



Blue Bin News

St. Louis City Residential Recycling Newsletter

Special Occasions

As nice weather approaches, grills start smoking, tiki lights begin flickering, and parties become the weekend pastime. If you've ever hosted a party, you've experienced the excess amount of waste that is left to clean up after the guests leave. Follow the tips below to reduce the amount of waste generated at your get-together.

- * Instead of sending paper invitations, take advantage of electronic invitations and reduce paper waste.
- * Request RSVPs by phone or e-mail rather than via U.S. mail.
- * Serve food on reusable plates or bowls, and serve drinks in reusable glasses or cups.
- * Set out reusable napkins. If you must buy disposable napkins, be sure they contain post-consumer recycled material and compost them after the party.
- * Provide a recycling can next to the trash can and be sure to label each one to prevent contamination.
- * If you compost at home, provide a third can for compostable materials and make a sign to let your guests know what can be composted.
- * Plan ahead. Purchase only as much food as you need to prevent leftovers that won't get eaten.
- * If you're planning a potluck, be sure to plan who makes what so you don't have 4 of the same dish.



We Challenge You To Shop With A Grocery List



According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, people waste about 30% of their household food budgets buying groceries that eventually expire and have to be thrown out. By having a list (and sticking to it) when you shop, you are more likely to buy only what you need and less likely to buy something you thought you were out of but weren't. Keep your list on or next to the refrigerator, so you can add to it as needed. Remember to take your list with you to the store. If you carry reusable shopping bags, include them at the top of your list to remind you to grab them on your way out the door. Not only will a shopping list save you money, it will help reduce your food waste. A 2007 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study concluded that food makes up 12.5% of our total municipal solid waste. As you shop, pay attention to what your food is packaged in. Try to give preference to products without packaging. Otherwise, look for products with the least amount of packaging, packaging that is recyclable, and packaging made from recycled materials.



May 2009 Upcoming Events

Details available at

<http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/recycle/calendar.html>

May 2 - Neighborhood Environmental Forum for North St. Louis City residents
www.stlarchs.org/slacat.htm

May 4 through May 11 - TRASHformations Recycled Sculpture Exhibit
www.madisoncountyrecycles.com/index.aspx?page=37

May 7, May 13, and May 27, Upcycling/Materials and Fabrication Class
www.earthwayscenter.org/calendar.html

May 8 - eARTHworks Art Show, www.moenviron.org/earthworks.aspx

May 14 - Four Seasons of Color with Sun Natives Class

www.mobot.org/iebms/coe/coe_p2_details.aspx?eventid=22861&sessionid=ej0fb5fe6ej7fa5fgm

May 22 - Materials Recovery Facility Field Trip, www.earthwayscenter.org/calendar.html

May 30 - Community Tox-A-Way Day for North St. Louis City residents, www.stlarchs.org/slacat.htm



World Oceans Day

With Earth Day barely behind us, we look ahead to another day intended to educate and motivate people across the globe about the importance of keeping our oceans healthy. World Oceans Day will be held on June 8th, 2009, to bring attention to the connections between our oceans, our climate, and our future. While St. Louis is not a coastal town, it is a river town and happens to sit on the banks of North America's longest river system, the Mississippi/Missouri River system. Since St. Louis is connected to the world's oceans via this massive river, our actions upstream have a direct impact on our oceans downstream. Rain washes litter down storm drains and into our rivers, and wind blows litter directly into our waterways. Some of this debris stays in the river and some of it is eventually carried into the oceans. About 80% of the discarded trash in our oceans originated on land. Of all that waste, 60%-80% is plastic. Plastic bags, cups, bottles, utensils, straws, food wrappers, etc. become detrimental to the fish and wildlife that depend on our oceans. You can help improve the health of our oceans by reducing, reusing, and recycling our finite resources.



REDUCE - First Priority

- * Cook from scratch to minimize waste generated by eating out and prepackaged meals.
- * When moving or shipping breakable items, pack them carefully using newspaper, textiles, popcorn or cornstarch packing "peanuts" rather than polystyrene packing "peanuts."
- * Cancel unwanted mailings or subscriptions.

REUSE - Second Priority

- * Purchase a reusable coffee filter or tea ball rather than disposable filters and bags.
- * Cut the back off of greeting cards and use the card covers as postcards or gift tags.
- * Replace household batteries with rechargeable ones.

RECYCLE - Third Priority

- * Recycle bottles/cans, papers, and cardboard at any of 27 dropoff sites located throughout the City of St. Louis.
- * Find options for recycling other items, such as batteries, books, cellular phones, electronics, electronic media, ink cartridges, textiles, and more by visiting our website.

Go to <http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/recycle> to learn more about reducing, reusing, and recycling.

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Issue #18

Earth Day Kicks Off Plastic Pot Recycling Program

Missouri Botanical Garden's annual plastic pot recycling collection opened on April 22, 2009 and will run until September 30, 2009.



This year, accepted materials include plastic cell packs, hanging baskets, trays, and pots of all sizes. They will not accept household plastics, food containers, clay pots, soil, metal hangers, or plastic bags.

To recycle your pots, shake any soil or rocks from the containers and remove any metal hangers, rings, or other foreign materials. Simply dropoff your items at one of eleven collection sites. Find the dropoff site nearest you at www.mobot.org/plasticpotrecycling/default.asp.

In 2008, 79 tons of plastic pots were recycled into plastic timbers. Remember to close the recycling loop and consider recycled plastic timbers for your next building project.

City of St. Louis Refuse Division's Recycling Program

Archived issues available at
<http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/recycle/residentialnewsletter.html>

Reader Submissions Welcome

Feel free to submit material for this monthly newsletter. Would you like to share your "how to" tips, upcoming events, or something else related to residential waste management? E-mail us at recycle@stlouis.missouri.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

To Subscribe

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