

A Quarterly Newsletter of



The City of Irvine
(949) 724-7669

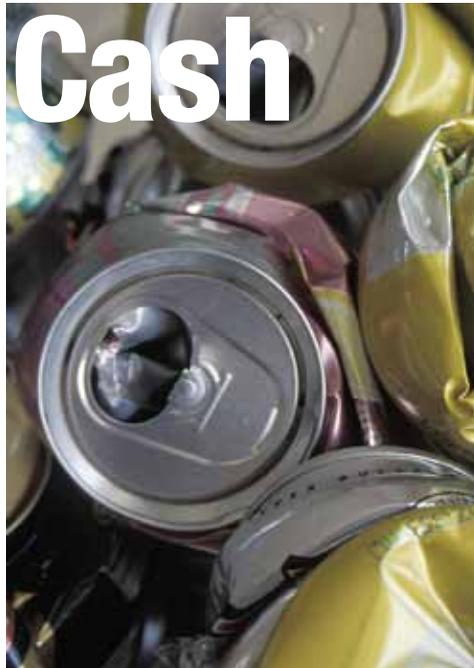
Waste Management of Orange County
(949) 642-1191



Fall 2009



Cans for Cash



During 2007 and 2008, the City of Irvine partnered with Irvine Unified School District and local businesses to take part in a nationwide aluminum can recycling challenge. Through this community partnership, the City of Irvine won an award two years in a row for the most innovative campaign and donated the award proceeds, totaling \$10,000, to the Irvine Public Schools Foundation to support the school district's recycling program.

This year, the City is participating in the recycling challenge once again. So, please save your aluminum cans and recycle them in Irvine during the month of October.

For more information about the Cans for Cash contest, please visit www.cityofirvine.org/environmentalprograms or call (949) 724-6459.

Put a little green in Halloween

The origins of the Halloween tradition started hundreds of years ago as an ancient Celtic festival that marked the end of summer harvest and the beginning of winter. During this celebration, they would adorn themselves in costumes and tell each other's fortunes.

Today, many of us participate in Halloween celebrations and adorn ourselves in costumes. But instead of fortune-telling, we head out for a bounty of candy or for a lively party. Halloween has become the second biggest holiday season of the year, with over \$5 billion in annual sales, according to the National Retail Federation. This year, help make Halloween more environmentally friendly. Here are some tips to add a little green to your orange and black celebrations and help save some money in the process.

Each year, about 36 million children go trick-or-treating, fully one-third of adults dress up in costumes, and 7.4 million pets get gussied up. Instead of buying brand-new costumes, create your own using items from around the house or visit local thrift stores. Search online for sites providing ideas and patterns to make your own costume. When done, recycle your costume. Trade with friends or organize a costume swap.

About \$1.5 billion is spent on Halloween and related fall decorations. Choose sustainable items for decoration. It's really scary to consider how much waste goes to the landfill. Make sure your decorations are durable and can be used over and over. Put your decorations together into a box or bin and clearly mark it "Halloween." Before you head to the store for decorations, check your own attic, garage, or storage area.

Planning a party? Send out an



electronic "evite" for your fabulous monster bash. Buy snacks in bulk and serve them in reusable bowls. Provide recycling containers for plastic, glass, and aluminum beverage containers.

When trick-or-treating, use a reusable bag, such as a pillowcase or canvas tote, to carry your treats. Consider giving out items that don't generate additional packaging waste, such as pencils or erasers. Look for treats made with organic or local ingredients.

Search online for other tips, crafts, and ideas to help green your Halloween. Visit these sites for ideas:

- www.greenhalloween.org
- www.costumzee.com
- www.treehugger.com
- www.babyzone.com

Don't forget to visit the city's website! We have tips on greening all of your holiday celebrations: www.cityofirvine.us/green_holiday_home.php.

Fun Facts about Can Recycling

- It takes 95% less energy to recycle an aluminum can than to create a new one from raw materials!
- Recycling 40 aluminum cans saves an amount of energy equivalent to 1 gallon of gasoline!
- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough electricity to power a TV for 3 hours!

Paper or plastic? No, thanks!

Reducing your waste is easy—stop accepting the free paper and plastic bags at the store. Once you get home to put away your groceries or other purchases, you are stuck with these bags. The bags are reusable, but a lot of them just go into the trash. Plus, many of the lightweight plastic bags end up on our roadsides or hanging from trees as litter.

You probably already have several canvas bags that you can reuse. Put some in your car. Then remember to grab the bags on your way into a store.

If you don't have lots of extra canvas bags, you can purchase reusable shopping bags. Some are so small and lightweight that they fold up to fit into a pocket or purse. Many of these reusable bags will hold as much as three to four plastic or two paper bags full of groceries. That also means fewer trips from the car to the house while you are unloading—and we know you'll like that!

Each year in the U.S., retailers hand out more than 380 billion plastic shopping bags and another 10 billion paper bags. When



you say, "No, thanks" to plastic and paper bags, you reduce the potential for litter and your weekly waste, and you conserve fuel that would have been used to deliver bags to the store. Carrying your own reusable bags is an easy way to help our environment, keep our community cleaner, and make your unloading a breeze.

To learn more about this and other "zero waste" options, visit the city's website at www.cityofirvine.us and click on "Zero Waste."

gray recycling bin. To participate, simply place your plastic bags inside another bag, not loose in the cart, to ensure that all the plastic will be captured in the sorting process. When your bag is full, tie it shut and drop it into the recycling cart.

Plastic bag recycling is also still available at most grocery stores.

Bag your bags

Residents with curbside recycling service can recycle their plastic shopping bags in the recycling cart with the gray lid. For residents who live in multi-family complexes, place your plastic bags in the

County HHW Collection Center Plans October Re-Opening

The Orange County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center (HHWCC), located at 6411 Oak Canyon in Irvine, was closed during part of August and September for a paving rehabilitation project. The project is in the final stages of completion and the County expects to have it up and running by mid October.

Residents may drop off household hazardous waste, pharmaceuticals, medical sharps in approved containers, and universal waste, such as fluorescent tubes and bulbs, batteries, and electronics. Drop-off hours are Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (The HHWCC is located off of Sand Canyon between the 5 and 405 freeways.)

To use this facility, proof of Orange County residency is required.

For more information or to learn more about other Orange County HHWCC locations, visit www.oilandfills.com or call 714-834-6752.

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HELPFUL HINTS for the HOLIDAY SEASON

As the holiday season approaches, you are probably already planning trips and parties. Beginning in November and continuing through Super Bowl Sunday, many people travel, visit relatives, eat big meals, prepare special foods, and give more than a few gifts. Because of this, the holiday season is often also waste season. It doesn't have to be. Here are some tips to help you have a less wasteful—and more relaxing—winter season.

■ **Party Planning** – Know how many people are coming to each event you're hosting and plan the food accordingly. If you have more leftovers than your family can finish, send food home with your guests. Avoid disposable decorations, dishes, cups, and napkins. Instead, reuse old family decorations, your own dishes, glasses, and cups, and reusable cloth napkins. If you don't have cloth napkins, maybe this would be a good time to invest in some. They are inexpensive and can be reused year after year. If you take a gift to your hosts, make sure it is consumable, such as food and drinks, or reusable, like a serving tray.

■ **Travel** – Road trips often include disposable food packaging and recyclable drink containers that end up in roadside trash cans. If you're traveling by car, pack snacks (and even lunch) in your own washable, reusable containers. You can put them into a cooler with drinks from home. When you get to your destination, wash your containers. They'll be ready to repack for the trip home. Look for roadside recycling containers, which are available at some rest stops. If you don't find them, put your aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage cans and bottles into a bag or box and recycle them when you get home. If you are flying, look for recycling bins for paper and drink containers in the airport.

■ **Gift Giving** – Make a list of everyone to whom you'll give a gift this holiday season. After making the list, decide how much you want to spend on gifts. Now, decide what you would like to give. One budget-conscious and waste-reducing way to give gifts is to shop for gently-used books and other items at secondhand and antique stores. Give

reusable gifts, such as washable placemats and cloth napkins, or consumable gifts, such as gift cards to a restaurant or movie. Gift cards for



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downloadable music are also a great, waste-free idea. Another option is to give of yourself, such as offering to run errands, babysit, take a walk in the woods, or meet for a picnic in the park. You also might consider giving to a good cause in honor of someone on the list; you can make a card describing the group that has received money or goods in their name. Framed photos make a wonderful gift—you might even be able to make a frame or find a unique used frame. If you choose to buy new gifts, look for items such as jewelry or handmade stationery made from recyclables.

■ **Gift Wrapping** – Reuse wrapping paper, gift bags, ribbon, and tags from past years. If you don't have any on hand, make your own wrapping paper by decorating the blank side of brown paper grocery bags; reusing colored sections of newspaper, old maps, or children's artwork; or using fabric, shelf paper, or wallpaper scraps. In other words, begin with items that you already have on hand! Or, "wrap" the gift in a basket or canvas bag that will be reusable later. If you buy wrapping paper, look for paper with recycled-content.

■ **Holiday Greetings** – Think about the holiday greetings that your family most enjoys—they are probably the cards or letters that include a personal touch, whether that is newsy notes or fun photos. Consider creating your own letter with family updates and holiday greetings. Of course, print it on recycled-content paper and mail it in recycled-content envelopes. Or, email paperless greetings instead.

This is a great time of year to discuss what really matters most to you, your family members, and friends. During this season of giving, learn what your family and friends really need. You might find that they could use more of your time and attention. Time and attention don't cost money and create significantly less waste than giving them a lot of stuff.

Read more about it!

42 Ways to Trim Your Holiday Wasteline
www.use-less-stuff.com/ULSDAY/42ways.html

Reducing Holiday Waste
www.epa.gov/osw/wycd/funfacts/winter.htm

Simplify the Holidays
www.newdream.org/holiday/

Tips for a Cleaner, "Greener" Holiday
www.informinc.org/greener_holiday.php



A ship-tastic idea!

Are you ordering a gift online for someone who lives faraway? Don't have it shipped to your house, unpack it, wrap it, and re-ship it. Save time, packaging, shipping costs, and fuel by having it delivered directly to your far-off friend or family member. If you really want the gift wrapped, many online retailers offer gift wrapping services, too.



Make Something Day

This isn't an enforced craft event for the non-crafty! Instead, it is an opportunity for each person to make something they enjoy. By hosting a "Make Something Day" with friends and relatives, you bring people together to enjoy each other's company and use their hands and hearts to create something special. For some, it will be a great meal. For others, it might involve sewing, knitting, or beading. One person may write a poem or a song. Others could paint, draw, or scrapbook. A few may decide to create holiday cards or gifts. Express your talent and share it.

Hosting a Make Something Day is easy:

1. Set the date and location.
2. Ask each person to come up with a creative idea and gather the needed supplies.
3. Set up tables so that crafters with common materials can work together. For instance, those with fabric will want to be at a separate table from the folks working on collages with glue!
4. Celebrate the creations over a meal. If one of your creative friends has cooked, enjoy. If not, have a pitch-in meal or order pizza.

QUOTES REQUOTED



When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe

John Muir, 1838–1914
American naturalist and writer

fast facts

Going Waste-Free

According to WasteFreeLunches.org, packing a waste-free lunch for your child costs about \$2.65 per day, while packing a lunch full of single-serve and disposable items costs \$4.02. Waste-free lunches can save your family \$1.37 per child per day. That's a savings of over \$240 for the school year. The same applies for lunches that adults take to work, but the savings is even greater—as much as \$340 per year. Pack waste-free to save!



Overshooting

According to The Global Footprint Network, we reached "Earth Overshoot Day" in mid to late September. This marks "the day when humanity begins using more ecological resources and services in a given year than Earth can regenerate in that year." From that day on, we are consuming resources that we are, in essence, borrowing from the future. "Put another way, in less than 10 months, humanity will have used ecological services it takes 12 months for the Earth to regenerate."



Creating Community

According to Bill McKibben in *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*, "consumers have ten times as many conversations at farmers' markets as they do at supermarkets.... When you go to the farmers' market, in other words, you're not just acquiring tomatoes; you're making friends."



Ecological Intelligence

Daniel Goleman explores the relatively new field of Industrial Ecology in his newest book, *Ecological Intelligence* (Broadway Business, 2009). The study of Industrial Ecology focuses on Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs), which guide businesses and consumers in judging the relative impacts of their actions. LCAs explore the environmental impact of each stage of extraction, transportation, and manufacture. LCAs are increasingly used by businesses to make supply-chain, manufacturing, and distribution decisions.

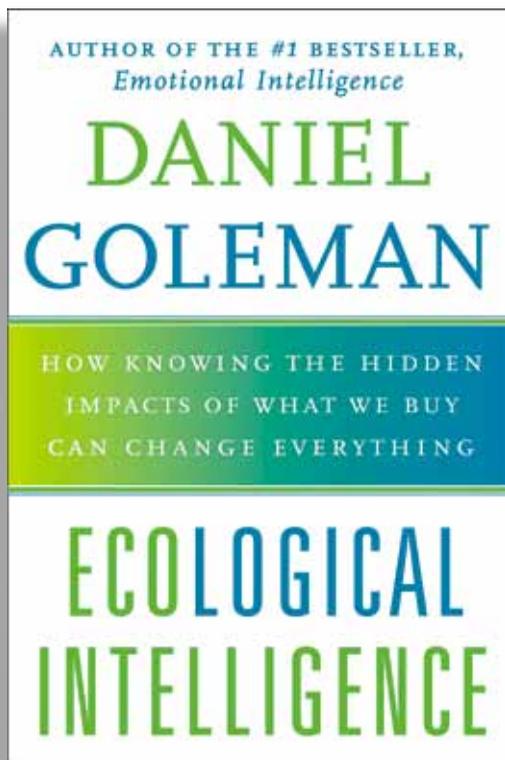
Goleman advocates for what he terms "radical transparency," which would involve making a large quantity of LCA information available to the average consumer. Much as food products are labeled with nutritional information, a radically transparent consumer product might be labeled with environmental impact information, such as pollution created, energy consumed, human and animal health effects, and non-renewable resource consumption.

Goleman writes, "If we get better, more complete information about the true effects of an item at the moment we are deciding whether to buy it, we could make wiser decisions. Such full disclosure can make each of us an agent for small, gradual changes that, when multiplied by millions, will ripple through the industrial enterprise, from manufacturing and design, through supply chains and transport, to the distant ends of consumption."

A single glass bottle, from cradle to grave, involves as many as 1,959 separate steps, each with its own environmental impacts. No consumer, no matter how well informed, can be expected to know and evaluate all of this information. Fortunately, there are many organizations devoted to helping consumers make wiser and greener decisions.

To learn more about the ecological impacts of various consumer products, visit these websites: Center for a New American Dream, www.newdream.org/marketplace/; Consumer Reports' Greener Choices, www.greenerchoices.org; and Good Guide, www.goodguide.com. At your local library, look for books such as *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things* by John C. Ryan and Alan Thein Durning.

Several organizations certify certain products as being sustainable or environmentally friendly, including: Forest Stewardship Council (paper and wood products), www.fscus.org; Green Seal (cleaning and construction products and services), www.greenseal.org; and USDA Organic (certified organic food products), www.ams.usda.gov/nop. Another certification coming soon will be Good Housekeeping's Green Seal of Approval.



Re-style

When the going gets tough, the tough get creative! Whether you are decorating your house or outfitting yourself, hard times don't have to mean that style goes out the window. Learn to rework what you have.

Decorating your house? Look to Mark and Sally Bailey for ideas. Sally's book, *Recycled Home*, explores their adventures in reusing their own stuff and the discards of others. Visit the local library to look for this and other books full of home decorating ideas that focus on reuse. While you are there, take a look at the magazine section. Periodicals such as *Ready Made*, *Country Living*, and *This Old House*, among others, are full of ideas for taking the used to create the useful and the ornamental.

Don't forget the clothes! Old jeans, T-shirts, and more, which are found in the back of nearly every closet, can be turned into all sorts of creative clothing and accessories. Turn an old backpack into a new fanny pack. Repurpose an old T-shirt into a shopping bag or a scarf. Create capris, shorts, or a skirt with an old pair of jeans. Or, turn the jeans into pot holders, bags, or a rag rug. For ideas, visit www.threadbanger.com, www.generation-t.com, or www.eHow.com (search for recycled clothes).



Buyback and Recycling Center



Waste Management of Orange County, in conjunction with the Orange County Conservation Corps, operates a buyback and recycling center at its Irvine facility. This center provides a convenient location for residents to recycle their aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage containers in exchange for cash. These containers are part of the California Refund Value (CRV) Program and include bottles and cans that held soft drinks, sports drinks, carbonated and noncarbonated water, fruit and vegetable juices, wine coolers, and beer.

In addition to the CRV cans and bottles that can be redeemed for cash, the center also accepts other recyclables. There is no cash payment for these items, but recycling drop-off is free! Other recyclables accepted include: non-CRV aluminum, non-CRV glass, non-CRV plastic, tin cans, newspaper, white ledger paper, computer paper, mixed paper, and corrugated cardboard.

The Waste Management Buyback and Recycling Center, operated by the Orange County Conservation Corps, is located at 16122 Construction Circle East in Irvine. It is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 714-956-6222.

Ready for recycling?

In Irvine, we recover about 66% of our waste for recycling and composting. That's great news!

Of course, recycling depends on each one of us. For recycling to continue and to grow, we each need to do our part. We need to buy products in recyclable containers and packaging. We call this "pre-cycling" because we are planning ahead to recycle. Then, we need to collect our empty and clean recyclables. We refer to this as "recovery." And finally, we need to buy new products made from recyclables, called "buying recycled."

These are the materials that we recycle locally: aluminum and steel cans; soda/ juice bottles; plastic milk containers; empty aerosol cans; pie tins; glass bottles and jars; plastic containers labeled #1 - #7; newspapers and inserts; junk mail; white copier/printer paper; corrugated cardboard/ boxes; magazines; colored and construction paper; cereal boxes (remove liners); and telephone books. This will help you pre-cycle.



For recovery, you need to know when, where, and how to recycle. If you have curbside trash collection service, your recyclables go into the cart with the gray lid. If you live in an apartment or condominium, look for carts with gray lids or for bins marked "Recycling."

You can buy recycled when you shop. To find recycled-content products, check the labels. Many products made from recyclables will have the recycled-content symbol (shown here) or phrases such as 100% Recycled Paperboard, Post-Consumer Recycled Content, Recycled Content, or Remanufactured. If you look, you'll be able to find recycled-content notebook paper, pencils, fleece hoodies, jewelry, and more. Some products are almost always made from recycled materials, including aluminum and steel cans and cardboard boxes.

To learn more about recycling and buying recycled, visit www.cityofirvine.us and www.americarecyclesday.org.

Doing some fall cleaning?

Bulky item collection is available year-round to Irvine residents who live in single-family homes and have curbside service. Residents are entitled to two free pickups each year, with up to four large items per pickup. Bulky items include large, hard-to-handle items, such as furniture, mattresses, and appliances, as well as televisions and computer monitors. While there is no charge for this service, it does require an appointment. For more information about the program or to schedule a bulky item pickup, call Waste Management's Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191.

Residents who live in apartments or other multi-family complexes should inquire with their property manager about bulky item service.



Be "sharps" smart

Sharps, such as needles, syringes, and lancets, cannot be mixed with household trash. In order to help you dispose of sharps properly, Waste Management, in partnership with Sharps, Inc., offers a mail-back disposal program. To take part in this low-cost program, residents purchase a kit at a local pharmacy. The first kit is FREE, and two additional kits require a \$5 co-pay. Residents simply show a valid ID at any participating pharmacy listed below to verify that they live in Irvine.

Each kit includes a specially designed sharps container and a postage-prepaid shipping container. Used sharps are placed inside the container for safe storage. Once the container is filled, it is dropped in the mail in the postage-prepaid box and sent to a certified medical waste facility, where it is destroyed. The Sharps Disposal by Mail kits are available at these locations:

- CVS, 15333 Culver Boulevard, Suite 300, 949-654-2600
- CVS, 6775 Quail Hill Parkway, 949-823-8915
- CVS, 5385 Alton Parkway, 949-733-8226
- CVS, 14330 Culver Drive, 949-786-0151

- Rite Aid, 3875 Alton Parkway, 949-250-4465
- Rite Aid, 18112 Culver Drive, 949-786-0151
- Walgreens, 6316 Irvine Boulevard, 949-451-1563
- Walgreens, 5695 Alton Parkway, 949-726-0716

To supplement local mail-back programs, Orange County's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers also accept medical sharps. Residents can now take their sharps to the HHWCC, located at 6411 Oak Canyon in Irvine. Sharps must be delivered in an approved sharps container, which is available at any pharmacy. Please call the County's HHW hotline at 714-834-6752 for additional information.



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.

Learn how to water for better plant health and lower your water bills in the process. The 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, and to get on the reservation list, visit www.irwd.com/FreePrograms/workshops.php or call 949-453-5327.

Fullerton Arboretum's Composting Classes are free to Irvine residents.



Learn how to turn yard clippings and food scraps into a valuable resource at the composting workshop. The class provides an overview of composting for the beginner as well as a discussion of advanced techniques for the experienced composter.

Visit their website at <http://fullertonarboretum.org> for the next composting class.

Learn more about composting by watching the videos posted on Irvine's website. Go to www.cityofirvine.us and click on "Composting Videos."

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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