

# EnviroTalk

Fall 2012

## Flood prevention basics

City of Tacoma residents are responsible for collecting and disposing of leaves and other debris from their property, including the area between their sidewalk and the street.

Leaves and debris left on streets or walkways can clog storm drains and cause streets and homes to flood.

### Wondering what to do with fallen leaves?

- ▶ Use leaves as compost in your garden.
- ▶ Place leaves in your brown yard/food waste container for pickup.
- ▶ Take leaves and yard waste to the Tacoma Landfill (no additional fee for City of Tacoma residential customers). *Please keep loads covered.*

[www.cityoftacoma.org/flood](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/flood)  
(253) 591-5585



## GARBAGE peek-a-boo

This fall, you might see City staff peeking inside garbage containers set out at the curb on collection day.

**What does this mean?** Solid Waste Management is conducting a visual survey of selected households to see how full garbage containers are during any given week.

**Why?** Reviewing garbage volumes helps the utility customize advice for customers on choosing the right size container, which may save money if customers are able to switch to a smaller can. The educational effort coincides with preparation for next year's switch to every-other-week garbage collection.

### When is the City switching to every-other-week garbage collection?

It depends on where you live in Tacoma. Implementation will be phased in across the city, spanning from March 2013 to January 2014. You'll receive advance notice by mail and phone as to when collection specific to your home will change.

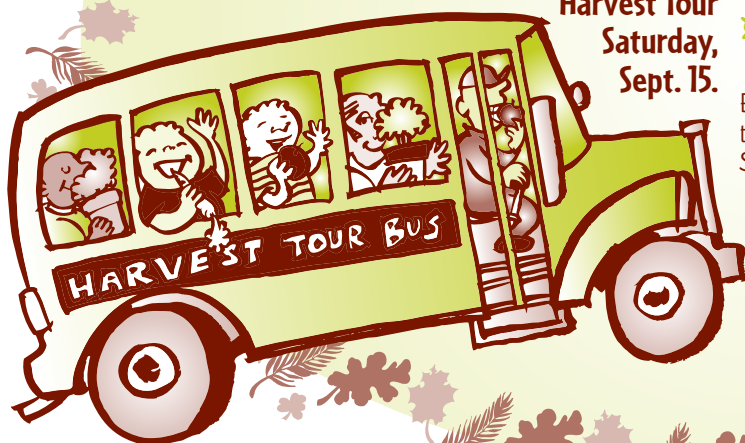
Solid Waste Management plans to visit a neighborhood council meeting near you this fall to discuss the upcoming collection frequency change. Find up-to-date information at [TacomaRecycles.org](http://TacomaRecycles.org).



# Do you know how Tacoma's Gardens Grow?

Celebrate the harvest season and  
ever-growing number of community  
gardens in Tacoma and Pierce County  
at the 2012 Community Garden

Harvest Tour  
Saturday,  
Sept. 15.



✂ **Self-guided tour:** Harvest tour maps can be picked up at King's Books, 218 St. Helens Ave., or downloaded at [www.cityoftacoma.org/communitygardens](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/communitygardens).

✂ **Bike tour:** 10-mile tour leaves at 10:30 a.m. Helmets required.

✂ **Bus tour:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The tour is free but seats are limited; pre-registration is required.

Both the bike and bus tours will leave from and return to McCarver Elementary School, South 23rd and South J streets.

Gardeners and tour participants are invited to gather for appetizers from 1-4 p.m. at The Hub, 203 Tacoma Ave. S., Tacoma.

To register or for more information:  
(253) 502-2150

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Food waste is recyclable

Food waste makes up one-third (approximately 14,000 tons) of the garbage generated by Tacoma's single-family households annually.

Food that was once considered garbage is now recyclable in your brown yard waste container. Find what's accepted and how to recycle your food waste at [TacomaRecycles.org](http://TacomaRecycles.org).

## A wall is a wall is a wall... **NOT**

The EnviroHouse's new demonstration area features energy-efficient wall materials and stormwater management design elements:

- ✂ **Seven walls** made of mud, foam, hay, glass and other natural materials. Cross sections of the walls reveal recyclable material and insulation with no off-gassing.
- ✂ **Seven-layer green roof** that absorbs and filters rainwater while providing natural insulation. Get an up-close view of the layers and how they work together.
- ✂ **Rain garden** displaying low-maintenance natural elements and plants conducive to reducing flooding problems while providing habitat for beneficial birds and insects.
- ✂ **Pervious concrete pavers** that are easy to install and readily available materials that allow water to soak into the soil while naturally filtering pollutants.

Visit the City of Tacoma EnviroHouse and learn how to go green inside and out.

Tacoma Landfill  
3510 S. Mullen St.  
[www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse)  
(253) 573-2426



# STOP BEFORE YOU TOP

When urban trees appear to have outgrown their homes, don't make the problem worse through harsh pruning or cutting tree branches back to stubs.

## 5 reasons not to "top":

1. Damage to trees from decay, sunburn and increased risk of insect and disease infestation.
2. Rapid increase in growth and future limb breakage.
3. Increased future expenses (pruning or early removal).
4. Decreased property values.
5. Ugly trees.

## Tips

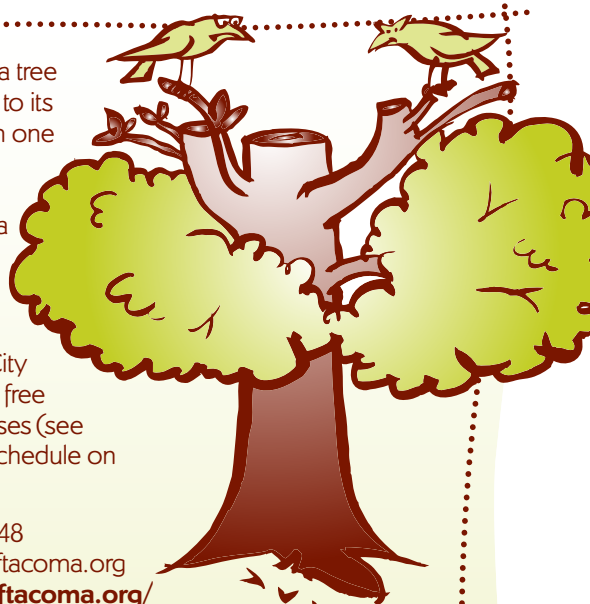
- ✂ Selectively remove branches and avoid excessive thinning of interior branches.

- ✂ Replace a tree unsuited to its spot with one that's a better fit.

- ✂ Consult a certified arborist.

Sign up for one of the City of Tacoma's free pruning classes (see workshop schedule on page 4).

(253) 591-2048  
trees@cityoftacoma.org  
[www.cityoftacoma.org/stopping](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/stopping)



## How to make your car habit more fish friendly

### ☀ Regularly maintain your vehicle and be on the lookout for leaks.

If you spot drips coming from your vehicle, use cardboard to catch the drips until you can get them fixed. (Make sure to dispose of stained cardboard in the trash, not the recycling!)

### ☀ Keep dirty car wash water out of local waterways by washing your car at a commercial car wash, using a waterless car wash product or washing your car on the lawn where soapy water can soak into the ground.

### ☀ Carpool, walk, bicycle or take public transit when possible.

Reducing cars on the road is always the fish-friendly way to go.

Vehicles are one of the biggest contributors to stormwater pollution that ends up in our local lakes, streams and Puget Sound. Motor oil, brake dust, tire wear, tailpipe emissions and car wash residue – it all adds up.

[www.PugetSoundStartsHere.org](http://www.PugetSoundStartsHere.org)

## RESOURCE LIST Fall 2012

### Solid Waste Management

Solid Waste Management (garbage, recycling, yard/food waste) Information line (recorded message)	565-5955	
General questions	591-5543	<a href="http://www.TacomaRecycles.org">www.TacomaRecycles.org</a>
Call-2-Haul	573-2468	<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/call2haul">www.cityoftacoma.org/call2haul</a>
EnviroHouse	573-2426	<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse">www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse</a>
Hazardous waste	591-5418	<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste">www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste</a>
Landfill scalehouse	593-7724	

### Surface Water Management Wastewater Management

General Surface Water and Wastewater questions	591-5588	<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/surfacewater">www.cityoftacoma.org/surfacewater</a> <a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/wastewater">www.cityoftacoma.org/wastewater</a>
Billing questions	502-2100	
Sewer backups & Street flooding		<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/flood">www.cityoftacoma.org/flood</a>
Street sweeping	591-5585	<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/streetsweeping">www.cityoftacoma.org/streetsweeping</a>
Leaf disposal		<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/leaves">www.cityoftacoma.org/leaves</a>
TAGRO	502-2150	<a href="http://www.tagro.com">www.tagro.com</a>

### Environmental Services (solid waste, surface water, wastewater) [www.cityoftacoma.org/environmentalservices](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/environmentalservices)

Email listserv		<a href="http://www.cityoftacoma.org/environews">www.cityoftacoma.org/environews</a>
Twitter		<a href="http://www.twitter.com/EnviroTalk">www.twitter.com/EnviroTalk</a> <a href="http://www.twitter.com/TAcomaGROW">www.twitter.com/TAcomaGROW</a> <a href="http://www.twitter.com/CityOfTacoma">www.twitter.com/CityOfTacoma</a>
Facebook		<a href="http://www.facebook.com/cityoftacoma">www.facebook.com/cityoftacoma</a>

When calling any of the utilities, please have your account number available. It is the first thing you will be asked and allows us to quickly access your information. Your account number is located at the top of your utility bill.





## GREENER CLEANER

Answer key to the Summer issue's puzzle.

A H K R V I Y B H N M L P A Z E  
H U B L E Q C B G R Y U I K J M  
S G L A D G J L N B C X A H K L  
Q C U V H E P V B N N M H K S A  
X C E Q G K O W B J K L F Z C N  
W H J L W C R U Y F C B O N Y E  
J T O N L X O A F R Y H O Q J K  
J Y O P W C U V H E Y I D S D G  
T E C U R B S I D E H Y R H K C  
M B C X E E H F G J L W E C H I  
W D G H M V W J K L W T Y U I B  
Z X C G I E T J Q U I O P D J L  
S X C V N E T Y H J K L R E C B  
H J K L D E D I S P O S A B L E  
J M C Z E X W H F J I T P O W V  
V N U T R Y U J F D S C V B H K

### Gunk remover

Try this nontoxic solution to remove stickers, adhesives and gunk from plastic, glass or other hard surfaces.

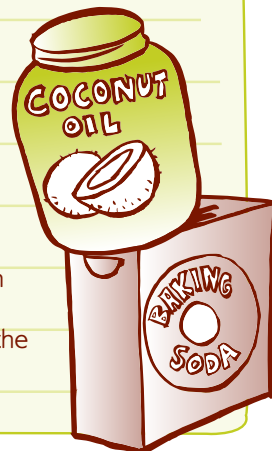
#### What you need:

- Coconut oil
- Baking soda

#### Directions:

1. Mix together equal parts of coconut oil and baking soda in a small container.
2. Using a rag, dab the mixture onto the gunk you are trying to remove, rubbing in a circular motion.
3. The gunk will begin to rub off. Once it's all gone, wipe off the remaining gunk remover with a clean rag.
4. If you have leftover gunk remover, place a lid on the container and store for future use.

[www.cityoftacoma.org/greenercleaners](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/greenercleaners)



## A thin layer of TAGRO can work MAGIC on your lawn.

Give your yard a little attention this fall and you'll be able to relax on a lush lawn next spring.

1. Thatch or plug dense or well-rooted lawns. Mow existing lawn short.
2. Spread a thin layer (about 1/4-inch deep) of TAGRO Mix.
3. Water well, and get ready to enjoy a lush and lovely lawn.

**FREE  
TAGRO Mix**  
(if you shovel  
it yourself)

TAGRO Mix and  
TAGRO Potting  
Soil are available  
year-round  
for pickup or  
delivery. Call  
for current  
pricing.

TAGRO Office  
2201 Portland Ave., Gate 6  
(follow the TAGRO signs)  
(253) 502-2150  
[www.tagro.com](http://www.tagro.com)



## Fall home & garden workshops

All workshops are open to Tacoma and Pierce County residents.  
Registration required. Schedules are subject to change.

### September

8	10:30 a.m.	Yard Waste & Worm Bin Composting
15	10:30 a.m.	Landscaping: Right Plant, Right Place
22	10:30 a.m.	Landscape Design: Solving Common Problems
23	1:30 p.m.	Gardens: Summer Harvest, Fall Planting & Winter Prep
29	10:30 a.m.	Natural Daylight: Solatube & DIY Install Demo
29	1:30 p.m.	Interior Design for a Healthy Home

### October

6	10:30 a.m.	Pruning Landscape Trees & Shrubs
13	10:30 a.m.	Yard Waste & Worm Bin Composting
14	1:30 p.m.	Rain Barrels: How to Make & Maintain
20	10:30 a.m.	Energy-Efficient Insulation + DIY Tips
20	1:30 p.m.	Energy-Efficient Windows & Doors
27	10:30 a.m.	Pruning Landscape Trees & Shrubs

### November

3	10:30 a.m.	Residential Landscape Lighting
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The City of Tacoma EnviroHouse is located at the Tacoma Landfill,  
3510 S. Mullen St.

For updated information or to register for workshops, please visit  
[www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse), email [ehouse@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:ehouse@cityoftacoma.org)  
or call (253) 573-2426.

### Edible Garden Workshop Series

Sept. 15	10 a.m. to Noon	Composting in the Garden
Oct. 13	10 a.m. to Noon	Putting the Garden to Bed

Workshops are located at the TAGRO Office, 2201 Portland Ave., Gate 6,  
Tacoma. For directions, call (253) 502-2150 or visit [www.tagro.com](http://www.tagro.com).

To register for Edible Gardens workshops, please contact Community  
Garden Coordinator Kristen McIvor at [kmcivor@forterra.org](mailto:kmcivor@forterra.org) or call  
(253) 363-1846.



## What's that **WORD**?

Below are seven statements that can be found in this issue of EnviroTalk. Each sentence has a missing word or phrase. Complete the sentence and then find the word or phrase in the word search. If you get stumped, the answers are at the bottom. A key to this word search will be featured in the next issue of EnviroTalk.

1. Celebrate the harvest season and ever-growing number of community gardens in Tacoma and Pierce County at the 2012 Community Garden Harvest Tour on Saturday, Sept. 15.
2. When urban \_\_\_\_\_ appear to have outgrown their homes, don't make the problem worse through harsh pruning or cutting tree branches back to stubs.
3. The EnviroHouse's new \_\_\_\_\_ area features energy-efficient wall materials and stormwater management design elements.
4. Vehicles are one of the biggest contributors to stormwater \_\_\_\_\_ that ends up in our local lakes, streams and Puget Sound.
5. Solid Waste Management is conducting a visual \_\_\_\_\_ of selected households to see how full garbage containers are during any given week.
6. City of Tacoma residents are responsible for collecting and \_\_\_\_\_ of leaves and other debris from their property, including the \_\_\_\_\_ between their sidewalk and the street.
7. TAGRO Mix and TAGRO Potting Soil are available year-round for pickup or \_\_\_\_\_.



Please see pg. 4 for answers to last issue's puzzle.  
 Answers: 1. HARVEST, 2. TREES, 3. DEMONSTRATION, 4. POLLUTION, 5. SURVEY, 6. DISPOSING, 7. DELIVERY

## Enviro**KIDS** Lunch money locket

Keep your lunch money safe with a locket made from a mint tin.

### What you need:

- Small metal mint tin (roughly 2 by 2-1/2 inches with a hinged lid)
- Acrylic paint
- Paintbrush
- String or metallic craft cord (3-foot length, thin enough to fit around or through the tin's hinge so the lid can still close)
- Tacky glue
- Decorations such as small plastic animals, fake jewels, or stickers

### Directions:

1. Wipe out the inside of the tin.
2. Paint the top with acrylic paint and let it dry.
3. Thread the string or metallic cord around or through the tin's hinges. Pull both ends of the string tight, so they fit snugly around the hinge, then knot together at the top.
4. Decorate the lid.
5. Let dry, then tuck away lunch money for safekeeping.

[www.cityoftacoma.org/envirokids](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/envirokids)



# EnviroTalk

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We want to hear from you:  
 EnviroTalk@cityoftacoma.org  
 www.twitter.com/EnviroTalk  
 (253) 591-5051



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# Garbage & recycling Holiday collection schedule



If your regular garbage, recycling or yard waste collection day falls on these holidays or the days following the holiday, your collection will be one day late during that week only.

Holiday	If your regular pickup day is...	Your pickup day will be...
Veterans Day	On regular schedule	
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, Nov. 22 Friday, Nov. 23	Friday, Nov. 23 Saturday, Nov. 24
Christmas Day	Tuesday, Dec. 25 Wednesday, Dec. 26 Thursday, Dec. 27 Friday, Dec. 28	Wednesday, Dec. 26 Thursday, Dec. 27 Friday, Dec. 28 Saturday, Dec. 29
New Year's Day 2013	Tuesday, Jan. 1 Wednesday, Jan. 2 Thursday, Jan. 3 Friday, Jan. 4	Wednesday, Jan. 2 Thursday, Jan. 3 Friday, Jan. 4 Saturday, Jan. 5



If you need this information in an alternative format, please call (253) 591-5051. People with hearing or speech impairments may contact us through Washington Relay Services, 1-800-833-6388 (TTY or ASCII).