



Blue Bin News

St. Louis City Residential Recycling Newsletter

Do You Care To Share?

A growing interest in product and service sharing has spurred innovative ways to conserve resources and dollars. People can list items on-line that they own but rarely use or search for items they'd like to borrow or rent instead of buy elsewhere.

One example is www.beta.neighborrow.com, "a platform that helps people access things they need to use but don't need to own." At www.frenting.com, you can "start a group with people you know. Post things you'd be willing to lend, share, or give away to the group. You can search or browse through your local network for what you want or need to borrow." "Save and earn money by sharing stuff with your friends," at www.neighborhoods.net. Swaptree.com is a place where you can trade books, music, DVDs, or video games that you own for items you want. To post things you'd be willing to lend, or search for items you'd like to borrow, visit www.loanables.com. At www.barterquest.com, "trade for goods, services, and real estate. Barter for a car, swap a timeshare or apartment, exchange for design services, massage, or dental work."



Additionally, check with your neighborhood association (NA) to find out if your neighborhood has a way of communicating with each other. Some NAs have listservs where neighbors can post/browse what products or services are available for loan, rent, or trade.

Mercury Drop-Off

From July 5 until October 22, 2010, Missourians can clear their homes of mercury-containing items, such as thermometers, blood pressure cuffs, thermostats, switches, etc. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) has launched a summer-long collection event, with nearly 50 drop-off locations throughout the state, including four in the St. Louis area.

To prevent the release of mercury if the item breaks while being transported, MDNR is asking that anyone seeking to dispose of items at these sites prepare them for drop-off by securing the item in two zip-top bags, then placing it in a sealed container, such as a coffee can or plastic margarine tub. Anyone uncomfortable transporting mercury instruments, or who has large quantities of mercury, can contact MDNR's Spill Line at 573.634.2436 to arrange for pick-up. The program does not include compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs). For proper handling of these bulbs, visit www.dnr.mo.gov/pubs/pub2273.pdf. A state contractor will recycle what can be recycled and properly dispose of the remaining items.



Drop off sites in the St. Louis area include:

- * St. Charles Fire Department, 400 North Drive, 636.949.3572. Call before delivery.
- * Franklin County Fire Department/Emergency Management Agency, 200 East 14th Street, Washington, 636.390.1020. Call for hours.
- * Jefferson County Health Department, 405 Main Street, Hillsboro, 636.789.3372, 8am-5pm, M-Th
- * MDNR, Environmental Emergency Response Section, Route 66 State Park Visitors Center, 97 North Outer Road, Eureka, 636.938.7808 or 636.938.7809. Call before delivery.

July 2010 Upcoming Events

Details available at

<http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/recycle/calendar2010.html>

Preserving the Harvest - July 8, 2010 (Thursday) - 7pm to 9pm
www.earthwayscenter.org/calendar.html

Recycled Arts Class: No-Sew Coffee Lover's Tote - July 22, 2010 (Thursday) - 630pm to 730pm
www.wholefoodsmarket.com/storebeta/st-louis/store-calendar/





What RRR You Reading?

Do you love reading, but dislike the thought of felling trees for books you'll probably read only once? In addition to borrowing from the library, perusing thrift or consignment shops, attending book fairs, or sharing with friends and family, there are a variety of other engaging ways to give and get books.

Book Sharing - At www.bookcrossing.com you can share books with people all over the world. Simply register your book to get a Bookcrossing ID (BCID). Write the website and BCID inside the cover. "Release your book into the wild" by "forgetting" it somewhere. When someone finds your book, they can go to www.bookcrossing.com and submit a journal entry. Each time someone records a journal entry, you receive an e-mail notification. You can also search the website for books that have been released in your area. Then you can go to those locations to "catch" those books.

Book Swaps - Swap books and pay for only shipping. List books you want to trade. When someone requests your book, mail it to them. Once they receive your book, you get a credit to request a book from other members. Websites that coordinate this type of book swapping include www.booksfree.swap.com, www.bookmooch.com, and www.paperbackswap.com.

Book Rental - At www.booksfree.com, you to pay a flat monthly fee to rent as many books as you can read. They mail you the books on your "to read" list, you keep them as long as you need. When you're finished, mail the books back and they'll send out more on your list.

Donation - Books can also be donated to various organizations for reuse. Explore your options at <http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/recycle/Books.html>

Prolonging The Life of Food

In the U.S., we throw away 25% of the produce we buy. Research conducted at the University of Arizona revealed that nationally, households discard \$43 billion worth of food every year. Not only does this waste dent our pocketbooks, it is also detrimental to our environment. When we throw away food, we are also wasting the resources that were used to grow, harvest, process, package, transport, and prepare that food.



Planning meals and using shopping lists can help reduce food waste. However, even after planning, produce sometimes spoils before we can use it. If your produce rots after just a few days, you might be storing incompatible fruits and veggies together, speeding the rate of decay. Some produce prefer to be stored in the refrigerator, others prefer the counter or cupboard. Some fruits emit ethylene gas that speeds up ripening and can prematurely decay nearby ethylene-sensitive produce. To prolong the life of your produce:

- * Keep produce whole. Keep all leaves, stems, etc. intact until you're ready to use it.
- * Refrigerate ethylene-producing apples, apricots, cantaloupe, figs, and honeydew.
- * Do not refrigerate ethylene-producing avocados, bananas (unripe), nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, or tomatoes.
- * Keep the following fruits and veggies away from the ethylene-producing foods listed above: Ripe bananas, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce and other leafy greens, parsley, peas, peppers, squash, sweet potatoes, or watermelon.
- * Eat most perishable items first. Most perishable: Artichokes, asparagus, avocados, bananas, broccoli, cherries, corn, green beans, mushrooms, mustard greens, strawberries. More perishable: Arugula, cucumbers, eggplant, grapes, lettuce, lime, pineapple, zucchini. Less perishable: Apricots, bell peppers, blueberries, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, grapefruit, leeks, lemons, oranges, peaches, pears, plums, spinach, tomatoes, watermelon. Least perishable: Apples, beets, cabbage, carrots, celery, garlic, onions, potatoes, winter squash.

If food does go bad, we can still harness some of the nutrients locked inside. Explore home composting options at <http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/recycle/compost.html>.

