

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



**The City
of Irvine**
(949) 724-7669



**Waste Management
of Orange County**
(949) 642-1191

Spring 2006



Waste Management offers Orange County residents options for disposing of “Universal Waste” to comply with new regulations

As of February 9, Californians must take batteries, e-waste to designated disposal sites

Residents of Orange County looking for alternatives for disposing of household “universal waste” such as batteries, electronics, old cell phones, or fluorescent light tubes now that it is illegal to place these items in trash cans have a number of local options.

As of February 9, all Californians must dispose of items deemed “universal waste” by the California Department of Toxic

Substance Control (DTSC) at designated recycling centers or household hazardous waste collection centers. Products like this, which have low levels of hazardous metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium, and chromium, can potentially contaminate soil and groundwater, so they cannot be disposed of in the trash and subsequently deposited into landfills. The DTSC’s new rules are applicable to households and small businesses.

According to David Ross, Senior District Manager of Waste Management of Orange County, “A number of questions remain about what constitutes universal waste and how it should be handled. However, we are doing what we can to assist our customers and let them know there are a number of local sites available where people can take universal waste to dispose of it safely.”

Among the items designated as universal waste as of February 9 are:

- **Common batteries** — AA, AAA, C cells, D cells, and button batteries (such as hearing aid batteries)
- **Fluorescent tubes and bulbs and other mercury-containing lamps** — Fluorescent light tubes and bulbs, high-intensity discharge (HID), metal halide, sodium, and neon bulbs
- **Thermostats** — Old-style thermostats with the sealed glass “tilt switch,” which contains mercury (the newer electronic kind are not considered universal



waste)

- **Electronic devices** — Televisions and computer monitors (which were already prohibited from household trash), computers, printers, VCRs, cell phones, telephones, radios, and microwave ovens

In addition to these items that are newly banned from trash disposal, the following universal waste items have been banned from household disposal for some time:

- **Electrical switches and relays** — Mercury switches that can be found in some chest freezers, pre-1972 washing machines, sump pumps, electric space heaters, clothes irons with tilt switches, silent light switches, automobile hood and trunk lights, and ABS brakes
- **Pilot light sensors** — Mercury-containing switches found in some gas appliances, such as stoves, ovens, clothes dryers, water heaters, furnaces, and space heaters
- **Mercury gauges** — Some gauges, such as barometers, manometers, blood pressure and vacuum gauges, contain mercury.
- **Novelties** — Examples include greeting cards that play music when opened, athletic shoes (made before 1997) with flashing lights in soles, and mercury maze games.
- **Mercury thermometers** — Mercury thermometers typically contain about a half-gram of mercury. Many health



clinics, pharmacies, and doctor’s offices have thermometer exchange programs, in which you can receive a new, mercury-free fever thermometer in exchange for your old mercury thermometer.

- **Non-empty aerosol cans that contain hazardous materials** — Many

(Continued on Page 4)



Did you know that musical greeting cards contain a mercury switch? Mercury is a toxic metal that can cause harm to people and animals including nerve damage and birth defects. If mercury is released into the environment, it can contaminate the air we breathe and enter streams, rivers, and the ocean where it can contaminate fish that people eat.

“Irvine Recycles” team set for busy spring

The “Irvine Recycles” team will take part in these great local events this spring. Stop by and see us!

Children’s Water Festival — This festival will take place Tuesday, April 4 and Wednesday, April 5, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each day, at Hidden Valley Park, 8800 Irvine Center Drive. This 10th annual festival is an environmental and water education event for over 6,000 fourth and fifth grade students, along with their teachers and parents. The festival features more than 70 interactive and hands-on activities that teach students about the environment, water resources, recycling, and ecology. The goal of the festival is to educate children about our ever-decreasing water supply, environmental stewardship, and groundwater and surface water protection. The festival is presented by the Orange County Water District (OCWD), OCWD Groundwater

Guardian Team, Disneyland Resort, and the National Water Research Institute. To learn more about the event, visit the website at www.ocwd.com.

UCI Earth Day — Earth Day is Saturday, April 22, and we’ll be celebrating between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Aldrich Park on the University of California – Irvine campus. At this event, electric vehicles will be on display, and other features will include hands-on educational booths, community service projects, art, and entertainment—all of which will raise awareness about environmental issues. The Irvine Recycles team will be on hand to encourage pollution prevention, waste reduction, and recycling. Educational materials and handouts will be available. Plus, participants will be able to play the team’s interactive Pollution Prevention Wheel Game, where lucky winners receive a promotional

prize. For more information, call 949-824-5182 or visit the website, www.uci.edu/celebrate.

Woodbridge Spring Street Fair — The fair will take place on Saturday, May 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Barranca Parkway between Lake and Creek. This event will feature a home improvement show, swap meet, a jet ski demonstration, and arts and crafts. In addition, there will be fun attractions for the kids, such as the moon bounce and pony rides. The Irvine Recycles team will be on hand to encourage pollution prevention, waste reduction, and recycling. Educational materials and handouts will be available. Plus, participants will be able to play the team’s interactive Pollution Prevention Wheel Game, where lucky winners receive a promotional prize. For more information, contact the Woodbridge Village Association at 949-786-1400.

Fishing around for recycling

The Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program (MRRP) is an innovative project dedicated to reducing the environmental damage caused by discarded fishing line. Monofilament fishing line lasts up to 600 years in the environment. While there, it entangles wildlife; is eaten by animals including birds, fish, manatees, and sea turtles; and is hazardous to boaters and swimmers.

MRRP strives to decrease the negative impacts of monofilament fishing line left in the environment by conducting regular cleanups and by encouraging anglers to recycle their used fishing line at tackle shops and in special outdoor bins.

Our environment is our most valuable resource. And you can help protect it by disposing of your old fishing line responsibly. Better yet, recycle it into other useful products.

The next time you re-spool, cast your used line into the Berkley Recycling Collection Bin at your favorite tackle shop. If you can’t find a participating dealer in your area, just send your line directly to Berkley Recycling Center, 1900 18th Street, Spirit Lake, IA 51360-1099.

Please join with us and Berkley in making a commitment to recycling and protecting our environment.

Read more about Irvine’s upcoming E-Waste Collection in “What’s Up?” on the back page.

10 Tips for a better Earth Day and a better year for the Earth

On April 22, 1970, school children, college students, parents, business people, elected officials, and more came together in the largest demonstration ever held in America—Earth Day. The brain-child of Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, Earth Day was planned as a “teach-in” about the environment for members of the U.S. Congress.

However, word spread. By Earth Day, 20 million Americans joined together in our nation’s capitol, at city halls and county courthouses, and in their own neighborhoods to say, “Let’s do something to clean up pollution!” Some 20 years later, American Heritage Magazine referred to the first Earth Day as “one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of democracy.”

Earth Day didn’t stop on April 22, 1970. In the years that followed, government, business, and private citizens worked together to clean up our air, land, and water. What we learned on Earth Day is that one day isn’t enough—it takes a long-term commitment to make our world a more livable place.

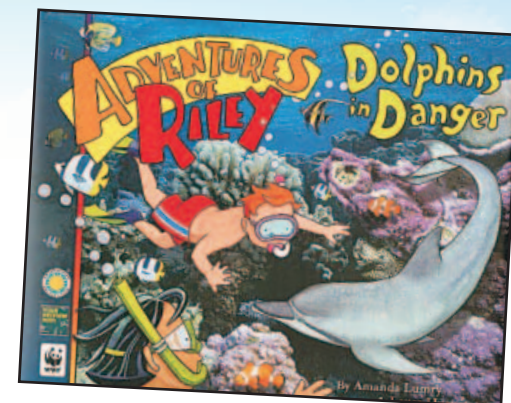
This Earth Day, recommit yourself to actions that will make our communities and our planet more pleasant places for all of us to live, work, and play. Here are some of the ways you can make it a better year:

1. Know more about what is happening in our community. Read the paper (and our newsletter, of course!). Listen to local news on the radio or TV. Use the Internet to find local events. Attend public meetings. Whenever you get the chance to vote, do it.
2. Take walks and get to know our community. While you’re out, pick up litter that you see. If your dog joins you, be sure to pick up after your canine companion. Your dog wants to be a good neighbor, too!
3. Volunteer outdoors. You might mow the lawn for an elderly neighbor. You might pick up litter at a park or playground. You could help out at a local event. Get outside and enjoy our natural world.
4. Reduce, reuse, and recycle! Eliminate waste by buying less stuff that you don’t really need. Avoid excessively packaged items. Say “no thanks” to store bags whenever possible. Carry your own refillable coffee mug. Use your stuff until it wears out.



Buy used items. Sell or donate usable stuff that you no longer need. Know what, where, and how to recycle.

5. Waste less food. Plan meals so that less moldy or spoiled food has to be thrown away. Finish the leftovers. Don’t buy ingredients that will sit unused on your kitchen shelves.
6. Electronics surround us. Keep yours in business as long as possible. Don’t purchase new items on the spur-of-the-moment. Take a good long look at your needs and evaluate your options before making your selection. Then maintain your equipment carefully. Follow instructions for cleaning and battery care. To keep your equipment in use as long as possible, update software and services, upgrade memory, or add accessories, as needed. And remember to look for energy-efficient equipment by seeking items with the “Energy Star” certification.
7. Become a greener gardener. Smaller grass lawn areas mean lower water bills, decreased maintenance, and less waste. Replace lawn by planting more trees, native or low-water-using plant materials, and ground covers. Reduce your use of chemicals by fertilizing only when your plants and soil really need the boost and by learning to use “Integrated Pest Management” to control weeds and bugs. (Reducing your purchase and use of chemicals can also reduce the amount of hazardous waste that you need to dispose.) Mulch and compost.
8. Learn more about the world in which we live. Take a close look at the non-fiction videos at the library. Read a book about science or nature, plants or animals, politics or policy. Remember *National Geographic Magazine*? It still publishes great articles about our world and the people, plants, and animals that populate it. Plus, the photography is better than ever. Pick up a copy at the library, a newsstand, or a used bookstore.



9. Touch the future—teach a child. Author Amanda Lumry is writing a series of books for children in kindergarten through third grade. This series, *The Adventures of Riley*, combines stories about Riley and his family with facts and photos about the real places featured in each story. By learning about these places, children learn about the plants, animals, and peoples who live there. So far, five *Adventures* have been published and 10 more are planned.
10. Don’t keep your Earth Day commitments a secret. Tell your friends and family about your new habits.

What is Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated pest management (IPM) starts with knowing your plants and their pests. This means regular monitoring and good record-keeping to determine if and when action is needed. When pests are present in numbers that could result in damage to plants, a variety of methods are used, beginning with those that are most benign and least expensive. With IPM, chemical pesticides are a last resort.

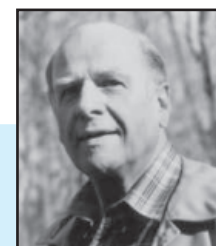
For more information, visit www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/ or www.epa.gov/pesticides/food/ipm.htm.

Think about it!

A disposable, carry-out coffee cup weighs about one ounce. If you drink two carry-out coffees every day, each week, all year long, you throw away 728 ounces of coffee cups—that’s 45.5 pounds of trash!



QUOTES REQUOTED



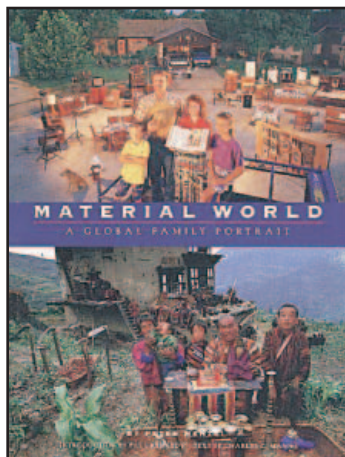
Earth Day worked because of the spontaneous response at the grassroots level. We had neither the time nor resources to organize 20 million demonstrators and the thousands of schools and local communities that participated. That was the remarkable thing about Earth Day. It organized itself.

Gaylord Nelson, 1916–2005
Founder of “Earth Day”

We're living in a material world

What if you took all of your possessions and put them into your front yard? That's the question photographer Peter Menzel asked himself. It's also the question which sent him to 30 different countries to meet and photograph one "average family." The result of this search was the book, *Material World: A Global Family Portrait* by Peter Menzel and Charles C. Mann, which was originally published in 1994.

Each family portrait pictures the family outside their home with all (or almost all) of their possessions. The possessions are not stacked to the side but are displayed in such a way as to be integrally part of the portrait, as though these things are precious members of the family. The text describes the family and



their lifestyle. Sidebars offer background on the countries in which they live. The differences between countries are, of course, striking and at times surprising.

If you enjoy *Material World*, take a look at the new book, *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats* by Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio (2005). This book also profiles 30 families around the world. However, instead of their possessions, *Hungry Planet* features their diets and pictures them in the marketplaces and with their food-stuffs.

Both books make you think about what we have, what we need, what we want, what we save, what we waste, and what all of this might mean to the global family.

No Waste Like Home

clean up
clear out
save money



Rather than searching for survivors or looking for the winner of a race, reality TV viewers in Britain are watching host Penney Poyzer expose the habits of some very wasteful families in "No Waste Like Home." With a combination of shock, shame, and wit, Poyzer teaches the families to clean up, clear out, and save money in the process. Her tips focus on reducing, reusing, and recycling waste; saving energy; cleaning with non-toxic cleaners; and selecting eco-friendly products. That's our idea of a great reality show!

Read Poyzer's tips at www.bbc.co.uk/homes/tv_and_radio/nwlh_index.shtml.

Worth Noting

Preparing for Prom — On average, American teens spend \$300 to \$500 each on prom attire, accessories, and events. Renting, borrowing, or buying used or vintage outfits could significantly reduce this cost. In 2004, Nina Sysko, a high school senior from Maine, created her own low-cost prom dress—from discarded Starburst candy wrappers.

Olympian Efforts — One of the missions of the Olympic Games is the "Promotion of Sustainable Development." For the 2006 Winter Games in Torino, this resulted in eco-friendly buildings in the Olympic Village, recycling at events and facilities, and tree-planting to offset carbon dioxide emissions, as well as other efforts.

Trade-ins welcome — Readers are hooking up on the web to trade used books. Several websites are catering to readers who would like to trade used books (mostly paperbacks) rather than buying and selling them. The largest of these boasts more than 300,000 available titles. If you'd like to become a book trader, visit one of these sites: www.paperbackswap.com, www.frugalreader.com, or www.titletrader.com. You might also want to set up a swap among your friends, family members, or neighbors.

Garden Gadgets

Would you like to create better garage storage? How about some festive outdoor lighting for your garden? Want to welcome your fine, feathered friends? Get on the Internet and go to www.care2.com/channels/solutions/home/456 to find the instructions for "Five Cool Make-It-Yourself Garden Gadgets."

The web page actually offers these six project ideas with complete instructions:

- Lanterns made from glass baby food jars
- Bird feeder and sanctuary using an old birdbath
- Birdseed catcher made from an old doormat
- Tool storage chest made from an old

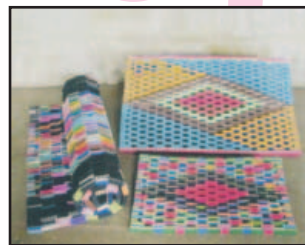
filing cabinet

- Dahlia tuber holder made from plastic strawberry flats
- String caddy made from a plastic detergent bottle

Do you notice what these projects have in common? That's it. They are all made from reused and found materials. Your own recycling bin or a neighborhood garage sale could become the source of the raw materials that you need for these and other projects.

All of these ideas and many more are published in the book *Great Garden Gadgets: Make-It-Yourself Gizmos and Projects*, edited by Fern Marshall Bradley and Christine Bucks (Rodale Press, 2001).

A flurry of flip-flops



Bitters Company is taking the sandal scrap from the cutting room floor of flip-flop manufacturers and turning it into colorful floating key chains, crates, barrels, and doormats.

As you know, flip-flops are basically foot-shaped. However, these shapes must be cut from rectangular sheets of colorful plastic, much as you would cut cookies from rolled-out dough. If you've ever made cut-out cookies, you know that a lot of un-cuttable scrap is left behind. Some of the plastic chunks being left behind during flip-flop fabrication are being used by Bitters Company to create these unique crates, key chains, barrels, and mats.

The Bitters Company's use of flip-flop scrap is what we call "pre-consumer recycled content." Pre-consumer waste is industrial scrap that could not be turned into the intended product. Cut ends of plastic, fabric, or paper are good examples of this waste. We refer to it as "pre-consumer" because no one like you ever purchased and used this portion of the raw material. In other words, it was discarded before it got to the consumer.

In addition to these pre-consumer flip-flop products, Bitters Company also makes several items from post-consumer waste, including bowls made from the steel in used 55-gallon drums and from old magazines. For more information, call toll-free 1-866-664-2488, e-mail info@bittersco.com, or visit the website, www.bittersco.com.

WHAT'S UP?

Irvine E-Waste Collection Event
Friday April 7 & Saturday April 8
8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Irvine Civic Center Parking Lot



The City of Irvine is sponsoring an e-waste collection event on Friday, April 7 and Saturday, April 8. Unwanted televisions, computer monitors, and other electronic waste will be accepted FREE of charge. Sorry, NO refrigerators, air conditioners, thermostats, smoke detectors, or gas or liquid filled items are allowed.

The event will be held in the Irvine Civic Center parking lot and is open to all residents and business owners in the Irvine area. Businesses are encouraged to bring in e-waste on Friday while Saturday will be primarily for residents. Although each day is designated for a specific crowd, no one will be turned away. If you have questions about the event, please contact the City of Irvine at 949-724-6459.



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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Bulky waste? No problem!

Irvine residents with curbside service have on-going bulky item collection available year-round. Residents are entitled to two free pickups each year, with up to four large items allowed per pickup. Bulky items include large, hard-to-handle items, such as furniture, mattresses, and appliances.

This is a special service, and residents **must call** to schedule 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.



Cash in your containers

Did you know that most beverages packaged in aluminum, glass, and plastic, such as soft drinks, water, beer, sports drinks, juices, and coffee and tea drinks, are included in the state CRV (California Refund Value) program? When you buy a beverage in one of these containers, you pay a redeemable deposit. When your container is empty, you can redeem it for 4 cents on containers that hold less than 24 ounces, and 8 cents on containers 24 ounces or greater.

Redeem more of your CRV containers:

- Look for the "CA Cash Refund" or similar symbol on bottle labels or the tops of aluminum cans. CRV containers are redeemable for cash at any CRV refund location. To find the center nearest you, call 1-800-RECYCLE or visit www.bottleandcans.com.
- Recycle your containers even if you don't want to redeem them for cash. If you don't want to redeem your containers, place them into your curbside recycling cart for recycling.
- On the go? Hold onto your empty beverage containers until you find a recycling bin. Keep an extra bag or box in your car so that you can collect your beverage containers without having them roll around.
- Throwing a party? Set up a separate



bag or box for recyclable beverage containers only. Later, redeem them for cash or put them in your curbside recycling cart.

- Keep it simple. There is no need to rinse, clean, or remove labels from your empty beverage containers.



Sharps smarts

Residents who use "sharps," such as syringes, needles, and lancets, for their own in-home medical care need to dispose of the sharps safely and properly. Here are your options:

- Ask at your doctor's office or pharmacy to see if they provide a sharps drop box.
- Use a mail-back program for sharps

disposal. Waste Management, in partnership with Sharps, offers a mail-back program. To participate, residents must purchase a special collection container. (Rite Aid drugstores sell containers for sharps.) For details about this and other mail-in programs, visit www.safeneedle disposal.org.



Learn how to "xeriscape"

Xeriscaping means creating a landscape with native and drought-tolerant plants to reduce your yard waste, lower your water bills, and create natural-looking surroundings. Learn more about xeriscaping, landscape design basics, and watering for optimal plant health at one of the Irvine Ranch Water District's periodic, free residential landscape workshops. For more information on the workshops, visit IRWD's website at www.irwd.com.

"Universal Waste"

(Continued from Page 1)

products in aerosol cans are toxic, and many aerosol cans contain flammables, such as butane, as propellants for products like paint. If your aerosol can is labeled with words such as TOXIC or FLAMMABLE, don't put it in the trash unless it is *completely* empty.

For additional information about universal waste, including how to properly dispose of it, visit www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/UniversalWaste/index.cfm. Residents may also call the Waste Evaluation help line at 916-322-7676 for additional assistance in determining what items qualify as universal waste.

Irvine residents (no businesses) can take their universal waste and other hazardous waste to one of the County of Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers (HHWCC). Operating hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 714-834-6752 or visit www.oclandfills.com. The nearest center for Irvine residents is the Irvine Regional HHWCC located at 6411 Oak Canyon in Irvine. The center is located off Sand Canyon between the 5 and 405 freeways; use the same driveway as Bark Park.

Waste Management of Orange County also accepts electronic waste such as televisions or computer monitors at its Sunset Environmental Transfer Station. Sunset is located at 16122 Construction Circle West in Irvine. The facility is open Monday through Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday, 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. All other hazardous or universal waste should be taken to one of the HHWCCs, as noted above.

Additional information about local disposal options is available at www.earth911.org or <http://ccelearn.csus.edu/mercurylamp/content/resources5.htm>.