

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Spokane Regional
Solid Waste System

(509) 625-6580
www.solidwaste.org

Spring 2010



E-Cycle Washington — A First Year Success Story

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) has added up all the numbers and declared the E-Cycle Washington recycling program for unwanted electronics a resounding success. In its first year of operation, over 38.5 million pounds of TVs, monitors and computers were turned in, free of charge, to authorized collection points throughout the state. Spokane County homes, schools and small businesses collected over 1.7 million pounds of electronic equipment.

The majority – 58 percent – of the items turned in were televisions, with monitors making up nearly 32 percent and computers 10 percent.

Electronics manufacturers in Washington began taking responsibility for the cost of recycling these products in January 2009. The Washington Materials Management and Financing Authority (WMMFA) is a manufacturer-funded organization that has contracted with collectors throughout the state to make e-cycling more convenient and easy. These authorized collectors handle the items safely

and responsibly, following standards set by WMMFA and Ecology.

E-Cycle Washington is an important program because of the millions of pounds of electronics that are thrown away each year.



These items usually contain toxic materials, including lead, cadmium and mercury, as well as hazardous chemicals that can be harmful to both humans

and our environment. By e-cycling, we can prevent these toxins from going into landfills and waste to energy plants.

Many of the components in e-cycled products can be recovered and used in new products. This conserves resources that would be required to recycle old units and reduces the necessity to manufacture new parts. Some of the turned-in items are still functional and may be able to be used by those who do not have the resources to purchase new equipment.

By e-cycling, we all take responsibility for electronics from the beginning to the end of their useful lives. For more information about E-Cycle Washington, visit www.ecyclewashington.org.

I want to e-cycle! What do I do?

Through E-Cycle Washington, you can turn in, free of charge, the following items:

- Computers
- CPUs (computer towers)
- Laptops
- Computer monitors
- Televisions

When you drop off your items, be sure to let the collector know that you are participating in the E-Cycle Washington program.

The program *does not* accept:

- Mice
- Printers
- Copiers
- Scanners
- All other electrical devices, including appliances and cell phones

There may be some recycling businesses or other programs that will take these unacceptable items. Call the Recycling Hot Line, 625-

6800, or see the Recycling & Garbage Guide in the front of the Dex phone directory for more information on other options.

When you turn in your unwanted electronics, be certain that you have completely destroyed any data that you would want to keep confidential. Reformatting the hard drive and deleting files are NOT secure methods of destroying data. WMMFA is not responsible for confidential data that is on any items that are turned in to the program.

To learn more about data destruction, collection locations, and alternatives for responsible disposal of items that are not accepted, please visit www.ecyclewashington.org. You can also call 800-RECYCLE (732-9253) for collection sites near you (this phone number is not for general information inquiries).

Come Celebrate Mother Earth with Your Friends and Neighbors at April Events

April 22, 2010 marks the 40th anniversary of Earth Day

Spokane area residents have two opportunities to participate in the celebration of Earth Day, beginning on Saturday, April 10, 2010 with "Spring Into Action: A Celebration of Environmental Awareness," presented by the Spokane Valley Parks and Recreation Department. Join other celebrants from 10 a.m. to noon at the Valley Mission Park picnic shelter area (11123 E. Mission Ave.) to learn fun and interactive ways to protect the environment. Activities include a tree planting ceremony, hands-on green activities, recycling information, energy conservation, information booths and more. For more information, call 688-0300 or visit www.spokanevalley.org

The following weekend, Saturday, April 17, 2010, Spokane will be "Taking it to the Streets" with Earth Day festivities beginning at 11 a.m. and continuing through midnight on Main Street, between Browne and Division in downtown Spokane. Throughout the day, participants will learn together, play together, and celebrate together. Attendees can look forward to:

- FREE earth-friendly activities for children of all ages, including planting veggies, building birdfeeders, creating recycled art projects, drawing sidewalk chalk

art, face painting, costume/drum making for the Procession of the Species parade through Riverfront Park, and much more!

- Feathered friends! The Washington State University Raptor Club will be on site with rescued owls and other raptors.
- Art, art and more art! One of the projects includes the demolition and reconstruction of seven retired pianos, which will be re-assembled into one recycled, music-making monster!
- Live music, poetry reading, roller derby, belly dancing and other performance art!
- Eating! Local food vendors will be there all day.
- Watching a movie with FREE admission at the Magic Lantern Theater.
- Touring the Main Market, the Community Building and the Saranac Building (the first platinum-certified "green" building in Spokane).
- Visiting demonstrations and displays by dozens of local businesses.
- Capping off the evening with live music, dancing and a beer garden inside the Community Building Warehouse until midnight!

Compost Fair

Join other prospective composters for the Compost Fair at Finch Arboretum on Arbor Day, Saturday, April 24, 2010, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to take part in hands-on demonstrations that teach the basics of home composting. Spokane County residents (with identification verifying residency) can receive a free plastic compost bin after completing the various activities. There is a limit of one bin per household. Attendees must arrive by 1:30 p.m. to complete all activities by the 2 p.m. closing time.



Master Composters, who will be conducting the demonstrations, are volunteers who have participated in a training program sponsored by the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System. Training classes to become a Master Composter are held each spring.

There will also be a Compost Fair at the Fall Leaf Festival in October, 2010. Call the Recycling Hot Line, 625-6800, for details.

New Facility Operating Hours Effective April 1

As part of the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System's (SRSWS) efforts to provide better customer service, the hours that the Waste to Energy facility, North County Transfer Station and Valley Transfer Station are open to the public are changing. New operating hours, effective Thursday, April 1, 2010, will be **7 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week.**

Please note that the "extended hours"

schedule that has been in place during spring/summer months in previous years will no longer be in use. This schedule was confusing for many customers. By standardizing the operating hours to be consistent throughout the year at all facilities, SRSWS hopes to eliminate that confusion.

If you have questions, please contact the SRSWS office, 625-6800.

Planning a Public Event?

Washington State law now requires that recycling receptacles be provided at all official gatherings and sports facilities. If you've attended recent events such as Bloomsday, Hoopfest or Pig Out in the Park, you have probably seen containers where empty cans and bottles can be deposited. The Spokane Indians Baseball Club has equipped Avista Stadium with plenty of receptacles for fans' recyclable items, and their mascot Recycle Man is usually on the scene during home games to encourage everyone to use the receptacles.

The Spokane Regional Solid Waste Sys-

tem (SRSWS) has Clear Stream recycling containers that your organization may borrow to use at your event. Containers are designed to collect aluminum cans and Code 1 plastic bottles.

It's easy to request Clear Stream containers!

1. Contact the SRSWS at 625-6580. You will be connected to the person who can schedule containers for your event.
2. Once you call, you will be mailed the Event Guidelines and Equipment Request

(Continued on Page 4)

Earth Day: A History

You'll hear a lot about Earth Day over the next month because 2010 marks the 40th anniversary of the first Earth Day. On April 22, 1970, about 20 million Americans gathered in their neighborhoods, hometowns, state capitols, and Washington, D.C. Events ranged from litter cleanups and tree plantings to demonstrations and "teach-ins" to increase environmental awareness and knowledge.

That first Earth Day was the culmination of efforts begun a century earlier and inspired by naturalists, such as Henry David Thoreau and John Muir. Early in the 20th century, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service were founded, devoting themselves to protection of our public lands and natural heritage resources. In the 1920s, Marjory Stoneman Douglas began her work to save the Florida Everglades. The storms of the 1930s that caused the Dust Bowl in the Great Plains led to conservation efforts on farm and ranch lands. In 1948, the first piece of legislation that regulated water quality, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, was passed by Congress. In 1953, Keep America Beautiful was founded, largely to address the eyesore and hazards of roadside litter. In 1962, Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, sounded the alarm about the effects of pesticides on wildlife, as well as humans.

In 1963, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson accompanied President John F. Kennedy on a speaking tour focused on environmental concerns. After President Kennedy's death, Nelson continued to work on the issue, but the next six years were consumed by other priorities.

Then, in 1969, three things occurred that got the nation's attention. In early January, Americans got their first glimpse of the earth as seen from space in photos



Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, exposed the risks associated with certain pesticides, some of which were banned less than a decade later.

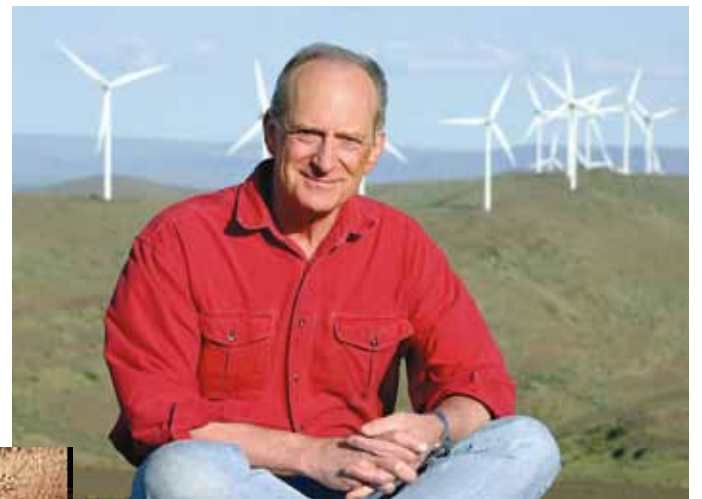
(Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

taken by the Apollo space crew. In late January, an oil spill fouled the California coast near Santa Barbara. In June, a chemical fire on Cleveland's Cuyahoga River received national media coverage. In 1969, the "enough is enough" moment occurred and Americans mobilized.

Senator Nelson realized that the time was right to put the environment at the top of the national agenda. He enlisted the help of graduate student Denis Hayes and planning got under way. When Earth Day rolled around, even the organizers did not anticipate how large the crowds would be or how passionate the voices. Within a year, President Richard Nixon had established the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Congress had passed the Clean Air Act, and that was only the beginning.

The work begun by Earth Day continued in the years that followed. In 1990, on the 20th anniversary of Earth Day, more than 200 million people in over 140 countries took part. In recent years, those numbers have continued to grow, with more than a billion people now taking part in annual celebrations, activities, and initiatives.

The motto of Earth Day is "Make Every Day Earth Day." By continuing our efforts to improve the environment in big and small ways, we are making every day and every year one for the earth and all of its inhabitants.



Denis Hayes was a graduate student when he agreed to work with Senator Gaylord Nelson to organize the first Earth Day. (Photo Courtesy of Zeitgeist Films)



This hillside dump was photographed in 1972 as part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Documerica" project, which was intended to capture images of environmental problems. (Photo by Gene Daniels, courtesy of U.S. EPA)

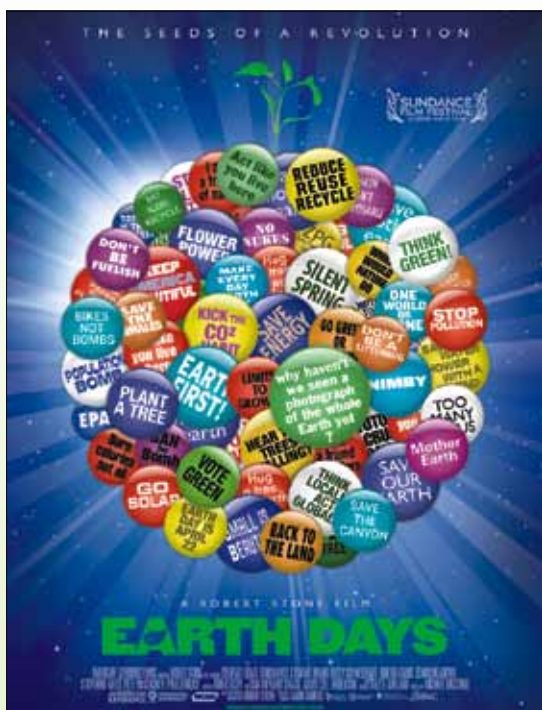
Read more about it!

Earth Day
www.earthday.net

Apollo 8's "Earthrise" Photo
www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/image_feature_102.html

Cuyahoga River Fire
www.cleveland.com/science/index.ssf/2009/06/cuyahoga_river_fire_40_years_a.html

Santa Barbara Oil Spill
www.dailynexus.com/article.php?a=16459



Earth Days

Last year, a documentary, "Earth Days: The Seeds of a Revolution," opened at the Sundance Film Festival. The film traces the beginnings of the modern environmental movement through the first Earth Day and the actions that followed. The documentary will air on "American Experience" on PBS on April 19 and will be available on DVD after that.

To learn more, visit www.earthdaysmovie.com or www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/earthdays/.

FAST FACTS

Cook, clean, deodorize

What gives lift to your homemade cookies, creates a soothing paste for a sunburn, deodorizes your fridge, and cleans your bathroom? Baking soda, of course! Baking soda, or sodium bicarbonate, is a leavening agent used in baking, but it is also so much more. Baking soda mixed with dish soap makes a versatile cleaning scrub. Mixed with white vinegar, baking soda can be used as an all-purpose cleaner. Baking soda can help deodorize trash cans, garbage disposals, laundry, gym bags, tennis shoes, cat litter boxes, hampers, and other smelly items. A paste made from baking soda and a small amount of water can soothe skin irritations caused by sunburn or insect bites.

For more baking soda solutions, go online and search for "baking soda solutions" or check out *Baking Soda Bonanza* by Peter A. Ciullo or *Green Up Your Cleanup* by Jill Potvin Schoff.



Green @ Home

Looking for ways to "green" your home? Whether you want to reduce your energy use, conserve water, choose environmentally friendly materials and products, reduce your waste, or protect your health, you'll find suggestions at www.epa.gov/greenhomes. Find specific ideas for each area of your home with the room by room feature.

Spring reading, naturally

As the temperatures warm, you may be looking forward to more time outdoors. Your plan may be to garden, bike or walk, or simply sit and enjoy the spring breezes and sunshine. Consider a trip to the library (or used bookstore), too. Nothing is finer than reading a good book outdoors on a warm spring day.

If you love nature, consider some classics. *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters* by Annie Dillard will have you ready to do some exploration of your own. Are you itching to travel? Pick up *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* by Bill Bryson. As two middle-aged men set out to hike the Appalachian Trail, you'll find humor and awe. Maybe it is the desert landscape that fires your imagination. Look for *Desert Solitaire* by Edward Abbey or *The Land of Little Rain* by Mary Austin. More

of a beach person? Track down a copy of *The Outermost House: A Year of Life on the Great Beach of Cape Cod* by Henry Beston. You might also look for works by John Muir, John McPhee, Gary Snyder, and Maxine Kumin, among others.

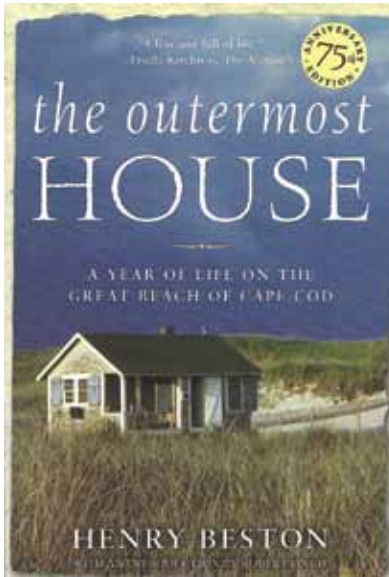
If you prefer your nature closer to the local coffee shop, look for *City Wilds: Essays and Stories About Urban Nature*, edited by Terrell F. Dixon. *City Wilds* celebrates the natural world that

is closest to home for many Americans.

Perhaps you are interested in how we form communities. A National Science Foundation study in 2007 found that as many as one quarter of Americans have no one to confide in or celebrate with. In *Population: 485 – Meeting Your Neighbors*

One Siren at a Time, Michael Perry writes of returning to his hometown and joining the volunteer fire department. One emergency call at a time, he connects with his neighbors and explores the place where he grew up with new eyes. In *Less Is More: Embracing Simplicity for a Healthy Planet, a Caring Economy, and Lasting Happiness*, edited by Cecile Andrews and Wanda Urbanska, the authors ostensibly address how to embrace a simpler lifestyle. However, their real concerns seem to be how we find and maintain more enriching relationships. The reader is challenged to ask the question, "What do I have to offer?"

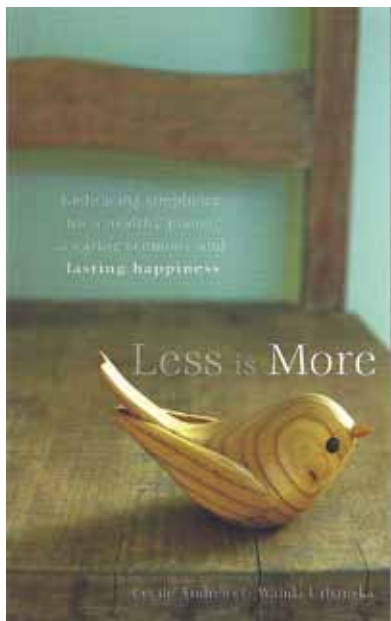
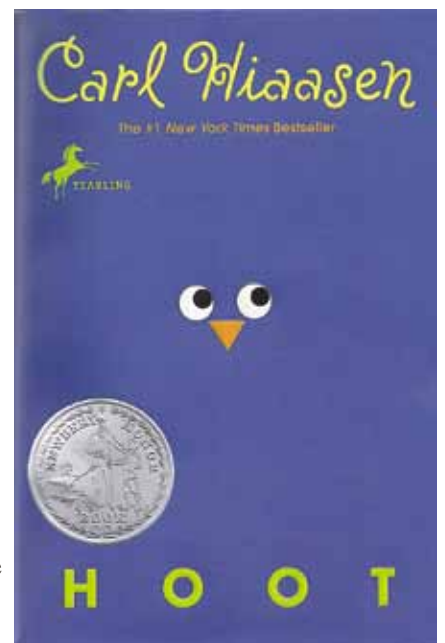
If you have children in your life, check out *Get Out! 150 Easy Ways for Kids & Grown-Ups to Get into Nature and Build a Greener Future* by Judy Molland. This book is full of ideas to get families and groups outside where they will learn about nature as they enjoy it.



Sharing books with young people builds relationships and improves their reading skills. For wonderful books about the natural world, look for Lynne Cherry's books, such as *The Armadillo from Amarillo* or *The Sea, the Storm, and the Mangrove Tangle*; *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky* by Chief Seattle, illustrated by Susan Jeffers; and *Just Us Two: Poems About Animal Dads* by Joyce Sidman. Encourage young gardeners with *The Empty Lot* by Dale H. Fife, *The Gardener* by Sarah Stewart, *A Handful of Dirt* by Raymond Bial, and Lorraine Roulston's series on Pee Wee, the worm. For the slightly older crowd, suggest a simple chapter book, such as *Judy Moody Saves the World* by Megan McDonald.

Pre-teens can be a harder group to please. Get them excited about the environment with Carl Hiaasen's eco-thrillers: *Hoot*, *Flush*, and *Scat*. In these books, youth find—and find ways to solve—environmental problems created by adults.

Obviously, there are many more great books for children, teens, and adults. Take advantage of that reuser's paradise—the local library—and enjoy good reading with the good weather!

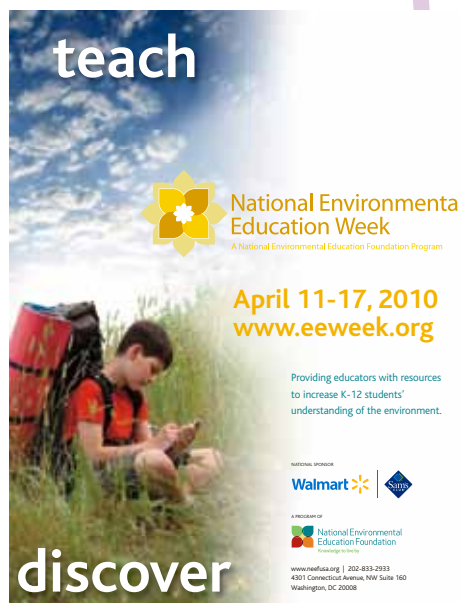


What a week!

In the week before Earth Day each year, students and teachers are invited to explore the natural world during National Environmental Education Week. Environmental education isn't just for the science classroom, but can include activities in social studies, language arts, math, art, music, and more. Environmental education gets students excited because they get involved in real-world problem solving.

There are many ways for students and teachers to take part in Environmental Education Week, beginning with incorporating environmental themes and topics into daily lessons. But the activities don't end there. Students can be encouraged to write conservation plans for home and school, audit energy and water use or trash disposal, set up a nature walk or scavenger hunt, take part in a litter cleanup, visit a local utility facility (power plant, water treatment plant, wastewater plant, recycling facility, etc.), start or expand a school recycling program, and much more. Get parent organizations and clubs into the act, as well!

Environmental Education Week 2010 is April 11-17. This year's focus will be on conserving water and energy to preserve our planet and save money. For more information, visit www.eeweek.org.



Those who dwell, as scientists or laymen, among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life.... There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter.

Rachel Carson, 1907–1964
from *The Sense of Wonder*
American biologist

One Change

If you were going to make one change this month, what would it be? We have a suggestion! Purchase recycled-content trash bags and trash can liners. When you are at the store to buy trash bags and can liners, read the labels and look for phrases like "made with recycled content" and "made with post-consumer recycled content."

Don't forget reuse. Plastic shopping bags can be used as liners for small wastebaskets.



Grasscycling = Less Waste, Less Fertilizer, Less Work

Grasscycling is a simple, natural approach to lawn care—you simply leave the grass clippings on the lawn as you mow. Since the clippings are 75 to 85 percent water, they decompose quickly and return their nutrients and moisture back to your lawn.

Save time: When you grasscycle, you won't be stopping your mower to empty the bag. You also won't have to rake up clippings later.

Save money: By leaving the grass clippings on your lawn, a significant percentage of the lawn's nitrogen needs are met, which means you won't need as much fertilizer. You get a greener, happier lawn when you grasscycle. One application of a slow-release or organic fertilizer in the fall is all most grass-cycled lawns need. You also save by not paying for Clean Green disposal.

Save the environment: Grass clippings make up approximately 90 percent of the yard waste produced in the Spokane area between mid-April and October. Grasscycling reduces waste and eliminates trips to Clean Green facilities. By using less fertilizer and fewer pesticides and herbicides, you can also reduce the potential pollution of our area waterways and aquifer.

Other benefits of grasscycling include reducing water evaporation from the lawn, reducing lawn wear by creating a cushioning layer, and encouraging better growth by keeping the soil temperature cooler.

Contrary to popular belief, grass clippings do not cause thatch. Thatch is made up of grass stems, shoots and roots that decompose slowly, unlike the clippings, which decompose much more rapidly.

You can grasscycle with any mower that is in good working condition and has a sharp blade. Mow at least once a week and reverse the mowing direction each time. You'll get the best results if the lawn is dry and you remove no more than 1" each time. Generally, you should cut your lawn to a height of about 2" to 3".

If you're in the market for a new mower, a mulching mower could be a good option for you. Push mowers and electric mulching mowers can grasscycle for you without the noise and pollution of gasoline-powered mowers.

For more information on grasscycling, call the Recycling Hot Line, 625-6800, or visit the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System website at www.solidwaste.org.



Go Toxin Free in 2010

Household cleaners, yard and garden chemicals, paints, and used oil can easily pile up in cupboards and on storage shelves. Many of these products can be toxic hazards to your family's health if they aren't handled properly. To keep your family and environment healthy, join your community and Go Toxin Free in 2010.

First, turn in your unneeded household toxins. Proper disposal of household toxins means a cleaner, safer home and environment. When materials are turned in at local drop-off sites, 83 percent are recycled and the remainder is properly disposed. Keeping these toxins out of the garbage, off the ground, and out of storm drains is important for our air, drinking water, and our river. Household toxins are accepted year-round at the System facilities: Valley Transfer Station, Waste to Energy Facility, and North County Transfer Station (see maps in the Household Hazardous Waste areas).

Next, choose safer substitutes. Labels with warning words, such as *danger*, *warning*, or *caution*, identify potential hazards if the chemical product is misused, spilled, or disposed of improperly. You can avoid these household toxins by shopping smarter and choosing safer options. Reading labels first will help you avoid products labeled "Dan-

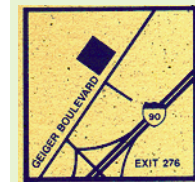
ger" or "Poison." Buying the least amount of product needed for the job will ensure you won't have extra and will save you a trip to the household hazardous waste turn-in sites.

Finally, create your own non-toxic cleaners. Your best bet is to create a low-cost household cleaning kit with white vinegar, baking soda, borax, castile soap, and a spray bottle. You can easily find cleaning recipes on the Internet. The Ecology website at www.ecy.wa.gov/toxicfreetips is a great place to start. Don't forget to include a little elbow grease to help these greener cleaners go the distance.

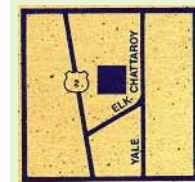
Spokane Regional Solid Waste System, Spokane Aquifer Joint Board, Spokane Neighborhood Action Program – Living Green, Spokane RiverKeeper, and Washington Department of Ecology are teaming up to help you have a Toxin Free 2010. While toxins are collected year-round, there will be a special Turn-in Day on Saturday, April 24, when participants may be eligible for prizes. Watch for more information in local media.

Spokane Regional Solid Waste System Facilities

All of these facilities accept recyclables, household hazardous waste, clean green/yard debris and garbage.



Waste to Energy Facility
2900 S. Geiger Blvd.
(West of Spokane across from the Washington State Patrol)



North County Transfer Station
22123 Elk-Chattaroy Rd.
(Intersection of Elk-Chattaroy Rd. and Hwy. 2)



Valley Transfer Station
3941 N. Sullivan Rd.
(South of Trent Ave., across from Spokane Industrial Park)

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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Funded by the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System with partial funding provided by a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology

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70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS
CONTENT, USING SOY INKS

Why can't we recycle more?

Different cities have different programs

When people move into the Spokane area or travel and return home, they often contact the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System, wondering why they can't recycle as many materials in Spokane as other cities.

Throughout the country, every area has local conditions that support different types of recycling programs. In Washington, the Department of Ecology develops recycling guidelines. Each county and city is responsible for implementing those guidelines and regulations. There are basic market-driven considerations, such as the volume of material available, access to processing facilities, and transportation costs, and there are political and legislative influences, as well. However, successful local recycling programs require three fundamental aspects: infrastructure, markets, and money.

Infrastructure: The recyclable materials – or commodities – have to get to a processing facility somehow. That can happen through a curbside collection program or when the customer takes material directly to a recycling drop-off facility. Within Spokane County, one or both options are available to every resident, but it is up to the resident to participate. The curbside or drop-off facility collects the commodities and takes them to a local processor for sorting and baling before shipment to a buyer.

Markets: Spokane could implement a collection program to *collect* almost anything. But if the local processor has no one to sell


the collected commodities to, all they have is a big pile of material with no place to go. There may be a recycling market someplace for any given commodity, but if it is too far away, the cost of transportation becomes higher than what the commodity is worth.

Money: Both infrastructure and markets lead directly to money. Spokane has unique market conditions because of the relatively low regional population density, sparse local end user markets, and high transportation costs to collect the commodities and then ship commodities to processors and end markets.

Spokane's current recycling program is based on those commodities that have readily available markets and historically strong commodity values. It is exciting to see the increased support for expanding the recycling program. Program planners are working on catching up to it, but building the infrastructure and program expansions can come with costs which may not be as well supported.


The good news is that Spokane is actively pursuing plans for adding commodities, such as additional plastics and mixed paper, to curbside recycling collection programs. It's important to remember that the implemented program will have to balance the benefits with the costs.

For more information on where you can take your recyclables, call the Recycling Hotline at 509-625-6800 or visit www.solidwaste.org.



WASTE TO ENERGY REPORT CARD

Working Together!



Oct. – Dec. 2009

<p>Garbage In 67,588 tons disposed 65,602 tons processed at WTE Facility 2,523 tons of ferrous metal recovered from the ash for recycling 19,171 tons of ash disposed at Rabanco</p>	<p>Electricity Generation 40,857 MWh produced 7,174 MWh used to run the facility 33,683 MWh sold to Puget Sound Energy Notice of Violation None Revenues after Electricity Transmission Expenses \$3,504,058.90</p>
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Public event

(Continued from Page 1)

Form. You can also access the forms online at www.solidwaste.org.

Select a recycling option

Determine ahead of time how your collected recyclables will get to a recycler. Event organizers are responsible for dealing with the recyclables and ensuring that they are delivered to a recycling facility for processing. If you have collected the co-mingled aluminum cans and plastic bottles, you need to be sure that the recycler can do a sort of these materials for you. These are your options:

- **For small events:** Haul your own recyclables to a private buy-back center.
- **For large events:** Contact the garbage hauler that serves the event site and discuss options for collecting recyclables. Haulers should be able to provide a roll-off container to collect recyclables.

Steps for successful event recycling

1. Pick up the requested number of containers, along with training materials, bags and recycling information.
2. Place the containers at your event. To get good clean recyclables, the containers must be placed next to garbage cans. This



minimizes the contamination in your recyclables.

3. Monitor the containers during your event—your garbage crew can also check the recycling bins. Because more people will be recycling, the garbage containers will not fill up as fast.

Cleaning up after your event

1. Repack the Clear Stream containers according to instructions. A return time will be arranged with you.
2. Make sure your recyclables get recycled!
3. Complete the post-event report.