

Community **RECYCLER**

PALO ALTO RECYCLING PROGRAM

SPRING 2007



How Will You Celebrate Earth Day This Year?

There are a variety of easy things you can do to help reduce our impact on the environment. This issue of the Community Recycler will give you a few examples of ways you can be part of the solution. When we work together, simple changes can change the world.



A Newsletter Promoting Using Less, Recycling the Rest

Bring Your Own Bag

It's an easy way to make a difference.

Almost every time we go shopping, we come out of the store with our merchandise in a paper or plastic bag. It may be more convenient to use them instead of remembering to bring our own, but what price do we pay for that convenience? Both paper and plastic bags create air, land and water pollution during resource extraction, manufacturing, transportation and ultimately in their disposal (even recycling them consumes energy and causes pollution). Bring your own bags when you go shopping. It's a simple way to make a difference.

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, 12 million barrels of oil are required to make the 100 billion plastic shopping bags used annually in the U.S. Plastic bags may consume less energy and generate less solid waste, air and water pollution than paper bags, but they do not biodegrade (they simply break down into smaller and smaller pieces of plastic). Many plastic bags are found floating in the oceans where they choke, strangle and starve wildlife. Plastic bags cause over 100,000 sea turtle and other marine animal deaths every year when animals mistake them for food.

Paper bags, on the other hand, may hold more than plastic bags, are usually made with some recycled content, and are biodegradable, but their production means cutting trees and making pulp. In 1999, 14 million trees were cut to produce the 10 billion paper grocery bags used by Americans that year alone. Paper bag production delivers a global warming double-whammy. First, forests, which are major absorbers of greenhouse gases, have to be cut down. Second, the manufacturing and transportation of the bags produces greenhouse gases.

You may reuse some of the paper or plastic bags you get from the store for things around the house such as garbage can liners or picking up pet droppings, but can you use all of them? The average family accumulates 60 plastic bags in

only four trips to the grocery store. Ask your retailer to pack your merchandise in the number of paper or plastic bags that you need and then have the rest packed in your cloth bags. Each cloth bag you use has the potential to eliminate an average of 1,000 plastic bags over its lifetime. It will even pay for itself if your grocery store offers a \$.05 or \$.10 credit per bag for bringing your own bags.

Sources:

The World Watch Institute www.worldwatch.org

The Algalita Marine Research Institute www.algalita.org

The Film & Bag Federation www.plasticbag.com

Reusablebags.com www.reusablebags.com

National Geographic News

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/09/0902_030902_plastic_bags.html



Use Less, Recycle the Rest



Bring Out Your Garden's Inner Jungle

Adding compost to your soil improves its structure, helps it absorb and hold moisture, supplies slow-release nutrients to your plants, reduces erosion and allows your plants to develop better root structure which helps them grow bigger, stronger, and healthier.

Compost Workshops

Learn how easy it is to compost your food and yard waste and make it work for you! Call the Recycling Program to enroll.

Backyard Composting

Palo Alto residents attending a workshop receive a voucher for a reduced cost Biostack compost bin (a \$99 retail value for \$27).

Tuesday Workshops

7:00pm - 8:30pm

May 22, July 24,
September 25, November 27

Saturday Workshops

10:00am - 11:30am

April 28*, June 23,
August 25, October 27

* Designates combination Compost and Less Toxic Pest Control workshop.

Worm Your Way Into It

Worm composting is a no fuss, no smell, and low maintenance way to compost.

Saturday Workshops

10:00am - 11:30am

April 7, September 8

The Finished Product

Palo Alto Compost, made from the materials collected through the drop-off and curbside yard trimmings collection program, is available at the Palo Alto Landfill.

Compost Giveaway Days

Palo Alto residents may receive up to one cubic yard of compost FREE on these scheduled days. Bring a shovel, containers to carry the compost home and proof of Palo Alto residency (i.e., driver's license) to the Palo Alto Landfill.

Saturday Dates

June 23,
September 29

Sunday Dates

October 7

The Organics Yard

Compost and other soil amendments specially developed for Palo Alto soils can be purchased from the Organics Yard located at the Palo Alto Landfill.

The landfill is located at 2380 Embarcadero Road and is open from 8:00am - 5:00pm, seven days a week.

Go Ahead, Let Your Kid Eat Dirt!

Rolling in the grass and playing in the dirt are two things that kids and pets do best. But that's also where most pesticides are found. Keep your loved ones safe and your garden beautiful using home composting and less-toxic pest control techniques.

These FREE Healthy Garden Workshops will help you create a yard and garden that is not only beautiful, but also a healthy space for your family and the environment.

FREE Healthy Garden Workshops

Saturday, April 28

Common Ground, 559 College Avenue, Palo Alto
www.commongroundinpaloalto.org



10:30 am - Kid-Safe / Pet-Safe Pest Control

- How to prevent garden pests and disease
- Where to buy and how to use less toxic pest control products that really work

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm - Lunch Break

- Bring your lunch or enjoy one of the local lunch venues

1:00 pm - Home Composting for Healthy Gardens

- Reduce pesticide, fertilizer and water use
- Improve the health of your garden's soil
- Turn garden and food wastes into a nutritious soil supplement



Palo Alto residents attending a workshop will receive a voucher to purchase a Biostack compost bin for just \$27 (a \$99 retail value – you save \$72) with proof of residency.

Register Now!

Space is limited, so please call (650) 496-5910 to reserve your space today.

For additional information on eco-friendly pest control, call (650) 329-2598 or visit www.ourwaterourworld.org

Use Less, Recycle the Rest

Tap into your Tap!

Reduce Waste and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

According to the Earth Policy Institute report, “BOTTLED WATER: Pouring Resources Down the Drain”:

- The U.S. is the world's biggest drinker of bottled water, consuming 7 billion gallons annually.
- In contrast to tap water, which is distributed through an energy-efficient infrastructure, transporting bottled water long distances involves burning massive quantities of fossil fuels. Nearly a quarter of all bottled water crosses national borders to reach consumers, transported by boat, train, and truck.
- Worldwide, approximately 2.7 million tons of plastic (made from crude oil) are used to bottle water each year.
- Making bottles to meet Americans' demand for bottled water requires more than 1.5 million barrels of oil annually, enough to fuel some 100,000 U.S. cars for a year.
- About 86% of plastic water bottles in the U.S. become garbage or litter, according to the Container Recycling Institute in Washington, D.C. Almost 40% of the #1 plastic bottles that were deposited for recycling in the United States in 2004 were actually exported, sometimes to as far away as China, adding to the resources used by this product.
- Bottled water costs as much as \$10 a gallon, which is more than gasoline. Most of this extra cost is driven by transportation and packaging.
- Roughly 40% of bottled water begins as tap water.

How Much Oil is in Your Water?



The photo above shows the amount of oil required to ship and truck water to the Bay Area for each water bottle pictured*.

- Calistoga, California - 200 miles
- Colorado - 1,213 miles
- New Zealand - 6,711 miles

* Not including the weight of the plastic or the natural gas used to make the plastic.

– Source: David Coale, Acterra

What does this mean?

It means we need to re-think our relationship with our tap! Using the reduce and reuse strategies below, you can help the community achieve its zero waste goal.

Reduce:

If you don't make water bottle waste in the first place, we don't have to “manage” it. Waste is created along the entire life of that bottle — from the process of creating the bottles, bottling the water, getting it to market, then into our waste management system for recycling where it is collected, transported to sorting facilities then on to recycling facilities.

Reuse:

Bring your own water bottle and use it over and over and over again. Each time you refill your own water bottle, it is one less bottle that has to be created.

What kind of refillable water bottle should you choose?

You may want to do some homework on the best choice of bottle for you. There are some studies that do not look favorably on plastic bottles. Glass and stainless steel bottles are alternative choices and can be found at some Palo Alto stores.

What if I prefer the taste of bottled water over tap?

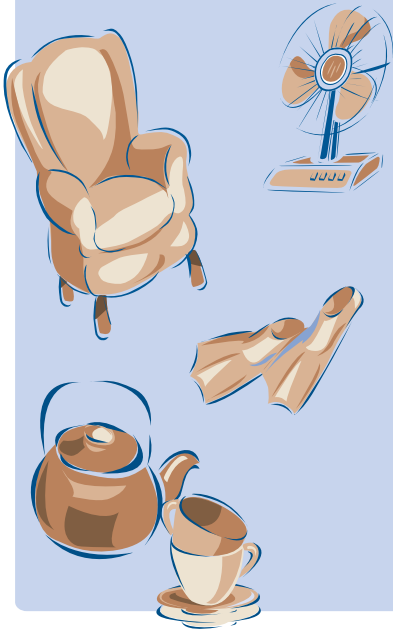
Filter the tap. Consumer publications such as Consumer Reports have performed comparisons on different types of filtration systems that may assist you in your decision.

Use Less, Recycle the Rest

palo alto citywide garage sale!

Saturday, June 2
from 8am to 1pm

join the fun!



Help the community and the environment by joining us to reduce waste and conserve valuable resources (and make yourself a few extra bucks)! Reusing – whether you donate, buy, or sell – is one of the best ways to reduce waste and keep usable stuff out of the landfill.

how it works

- Send in the entry form below. The Recycling Program must receive it by May 7.
- You'll receive a free Garage Sale Kit complete with a handy list of tips for a successful sale, an eye-catching sign and a list of reuse organizations.
- Your address and sale merchandise will be listed on May 30 and June 1 in the Palo Alto Weekly as part of a full page map with all participating sales.

interested in shopping only?

Look for full page ads listing sale locations and merchandise in the Palo Alto Weekly on May 30 and June 1. Maps will also be available online in late May at www.cityofpaloalto.org/garagesale

reuse — another step toward zero waste

sign me up!

I agree to operate my garage sale on Saturday, June 2, from 8am to 1pm. I understand that the deadline for receipt of my application/cancellation is May 7. I agree to contact the Recycling Program by May 7 if I must cancel my sale, so my name can be removed from the list of participants appearing in the Palo Alto Weekly.

NAME (will not be listed in the newspaper):

PHONE (will not be listed in the newspaper):

ADDRESS OF GARAGE SALE (will be listed):

NEAREST MAIN CROSS STREETS:

Items you plan to sell: Clothing Furniture Antiques Books
 Toys Appliances Jewelry OTHER (list items of special interest):

ONLINE : www.cityofpaloalto.org/garagesale
MAIL: Recycling Program Garage Sale
P.O. Box 10250 • Palo Alto, CA 94303
PHONE: 496-5910



Palo Alto Recycling Program

Use less, recycle the rest.

City of Palo Alto Public Works Department



Use Less, Recycle the Rest

Don't Wipe Out the Forest

Buy toilet paper made from recycled paper.

Forests are being destroyed to make toilet paper, facial tissue, paper towels and other disposable paper products. These forests support numerous species of plants and animals and act as important carbon storage areas to help reduce global warming.

If every household in the United States replaced just one roll of virgin fiber toilet paper (500 sheets) with a roll of 100% recycled toilet paper, we could save 423,900 trees.

Source: National Resources Defense Council

Help halt the destruction, buy paper products with recycled content

Visit www.nrdc.org/paper for the "Shoppers Guide to Home Tissue Products" or for more information regarding the paper industry and disposable paper products.

Buying Recycled Another step toward Zero Waste



greenlight earth day film festival



Call For Entries

Entries are being accepted for the GREENLIGHT Earth Day Film Festival. There is no entry fee.

ENTRY CATEGORIES (3):

- Students grades 6-8
- Students grades 9-12
- Open (all others)

PRIZES:

- Top entries will be shown at the GREENLIGHT Earth Day Film Festival to be held at Cubberley Theater at 4000 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto on Thursday, May 24, 2007 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm.
- Entries will be shown on cable TV and the Internet.
- Prizes include Apple and Best Buy gifts cards, a \$500 cash prize for "Best of Festival", Electronic Arts Inc. (EA) gaming tour and more.

FESTIVAL INFORMATION

- For judging criteria, guidelines, event directions, prizes and other festival information, visit www.cityofpaloalto.org/earthday
- For general festival questions, contact Amanda Cox, a GREENLIGHT Earth Day Film Festival Committee member, by phone at (650) 329-2417 or by email at Amanda.Cox@cityofpaloalto.org



Palo Alto Recycling Program

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City of Palo Alto Public Works Department

We welcome all comments, questions, and suggestions. Please send them to:

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Or email us at:
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City of Palo Alto Recycling saved the following resources by using New Leaf Sakura 100, manufactured with Green-e® certified renewable energy, 100% post-consumer waste, and processed chlorine free: 19 fully grown trees, 6328 gallons of water, 11 million BTUs of energy, 914 pounds of solid waste, and 1775 pounds of greenhouse gases.

Individuals with disabilities who require accommodations to access City facilities, services or programs, or who would like information on the City's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, may contact the City's ADA Coordinator at 650-329-2550 (voice) or email ada@cityofpaloalto.org

The Community Recycler is produced by the City of Palo Alto Recycling Program and is distributed as a public service to all residents in Palo Alto. The Community Recycler often provides information about specific products or companies. Such inclusion does not imply endorsement by the Palo Alto Recycling Program.

For more information about recycling in Palo Alto, garbage pick-up or household hazardous waste, please refer to the appropriate organization or visit the City of Palo Alto's website.

Palo Alto Recycling Program
ph: (650) 496-5910
email: recycling@cityofpaloalto.org
web: www.cityofpaloalto.org/recycle

Palo Alto Sanitation Company
ph: (650) 493-4894

City of Palo Alto Landfill
ph: (650) 329-2655

City of Palo Alto Household Hazardous Waste Program
ph: (650) 496-6980

Use Less, Recycle the Rest