

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



**The City  
of Irvine**

(949) 724-7669



**Waste Management  
of Orange County**

(949) 642-1191

Fall 2008



# Cans for Cash

In 2007, the City of Irvine partnered with Irvine Unified School District and local businesses to participate in a nationwide aluminum can recycling challenge. As a result of this community partnership, the City of Irvine won an award for the most innovative campaign and donated the award proceeds of \$5,000 to the Irvine Public Schools Foundation.

This year, the City is participating in the recycling challenge again. The City will partner with Irvine Unified School District, local businesses, and area recycling partners to encourage the community to recycle as many cans as possible during the collection period in October.

Cans for Cash heightens community awareness about the benefits of aluminum can recycling:

- Recycling 40 cans saves the equivalent of 1 gallon in gasoline.
- The energy saved by recycling one ton of aluminum could fuel a car that gets 35 mpg for 82,250 miles.

Local Irvine schools will benefit from the opportunity to raise funds through recycling. For each pound of cans recycled at a local school, that school will receive \$1 back to support its recycling program.

Businesses are encouraged to adopt a local school as a Partner in Recycling to help in the schools' effort to raise money and heighten the community's awareness of aluminum can recycling.

To learn more about the Cans for Cash recycling challenge, please visit [www.cityofirvine.us](http://www.cityofirvine.us).



# Change the smoke detector batteries — and recycle them

**Californians must keep all universal waste, including batteries, out of household trash**

When Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 2, people will engage in the ritual of changing their clocks. Many will also follow the recommendation to change the batteries in their smoke detectors.

But what to do with the old batteries? In California, placing batteries and other "universal waste" into household trash is prohibited, so Waste Management reminds our customers to be sure to recycle them.

Keep a plastic bucket in your home where your family can discard used batteries. Once the container fills up, dispose of the batteries properly. Here are three options:

- Drop off batteries at a household hazardous waste center (see box for details).
- Take the batteries to a retailer, such as an electronics store, that accepts batteries for recycling.
- Dispose of the batteries through the expanded Bulky Item collection service provided by Waste Management. Each household is limited to two, free Bulky Item collections per year. (During Bulky Item collections, you can also dispose of electronic equipment, including stereos, televisions, computers, monitors, cellular phones, VCRs, microwaves, and other similar items commonly known as "brown



goods" and "e-waste," tires, and fluorescent light tubes.) For more information or to schedule a Bulky Item collection, call Waste Management Customer Service at 949-642-1191.

Don't forget about the batteries in your workplace. Set up a collection center where employees

can drop their used batteries and rotate among co-workers to take the batteries to be recycled.

## Hazardous Waste Collection Centers

There are four convenient Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers located throughout Orange County that accept residential toxic waste. These facilities also accept home-generated sharps waste and universal waste. All of the centers are open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and are closed on rainy days and holidays. Proof of Orange County residency is required.

The nearest facility is the Irvine Regional HHWCC at 6411 Oak Canyon (adjacent to the City of Irvine O.S.F.)

For more information, visit the County of Orange's website at [www.oclandfills.com](http://www.oclandfills.com) or the City of Irvine's website at [www.cityofirvine.us](http://www.cityofirvine.us).

# New law for "sharps" disposal

On September 1, 2008, a state law enacted by Senate Bill 1305 went into effect prohibiting disposal of home-generated "sharps" (needles, syringes, and lancets) in solid waste and recycling containers. Needles and syringes that are improperly disposed can create a safety and health risk for the community.

To address this issue, the City of Irvine has implemented a convenient Sharps Disposal by Mail program for Irvine residents. The Sharps Program provides a way for residents to properly dispose of used needles, syringes, lancets, and related sharps used for in-home medical testing and treatment. Each kit includes a specially designed sharps container and a pre-approved, postage-paid shipping container ensuring the resident's medical waste will be delivered safely by the U.S. Postal Service to a certified medical waste facility.

The first kit is available to Irvine residents at no cost. Residents who require additional containers will be charged \$5 per container, with a limit of three kits (including the initial kit) per 12-month period.

Irvine residents may obtain a kit at the following locations. Proof of Irvine residency is required.

- CVS Pharmacy, 15333 Culver Boulevard, Suite 300, 949-654-2600
- CVS Pharmacy, 6775 Quail Hill Parkway, 949-823-8915
- CVS Pharmacy, 5385 Alton Parkway, 949-733-8226
- CVS Pharmacy, 14330 Culver Drive, 949-559-8129
- Rite Aid Pharmacy, 3875 Alton Parkway, 949-250-4465
- Rite Aid Pharmacy, 18112 Culver Drive, 949-786-0151
- Walgreens, 6316 Irvine Boulevard, 949-451-1563

Sharps are also accepted at the County of Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers. (See box below left.)

For more information, please visit [www.cityofirvine.us](http://www.cityofirvine.us), or call 949-724-7669.

# Do you Freecycle?

If so, you're in good company! Freecycle is part of a virtual community that began with about 40 people in Tucson, Arizona in 2003 and has grown to 4,566 groups with 5,604,000 members around the world. Each Freecycle group is local and independent, but all groups follow a few simple guidelines—everything offered or accepted must be free, legal, and appropriate for all ages.

Members can post items that they would like to receive (Wanted) or items they would like to give away (Offer). An email alerts all members of these postings. People freecycle office and school supplies, clothes and shoes, sports equipment, books and magazines, toys, games, computer accessories, sheets and towels, CDs, DVDs, and so much more.

If you are interested in joining the local Freecycle group, visit [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org) and search for Irvine, or go directly to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FreecycleIrvine/>.



# 10 Tips *for a* Frugal Fall

We're reusing some old advice in this edition—namely, sayings that are well-known and full of common sense. Whether you're trying to live a greener lifestyle or just a more frugal one, you'll find that this advice can save you money and reduce your waste.

- 1. Waste not, want not.** There's a reason why the word for trash is "waste." What we throw away is "wasted" rather than being put to good use. If you take care of what you have, it will still be yours to use and enjoy in the future. When we reuse and recycle, we use our resources more efficiently, rather than letting them go to waste.
- 2. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.** By choosing durable products, properly maintaining appliances and furniture, and making minor repairs as needed, you can keep the things you own in tiptop shape. Wouldn't you rather get more use out of what you already own than spend money to replace it with something new?
- 3. There is no place like home.** Children form lifelong habits when they are young. If the habits in your home include conserving resources, saving energy, spending wisely, reducing waste, reusing, recycling, and composting, your children will become good stewards of the environment and productive members of our economy.
- 4. If it "ain't" broke, don't fix it.** Don't replace it, either. Whether it is a cell phone, a TV, or a bookshelf, if what you have works, keep it and keep using it.
- 5. One person's trash is another person's treasure.** This is one of our favorites, of course. The things you no longer want or need may be exactly what someone else is looking for. Or, someone else's "trash" may become your treasure.
- 6. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.** Choosing non-toxic cleaning products creates less indoor air pollution and eliminates the need to dispose of products as household hazardous waste. When you reduce your use of hazardous paints,



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cleaners, automotive fluids, and lawn and garden products, you help prevent pollution and reduce the costs of hazardous waste disposal.

- 7. Many hands make light work.** The "little things" that you do make a difference. Think about it — if every person in America were to recycle one plastic bottle today, that would be over 305 million plastic bottles recycled! And that's just today!



- 8. What goes around comes around.** By recycling, you ensure that your discards become someone else's new stuff. In the process, you help save energy, reduce pollution, and conserve natural resources.

**9. Knowledge is power.** Do you know what can be recycled locally? Do you know where the closest second-

hand store is? Do you know where and how to dispose of household hazardous waste or old electronics properly? If not, contact us. We have the answers to these and many other questions.

- 10. Better late than never.** If you've been a spender in the past, there is no reason why you can't be more frugal in the future. Being a "sustainable consumer" means spending your money wisely, using durable goods longer, reusing what you have, and recycling all you can.

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## Read more about it!

New American Dream's Carbon Conscious Consumer Project  
[www.newdream.org/c3](http://www.newdream.org/c3)

EcoConsumer  
[www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/ecoconsumer/](http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/ecoconsumer/)

Simple Living Network  
[www.simpleliving.net](http://www.simpleliving.net)

*The Complete Tightwad Gazette* by Amy Dacyczyn (Villard, 1998)

*Get Satisfied: How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*, edited by Carol Holst, Simple Living America (Easton Studio Press, 2007) – [www.getssatisfied.org](http://www.getssatisfied.org)

*30 Days to a Simpler Life* by Cris Evatt and Connie Cox (Plume, 1998)

# The choice is yours

According to the U.S. Postal Service, American companies sent out 100 billion pieces of unsolicited advertising mail in 2005. That's more than 333 pieces for each person in your family—or almost one mailing each day. Because you weren't expecting most of this mail and most likely didn't want much of it, your family probably refers to it as "junk mail."

You can reduce the amount of junk mail that your family receives. When you apply for a credit card, order a product, fill out a warranty card, or donate money, check the box that says, "Please do not provide my name or address to other organizations." If there is no box, write this message in large letters. If you are already a customer or donor, contact the companies and organizations through their toll-free phone numbers or websites and ask them not to rent, trade, or sell your name and address. Don't forget online vendors!

Another way to reduce your junk mail is to sign up for "preference services." These services provide a "do not mail" list to businesses and other organizations. The lists work because the businesses and organizations don't want to waste their money sending advertising to people who don't want it and won't look at it. Here are some of the preference services that are available. There may be some fees.

- All Types of Mail: [www.dmachoice.org](http://www.dmachoice.org) (Click on "Remove My Name From Those Lists.")
- Credit Card Offers: [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com) or 888-567-8688
- Catalogs: [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org)
- Additional Resources: [www.stopjunkmail.org/links.htm](http://www.stopjunkmail.org/links.htm)

If your family regularly orders from companies or donates to organizations, you will not be removed from mailing lists for those businesses and organizations. This is "solicited" mail because you buy from the company or support the organization.

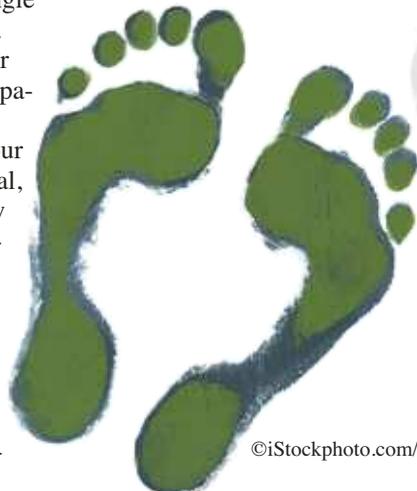
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# Measuring the human footprint

How big a footprint does the average American boy or girl leave behind over the course of a lifetime? National Geographic set out to answer this question. The result was the *Human Footprint* project, which premiered on the National Geographic Channel last spring.

During the film, a lifetime supply of potatoes spills from the back of a dump truck, a lifetime supply of bread is laid out to make an enormous American flag, and 28,433 rubber ducks represent the number of showers the average American will take in a lifetime. There are many other striking images of the sheer mass of consumption that goes into a single American life.

From your morning newspaper to the bananas on your breakfast cereal, you'll see how much one person uses. For instance, over the course of a lifetime, an American will read 5,054 newspa-



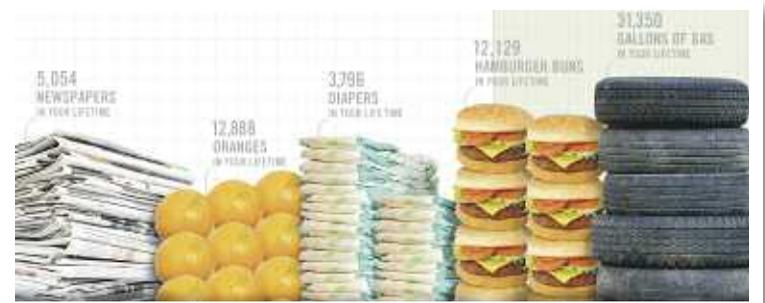
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pers, which is 43 trees' worth of paper. This same American will eat 5,067 bananas, which will travel a total of 11 million air miles to arrive on the breakfast table.

At the website devoted to the project, you can read a short essay entitled "Trash Talk," which introduces you to the facts and figures of America's waste habits. You can watch three short videos, which are excerpted from the 90-minute program, to get an idea of what "mass" consumption looks like. You'll also find "Consumption Interactive" (at the bottom of the web page). Click on this and you'll be able to see how your own consumption of eggs, milk, bananas, soft drinks, potatoes, and bread, as well as newspapers, the diapers from your early childhood, your regular showers, and your car, compare with national and international averages. You can also click through to watch the video about each of these items. Go to [www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint) and explore.

Teachers, there is a nine-page Educational Resource Guide at the website for downloading, as well as additional information on National Geographic's Preserve Our Planet series.

The DVD of *Human Footprint* is available for \$24.95 at [www.shopngvideos.com](http://www.shopngvideos.com).



Source: National Geographic Channel, 2008

## FAST FACTS

Total Annual Waste Generation in U.S.  
**251.3 million tons**

Per Person Waste Generation  
**4.6 pounds per day**

Total Annual Recycling & Composting in U.S.  
**81.8 million tons**

National Recycling Rate  
**32.5%**

Nationwide Benefits of Recycling & Composting  
**Equivalent to conserving 10 billion gallons of gasoline and removing 39.4 million passenger cars (and their emissions) from our roads**

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures for 2006"

## GARBAGE: THE MOVIE



Canadian filmmaker Andrew Nisker set out to learn about trash. He enlisted the help of the five-member McDonald family for his documentary project. The McDonalds were asked to collect every piece of trash that they generated over three months and store it all in their garage. (They didn't keep "wet trash," such as rot-

ting food waste, as that would have been a health hazard.) As you can imagine, it turned out to be a huge pile of waste!

The 76-minute documentary, *Garbage: The Revolution Starts at Home*, explores the waste created by the McDonald family, as well as where the materials came from and where they will go after leaving the garage. During the project, the McDonalds and the viewers begin to see that each action in the home has a reaction in the environment.

To learn more about the film, visit [www.garbagerevolution.com](http://www.garbagerevolution.com). Online, you'll find a list of upcoming viewing opportunities, information on ordering the film, 12 things you can do right now to make a difference, and more.



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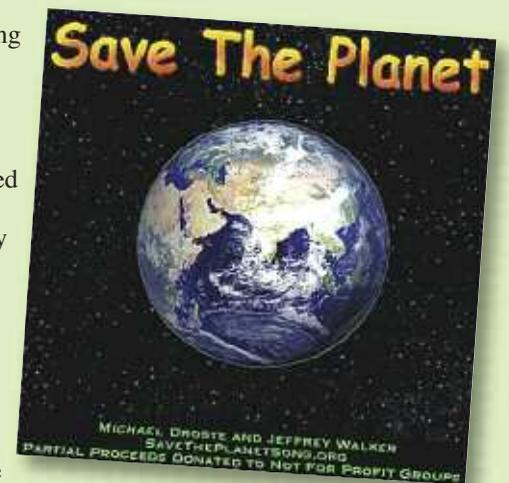
## Save the Planet

What happens when two creative teachers join forces to teach their students about the environment? In the case of singer Jeffrey Walker and musician Michael Droste, who both teach in Illinois, the result was the "Save the Planet" song and video.

The song and video focus attention on the ways that humans have damaged the earth. However, the song isn't gloomy and doesn't scold anyone. Instead, it reminds each of us that our everyday habits—from conserving water and saving energy to recycling—can make our planet better and healthier for all of us. The chorus of the song reminds us all to "Save the Planet from Destru-u-uction." You'll still be humming long after the music stops.

Several versions of the song are available for download at Amazon.com. To watch the video, go to [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com) and search for "Save the Planet Song." To learn more about Walker and Droste's project, visit [www.savetheplanetsong.org](http://www.savetheplanetsong.org).

While you're at YouTube, also check out "Kids 2 Save the Planet."



## QUOTES REQUOTED



We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there.

Charles Franklin Kettering, 1876–1958  
American inventor and engineer

## WHAT'S UP?

Learn how to water for better plant health and lower your water bills in the process. Irvine Ranch Water District offers residential landscape workshops to promote water efficiency. These free workshops are open to any residential customer in the IRWD service area. For more information, or to get on the reservation list, visit [www.irwd.com/FreePrograms/workshops.php](http://www.irwd.com/FreePrograms/workshops.php), or call 949-453-5327.



During your fall yard cleanups, remember that green waste is collected separately from trash. Green waste service is provided weekly to most residents with curbside service. The exception is those areas where homes do not typically generate a large amount of green waste. For more information, call Waste Management Customer Service at 949-642-1191.



Holiday tree collection will be available to residents with curbside service. During the three weeks following Christmas, trees will be collected on your service day. Simply place your bare tree out at the curb on your collection day. Trees must be free of decorations, stands, lights, etc. Trees that are 4 feet or taller must be cut in half. Residents with green waste carts may cut up their trees and place the pieces into the green waste cart for collection.



**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

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The views and statements of environmental organizations referenced in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the City of Irvine.



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USING SOY INKS

## Unused, unwanted, and expired medications

Once it was common practice to flush old medications down the toilet. However, we now know that these substances create problems at wastewater treatment plants and in the environment. Also known as pharmaceuticals, old medications include prescription drugs, such as birth control pills, estrogen replacement drugs, cancer medications, antidepressants, and antibiotics; over-the-counter medications, such as pain relievers, antacids, and cold/flu remedies; antiseptics (germ-killing liquids); and veterinary medicines.

One very important thing everyone can do is to take medications as directed and finish the prescription when directed to do so by your doctor. If you have old medications to dispose, please dispose of them properly.



Most medications are accepted, along with other household hazardous wastes, at the County of Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers. There is no charge to Orange County residents. See the box on the front page for locations and hours, or visit [www.oilandfills.com](http://www.oilandfills.com)

for details. Use the original container with safety caps and the name of the drug. For privacy, remove the patient's personal information from the container before disposal. (You can do this using a thick black marker or by tearing off the portion of the label with the patient's name, address, and prescription number.)

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers cannot legally accept prescription medications that are considered "controlled substances" and which have a potential for addiction and/or abuse, such as narcotics and tranquilizers. Common controlled substances include codeine, vicodin, ritalin, valium, phenobarbital, and anabolic steroids. For instructions on proper disposal of unused portions of controlled substances that are not accepted at the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers, please contact Waste Management of Orange County at 949-642-1191 or the City's recycling hotline at 949-724-7669.

Under Senate Bill 966, which was signed into law in 2007, California must begin to educate consumers about proper disposal of pharmaceuticals and to provide alternative disposal programs. For more information about this California initiative, visit [www.nodrugsdownthedrain.org](http://www.nodrugsdownthedrain.org).

## Nine ways to reduce and reuse

Waste reduction and reuse are two simple ways to reduce the clutter in your home and the waste you haul to the curb each week. In addition, waste reduction and reuse often save you money.

Waste reduction is what we don't use or waste—by choice. It is the waste that we choose to prevent when we buy only what we need, select products with less packaging, or refill containers. When we practice waste reduction, we don't create any waste that must be recycled, composted, or disposed. In fact, we create no waste at all.

Reuse can take many forms. First, you might use something over and over again, such as a refillable coffee mug. Second, you might take a used item and put it to work for a new but similar purpose, such as washing a tin that originally held tea bags and reusing it to hold binder clips on your desk. Third, you might put an item to work in a whole new way, such as cutting off the bottom of a milk jug to create a scoop for your bird seed. Reuse eliminates waste, exercises your creativity, and saves money!

Here are nine simple ways to reduce and reuse:

1. Use your local library. The library is a great place to find books (both in print and on CD or tape), magazines, videos, and music CDs.
2. Pack a low-waste (or waste-free!) lunch. All you need is a reusable lunch bag or box, plus washable containers. You probably already have these, meaning you can save money and reduce your waste.



3. Download music and books on the Internet. You can listen while sitting at your computer or load them onto your iPod or MP3 player for on-the-go enjoyment.

4. Shop for used clothes, books, and household items at secondhand stores and online. You'll find lots of choices and great deals. Don't forget to take your own reusable shopping bags on all your shopping trips!

For more information, visit [www.cityofirvine.us/reuse.php#4](http://www.cityofirvine.us/reuse.php#4).

5. Carry your own coffee mug or refillable water bottle. If you buy one cup of coffee each day or pick up one bottle of water, you could reduce your waste by 365 paper cups or 365 recyclable bottles in a year!



6. Fix broken or torn items. Instead of a junk drawer, have a repair drawer. If you include a small tool kit, a sewing kit, and glue, you'll have what you need for most small repair or mending jobs.

7. Rent equipment or supplies that you'll only need for a short period of time. For instance, a power-washer may be something you need only once a year to clean your deck or patio. Instead of buying and storing it, rent it. Don't forget that you can also rent everyday items, such as movies. For information, check the Yellow Pages for Rental Service Stores.
8. Sell working and usable items that you no longer want or need. You can use the Want Ads to advertise your items, hold a garage sale, use a consignment store, or post things for sale online.
9. Give away gently used items. Outgrown clothes, unneeded small appliances, working computers, and more might be just what a non-profit organization needs to serve the needy in our community. For more information, visit [www.cityofirvine.us/howtodisposezerowasteaway.php](http://www.cityofirvine.us/howtodisposezerowasteaway.php).

For more waste reduction and reuse ideas, visit the City of Irvine's Environmental website, [www.cityofirvine.us](http://www.cityofirvine.us), and click on "Zero Waste." You'll find tips on being a smart consumer, suggestions for home and business, and much more.

**Irvine's  
Recycling Rate  
is 56%—  
much higher than  
the national  
average!**

## Create your own compost

Creating compost is easy. Heap materials in a pile, or place them into a compost bin. (You can build or buy compost bins.) Mix together "brown" and "green" organic waste. Browns include leaves, dying plants, shredded paperboard or newspaper, bread, pasta, rice, and wood chips. Greens include fresh grass clippings, vegetable and fruit scraps, fresh plant trimmings, cut flowers, coffee grounds and filters, tea bags, and rotting fruits or garden vegetables. Keep your materials about as moist as a wrung-out sponge. Turn or stir your materials regularly over the next few months. Your finished compost will look like crumbly soil.

Compost will add nutrients to your garden or potting soil, as well as help your soil drain water more efficiently.

If you would like more information about creating backyard compost, please watch the composting "How To" video on the City's website, [www.cityofirvine.us](http://www.cityofirvine.us). You can also learn more about composting at one of the classes offered at the Fullerton Arboretum; go to [www.fullertonarboretum.org](http://www.fullertonarboretum.org) for details. To purchase composting equipment, check with a lawn and garden store or visit a site like Green Culture, [www.greenculture.com](http://www.greenculture.com), on the Internet.