

EnviroTalk

Summer 2011

RECYCLING review

Paper us proud, Tacoma

Results from a recent study revealed 1,500 tons of recyclable paper in Tacoma's residential garbage stream. Help reduce that by regularly recycling your clean paper products. Here's a review of what is and isn't allowed in your blue recycling container.

Paper

Yes

Bags
Egg cartons (no Styrofoam)
Gift wrap (non-metallic)
Junk mail
Newspaper, magazines, catalogs
Paper boxes (dry foods, toothpaste, etc.)
Paper towel/toilet paper rolls
Printer paper
Shredded paper strips
(place inside bag)

No

Carbon paper
Cups
Foil/metallic gift wrap
Paper box liners
Paper plates & cups
Pizza boxes
Soiled paper
Toilet paper, facial tissue, paper towels, napkins

Find more lists of what is and isn't recyclable at
www.cityoftacoma.org/recyclingreview.

Tacoma's garbage TELLS

Ever wonder what's in Tacoma's garbage? You might be surprised to learn what was found during Solid Waste Management's first-ever waste composition study. Almost 25% of residential garbage was recyclable through curbside service, including paper (11%), plastic (7%), glass (3%), aluminum/tin (2%) and yard waste (1%).

What does this mean?

✿ **Good, with room to improve:** Most of the empty jars, jugs, boxes, cans and paper you generate on a daily basis are accepted in Tacoma's curbside recycling service. Please recycle or reuse as much as possible.

www.cityoftacoma.org/recyclingreview

✿ **Let's get to 0%:** The study revealed a mere 1% each of household hazardous waste (HHW) and electronic waste (also hazardous) in the garbage stream. While these are low percentages, hazardous materials should never be put in the garbage.

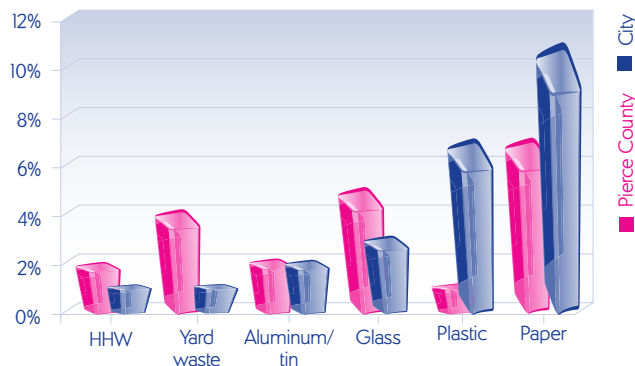
Dispose HHW (medical waste, chemicals, fluorescent lights, oil-based paint, etc.) free of charge at the City's HHW Facility (Tacoma Landfill, 3510 S. Mullen St.). www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste

Recycle computers and TVs free at local charities and retailers participating in E-Cycle Washington. www.ecyclewa.org

How do we compare?

Tacoma plans to repeat the waste composition study to compare improvement against current baseline stats. Pierce County conducted a similar study with similar results last year. The graph below shows how we compare.

Find detailed waste composition study results at
www.cityoftacoma.org/solidwaste.



Container gardening with TAGRO

- ❁ **Choose a container.** Use pottery, or found items like old shoes, bathtubs or dishware.
- ❁ **Fill with TAGRO Potting Soil.** Perfect for indoor or outdoor container gardens, greenhouses or raised garden beds.
- ❁ **Determine what to plant.** Plants described as compact, bush, container or window-box are bred for small spaces. Salad greens are an easy way to incorporate edibles into your garden.
- ❁ **Find a good spot.** Think somewhere sunny, accessible and easy to water.
- ❁ **Water regularly.** Check once a day to see if soil is damp.

TAGRO Mix and TAGRO Potting Soil are available for pickup or delivery.

www.tagro.com

(253) 502-2150

2201 Portland Ave., Gate 6, Tacoma

Free TAGRO Mix (you shovel!)
Just bring a shovel, containers ... and someone to do the shoveling.



Did you know ...

- The containers (pots, trays, baskets and hangers) that your seedlings and plants come in from the nursery are not recyclable.
- ❁ Reuse them to grow your own seedlings
- ❁ Decorate and use them for smaller plants
- ❁ Check with your nursery and ask if they'll take back containers for reuse
- ❁ Throw them in the garbage

Planning a fundraising car wash?

Make it fish friendly

Parking lot car wash fundraisers can send a lot of dirty soap and grime down the storm drain and into lakes, streams, rivers and Puget Sound.

Keep dirty water out of Puget Sound:

- ❁ **Check out a Clean Bay Car Wash Kit** to direct dirty wash water into the wastewater system where it is treated, or nearby landscaping where it is filtered by the soil. For fundraisers only, not for personal use.
www.cityoftacoma.org/carwashkits, (253) 502-2220
- ❁ **Sell car wash coupons** to a commercial car wash, where dirty wash water is sent to the wastewater treatment plant. Ask your local car wash about opportunities, or contact the Puget Sound Car Wash Association.
www.CharityCarWash.org, (206) 622-8425

Host a garden party
Learn about TAGRO and other natural yard care practices by hosting a "Garden Party" tailored to meet the needs of you and your neighbors.

For more information:
Geoff Rinehart,
Tacoma-Pierce County
Health Department
(253) 798-4587



Help keep
West Nile
away

Reduce mosquito breeding habitat

- ❁ Eliminate standing water around your house
- ❁ Change water frequently in wading pools, fountains, bird baths and pet dishes
- ❁ Make sure gutters drain properly

Prevent mosquito bites

- ❁ Stay indoors at dawn and dusk
- ❁ Wear long sleeves and pants when in mosquito-infested areas
- ❁ Wear mosquito repellent
- ❁ Make sure windows and doors are "bug tight"

www.cityoftacoma.org/westnilevirus
(253) 798-6578



Pizza boxes

Q: Can pizza boxes go in the recycling and yard waste bins?

A: No. Pizza boxes must go in the garbage. Why? It's the buttered crust, savory toppings and cheesy goodness that contaminates the box with grease and stuck-on food. All recyclables need to be clean of food residue.

Find out more about what is and isn't recyclable at www.cityoftacoma.org/recyclingreview.

Help protect Puget Sound 24-hour water pollution hotline

Activities to report include:

- Construction site runoff
- Accidental spills
- Leaking dumpsters
- Soapy or discolored water running into storm drains
- People dumping oil, chemicals or other waste into or near City storm drains, creeks, lakes or Commencement Bay.

(253) 383-2429

The hotline is a joint effort between the City of Tacoma and Citizens for a Healthy Bay.

Air and upholstery freshener

Ingredients:

- Clean, empty spray bottle
- Water
- Essential oil

Directions:

1. Fill spray bottle a couple inches from the top with water.
2. Add a few drops of essential oil until the desired scent is achieved.
3. Mix well.
4. Spray on couches, mattresses, throw pillows and other upholstered items.*

**We recommend testing this on a hidden portion of the upholstered item first.*

www.cityoftacoma.org/greenercleaners

GREENER CLEANER

Add essential oils to your natural homemade cleaning products for better results.

- **Citrus** (orange, lemon, grapefruit) – Works as a disinfectant.
- **Lavender** – Works as an antiseptic, antibacterial and antifungal. It also repels a variety of insects including flies, fleas, mosquitoes and moths.
- **Tea Tree** – Works as an antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal. Works well on mold and mildew.

EnviroKIDS And the awards go to...

Tacoma students displayed their dedication to the environment as well as their artistic ability in this year's EnviroChallenger/EnviroKids Earth Day art contest. More than 140 students entered the art contest, which asked elementary and middle school students to draw an environmental mascot that represents one of the positive behaviors they have learned about surface water, wastewater or solid waste from the City of Tacoma EnviroChallenger program.

The winners are:

Grades K-2 Division

- 1st place, Micaela Stewart, second grade, Browns Point Elementary School
- 2nd place, Evan Van Orsow, second grade, Browns Point Elementary School
- 3rd place, Ana Matteson, kindergarten, Seabury School

Grades 3-5 Division

- 1st place, Sierra Berry, fifth grade, Point Defiance Elementary School
- 2nd place, Paizlee Tyler, fifth grade, Lister Elementary School
- 3rd place, Cuc-Tien Ly, fifth grade, Lister Elementary School

Grades 6-8 Division

- 1st place, Nhu-Thuy Pham, eighth grade, Truman Middle School
- 2nd place, Max Mayo, seventh grade, First Creek Middle School
- 3rd place, Emma Lavold, seventh grade, Jason Lee Middle School

To view the winning works of art, visit www.cityoftacoma.org/envirokids.

Prizes for the contest were generously donated by the Tacoma Rainiers and Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium.

EcoFind

Banners to bags

This spring, the Urban Forest Project Tacoma planted 85 tree-themed banners by local artists, designers and students to celebrate Arbor Day. The banners created a forest of thoughtful images amid the concrete and asphalt of Tacoma's urban landscape. The banners have since been taken down and are being transformed into one-of-a-kind messenger bags. You can view the designs at www.ufp-tacoma.com.

Check out the online shop on the Urban Forest Project Tacoma website to purchase T-shirts or posters of your favorite banner designs. The special-edition messenger bags will also be for sale.

Proceeds will go toward planting and maintaining trees in Tacoma.

www.ufp-tacoma.com
(253) 591-2048

Summer 2011 RESOURCE LIST

Resource	Phone	Website
Solid Waste Management (garbage, recycling, yard waste)		www.cityoftacoma.org/solidwaste
Recorded information line	565-5955	www.cityoftacoma.org/garbage
Solid Waste general questions	591-5543	www.cityoftacoma.org/recycle
Call-2-Haul	573-2468	www.cityoftacoma.org/yardwaste
EnviroHouse (green bldg. exhibit)	573-2426	www.cityoftacoma.org/call2haul
Hazardous waste	591-5418	www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse
Landfill scalehouse	593-7724	www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste
Wastewater/Surface water		
General questions	591-5588	www.cityoftacoma.org/wastewater
Billing questions	502-2100	www.cityoftacoma.org/surfacewater
TAGRO	502-2150	www.tagro.com
Street sweeping	591-5585	www.cityoftacoma.org/streetsweeping
Water pollution hotline	383-2429	

When calling any of the utilities, please have your account number available. Your account number is located at the top of your utility bill.

Mark a storm drain, SAVE a FISH

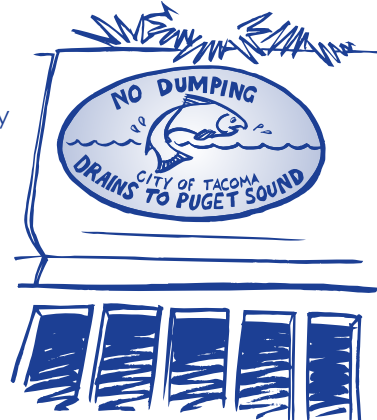
What goes down storm drains isn't just rain. It's runoff from construction sites, chemicals people dump, and pollution rainwater picks up as it flows across roofs, lawns, driveways and roads.

Storm drain markers offer a reminder that what goes down Tacoma's storm drains flows directly – untreated – into Tacoma's waterways and eventually Puget Sound.

To sign up or find out more about marking storm drains in your neighborhood, contact the City of Tacoma's EnviroChallengers.

www.cityoftacoma.org/surfacewater
(253) 502-2220

Puget Sound
Starts Here.org



Take a walk at Urban Waters

From downtown Tacoma, you can see the brick-red building that is the Center for Urban Waters along the east side of the Thea Foss Waterway. But if you take a walk along the esplanade in front of the building at 326 E. D St., you can get a close-up look that includes much more:

- ✿ **Views of the downtown skyline.** Mount Rainier, Commencement Bay, and the Murray Morgan and state Route 509 bridges. Plus waterway activity, such as tugs and pleasure boats.
- ✿ **Watch for wildlife along the shoreline and in the snags.** Osprey and seal pups have been spotted in the area.
- ✿ **Learn what makes the Center for Urban Waters a shining example of green building.** New signage highlights many of the features – including the green roof and rain garden – designed to earn a LEED Platinum rating.
- ✿ **Explore the Tidal Resonance Chamber,** a unique rammed-earth public art project you can step into and experience the tides of the Foss Waterway.

www.cityoftacoma.org/urbanwaters



Say hello to the EnviroChallengers

During the school year, the EnviroChallenger educators can be seen around town, going from school to school teaching Tacoma students about science, the environment and what they can do to protect it. In the summer, these amazing educators bring their knowledge and enthusiasm for the environment to numerous community events.

Here are a few places to see the EnviroChallenger educators in action this summer:

- ✿ July 10: Art on the Ave (Sixth Avenue)
- ✿ July 30-31: Ethnic Fest at Wright Park
- ✿ Aug. 6: Proctor Art Fest
- ✿ Aug. 20: South Tacoma Classic Car Show
- ✿ Aug. 27-28: Maritime Fest (Thea's Park and the Foss Waterway Seaport)

The EnviroChallenger educators attend more than 30 events throughout the year. If you have an event where you would like to see them, let us know.

www.envirochallenger.com
(253) 591-5066



5 ways to reuse plastic bags

1. **Paintbrush preserver:** To keep brushes and rollers from drying out, place them in bags,

and tie them or wrap them with rubber bands to keep out air. They will stay moist for a day or so.

2. **Knee pads:** Layer a couple bags and tie them around your knees before you work in the garden; the bags act as knee pads and keep your pants clean.
3. **Pet waste cleanup:** Use bags as gloves to pick up pet waste and then turn the bag inside out, tie closed and dispose of the entire bag in your garbage can.
4. **Wet umbrella protector:** To avoid soaking anything important or making a wet mess, keep a plastic bag in your purse or tote to wrap around your wet umbrella.
5. **Filler:** To cut down on the amount of potting soil needed to fill large planters, crumple some bags to fill the bottom (be sure not to cover the drainage hole).

Remember to take your own reusable bags to the grocery store. That's the best way to reduce waste in the first place.

Source: Real Simple

Make your own plastic bag holder
by stuffing your bags into an empty cardboard tissue box. Place the holders under the sink, in the pantry or in a drawer for handy retrieval.

DID YOU KNOW?

... the pipes that connect your home's plumbing to the City's sanitary sewer main are your responsibility to repair and maintain?

Homes constructed before 1980 are likely to have side sewers made of clay or concrete pipes. These pipes can crack, shift out of place, and/or be invaded by roots, causing leaks or blocked pipes.

The City of Tacoma recommends hiring an inspector to check the condition of your home's side sewer if it is more than 25 years old and/or does not have PVC pipe running from your home to the City sewer main.

www.cityoftacoma.org/sidesewer
(253) 591-5588

Time to tee up

Practice your swing at Tacoma Firs Golf Center, which features 60 covered tee stations, an 18-hole miniature golf course, natural-grass putting green and 50-yard short practice area.

Tacoma Firs Golf Center (4504 S. Tyler St.) is located on previously unused land at the Tacoma Landfill, and it operates under a revenue-sharing agreement with the City.

www.tacomafirsgolfcenter.com
(253) 472-6899

EnviroTalk

in this issue

- ✿ What's in Tacoma's Garbage? page 1
- ✿ Container gardening with TAGRO page 2
- ✿ EnviroKids art contest winners..... page 3
- ✿ Summer resource list..... page 4
- ✿ Reuse plastic bags page 5

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



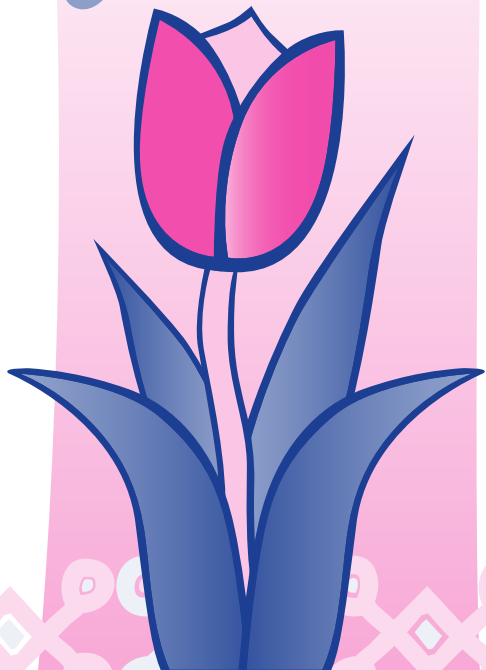
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City of Tacoma
 Public Works
 Environmental Services
 747 Market Street, Room 408
 Tacoma, Washington 98402-3769

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 PERMIT NO. 2

FREE Home & Garden WORKSHOPS



The following workshops will be held at the City of Tacoma EnviroHouse (Tacoma Landfill, 3510 S. Mullen St.). Workshops are open to Tacoma and Pierce County residents. Schedule is subject to change. Registration is required.

June

- | | | |
|----|---|------------|
| 11 | Composting/Worm Bins | 10:30 a.m. |
| 18 | Porous Paving: Driveways, Pathways and Patios | 10:30 a.m. |
| 25 | Home Irrigation: Select, Install, Maintain | 10 a.m. |

July

- | | | |
|----|--|------------|
| 9 | Composting/Worm Bins | 10:30 a.m. |
| 16 | Ductless Heat Pumps | 10:30 a.m. |
| 17 | Plant Now for Fall & Winter Harvest | 1:30 p.m. |
| 23 | Natural Lawn Care & Pest Management | 10:30 a.m. |
| 30 | Solar Power: How it Works & Incentives | 10 a.m. |

August

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|------------|
| 6 | Garden Design & Plant Tour | 10:30 a.m. |
| 13 | Composting/Worm Bins | 10:30 a.m. |
| 20 | Residential Green Roofs | 10 a.m. |

www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse
ehouse@cityoftacoma.org
 (253) 573-2426

