewey Township; Hanna Township; Prairie Township
- D** Clinton Township; Noble Township; Scipio Township; Town of Wanatah
- E** Johnson Township; Lincoln Township; Pleasant Township; Union Township; Washington Township
- F** Michigan City – West of Karwick Road; Sheridan Beach; Pottawattamie Park; Village Green
- G** Michigan City – East of Karwick Road; Springfield Township; Long Beach; Michiana Shores; Shoreland Hills
- H** Coolspring Township; New Durham Township (excluding the Town of Westville and New Durham Estates); Weatherstone Village; Terrace Acres
- I** Center Township
- J** Galena Township; Hudson Township; Wills Township; Trail Creek (Michigan City); Rolling Prairie Mobile Home Park

Reminders:

- Place your recycling totes out the night before or by 6 a.m. the day of collection.
- Call within 24 hours to report a missed pickup. If you call after hours, please leave a voice mail message.

NOTE: Township is outside of City limits. Never remove tote from assigned address.

January						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Holiday No Service	F	G	H	I	J
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	A	B	C	D	E	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	F	G	H	I	J	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	A	B	C	D	E	
29	30	31				
	F	G				

February						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3	4
			H	I	J	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	A	B	C	D	E	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	F	G	H	I	J	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	A	B	C	D	E	
26	27	28				
	F	G				

March						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3	4
			H	I	J	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	A	B	C	D	E	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	F	G	H	I	J	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	A	B	C	D	E	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	F	G	H	I	J	