

EnviroTalk

Spring 2014

Stop before you top

If your tree has outgrown its home, don't make the problem worse with harsh pruning or cutting tree branches back to stubs.

5 reasons not to "top" your trees:

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.

(253) 591-2048

trees@cityoftacoma.org

cityoftacoma.org/stoptopping



Toilets AREN'T trash CANS

No one likes to talk about toilets. But there's something you need to know: Disposable wipes are causing headaches in homes and in sewer pipes.

And that's costing you money – whether it's to fix your own plumbing or the City sewer system.

Many products called disposable or flushable don't break up like toilet paper. They clog pipes or get caught in sewer system pumps, causing messy backups and expensive repairs.

The bottom line: Flush human waste and toilet paper.

Everything else – including wipes, diapers, cat litter, facial tissues, paper towels and sanitary products – goes in the trash.

These products don't dissolve. You can test them yourself with two bowls of water. Put toilet paper in one and your test item in the other. Swish both items in the water. Wait an hour and swish again. By then, the toilet paper should have almost dissolved, while the other item hasn't changed much.

Unless something disintegrates at the rate of toilet paper, it goes in the garbage.

cityoftacoma.org/
flushable

Strange finds fished from Tacoma's sewers

Over the years, the pipes that carry wastewater from homes and businesses to the treatment plants have yielded a collection of unusual objects.

Among the discoveries:

- Toys
- Dentures
- Clothing
- Basketball
- Five-gallon bucket
- Waterbed mattress
- Construction debris
- 16-foot extension ladder

That may be a surprising list, but you won't be surprised to know that NONE of these things belongs in the sewer system.



Pay the easy way: **ONLINE**

Paying your bill for Solid Waste, Surface Water, Wastewater, Tacoma Power and Tacoma Water online should be fast, easy and secure. It is!

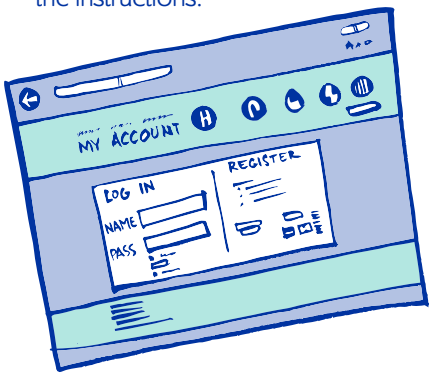
When you use **MyTPU.org/MyAccount**, you can easily:

- Pay your utility bill
- Get text and email reminders and manage your profile
- Set up recurring credit and debit card payments without fees
- Sign up for Budget Billing

The updated site has received positive comments from customers.

"After trying to use the site many times before the new update, I can truly say this was so much easier and logical to get info I needed and get back to doing other tasks," said one customer.

Want to pay your bill online? Simply create an account at **MyTPU.org/MyAccount** and follow the instructions.



Answer key for puzzle in the winter 2013 issue:

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

LIVE HERE?

Protect downstream salmon habitat with a new rain garden and Flett Creek or Leach Creek Watershed homeowners may qualify for a cash rebate of up to \$2,000 to help with construction costs. Soil testing and expertise are available regardless of where in Tacoma you own a home. Learn more at cityoftacoma.org/raingarden.

Watch our video on YouTube...

STOP WOOD SMOKE: our air needs your help

Pierce County has an air quality problem due to fine particle pollution from wood smoke. In colder months, the pollution level in some areas violates federal standards and causes health problems.

You can help the City of Tacoma and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency reduce wood smoke two ways:

- ✿ **Don't burn during Air Quality Burn Bans.** Using a woodstove or fireplace during a ban may result in a fine of up to \$1,000.
- ✿ **Get paid to upgrade your old woodstove or insert!** Funding is available to help you change to a cleaner source of heat.

Get more info and sign up for burn ban alerts at airsafepiercecounty.org.

airsafepiercecounty.org

Make a Splash: \$ for projects that protect waterways

Do you have an idea that will help protect local waterways? Apply for a Make a Splash grant from Surface Water Management for a project that helps keep our waterways pollution-free.

Make a Splash grants of up to \$4,000 fund projects to prevent stormwater pollution or protect and restore local lakes, streams, rivers and Puget Sound. Projects that tie in with the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign (PugetSoundStartsHere.org) are encouraged.

Past projects have included videos, multilingual outreach efforts, classroom experiences, and monitoring and stewardship projects.

Applications and details are on the City's website. Deadline is May 23, 2014.

(253) 502-2126

cityoftacoma.org/makeasplash



RESOURCE GUIDE SPRING 2014



Solid Waste Management

Solid Waste Management (garbage, recycling, yard/food waste)		www.TacomaRecycles.org
General Solid Waste questions	502-2100	
Recorded Solid Waste Information & Holiday Schedule Line	565-5955	
Call-2-Haul	573-2468	www.cityoftacoma.org/call2haul
Hazardous waste	591-5418	www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste
Landfill scalehouse	593-7724	

Surface Water Management Wastewater Management

Sewer backups & Street flooding Street sweeping	591-5585	www.cityoftacoma.org/sewerbackup www.cityoftacoma.org/flood www.cityoftacoma.org/streetsweeping
Billing questions	502-2100	
Leaf disposal		www.cityoftacoma.org/leaves
TAGRO	502-2150	www.tagro.com
Tree resources	591-2048	cityoftacoma.org/urbanforestry
General Surface Water and Wastewater questions	502-2100	www.cityoftacoma.org/surfacewater www.cityoftacoma.org/wastewater

Environmental Services (solid waste, surface water, wastewater) cityoftacoma.org/environmentalservices

EnviroHouse	573-2426	www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse
Email listserv		www.cityoftacoma.org/environews
Twitter		www.twitter.com/CityofTacoma
Facebook		www.facebook.com/CityofTacoma

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

EnviroKIDS

Seed balls

For a little gardening fun, toss a few seed balls wherever you want plants to grow.



What you'll need:

- Bucket
- Clay (use dry pottery or red clay from an art supply department if you don't have clay soil)
- Compost
- Seeds (try native wildflowers)
- Water
- Cookie sheet or tray
- Newspapers

Directions:

1. In a bucket, mix 5 parts dry clay with 1 part compost and 1 part seeds.
2. Add water a little at a time until the mixture holds together in a ball.
3. Pinch off small pieces to make seed balls about 3/4 to 1 inch in diameter.
4. Set on a newspaper-covered cookie sheet and let them dry.
5. Toss seed balls into the garden.

FREE SPRING WORKSHOPS

Home & garden

Advance registration required.

Space is limited. Schedule is subject to change.

Workshops are open to Tacoma and Pierce County residents.

March

- 8 10:30 a.m. Yard Waste & Worm Bin Composting
- 9 1:30 p.m. Rain Barrels: How to Make & Maintain
- 15 10 a.m. Rain Garden How-to & City Incentives
- 22 10:30 a.m. Pruning Landscape Trees & Shrubs
- 29 10:30 a.m. Food Gardens: Starting from Seed

April

- 5 10:30 a.m. Tree Selection: Right Tree, Right Place
- 5 1 p.m. Tree Planting Done Right
- 12 10:30 a.m. Yard Waste & Worm Bin Composting
- 19 10:30 a.m. Planting for Summer & Fall Harvest
- 26 10:30 a.m. Backyard Chickens: Getting Started

May

- 3 10:30 a.m. Solar Power: How it Works & Incentives
- 10 10:30 a.m. Yard Waste & Worm Bin Composting
- 11 1:30 p.m. Rain Barrels: How to Make & Maintain
- 17 10:30 a.m. To be determined (see website)
- 31 10:30 a.m. Ductless Heat Pump Advantages & Incentives

Location: City of Tacoma EnviroHouse at the Tacoma Recovery & Transfer Center (formerly Tacoma Landfill), 3510 S. Mullen St., 98409

Register online at cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse or call (253) 573-2426.



Gardening

The Community Gardens program, sponsored by TAGRO and other organizations, is now Harvest Pierce County.



A series of free Edible Gardens workshops, aimed at beginning vegetable gardens, will be taught by Harvest Pierce County and the Pierce County environmental educators.

Classes in Tacoma:

March 15, 10 a.m. to noon – Starting from Seed

April 19, 10 a.m. to noon – Garden Soil 101

May 17, 10 a.m. to noon – Planting & Maintaining Your Summer Vegetable Garden

Location: TAGRO, 2210 E. Portland Ave., Gate 6, Tacoma, WA 98421

These classes are held at other locations in Pierce County too. Check the website for dates and details.

Classes are free but registration is required. To register, call (253) 798-4133 or visit piercecountywa.org/enviroed.

Gallucci Learning Garden – Fundamentals of Organic Gardening

Fundamentals of Organic Gardening is a hands-on gardening class taught at the Gallucci Learning Garden, on the corner of South 14th and G streets.

Schedule: Wednesdays from 5-7 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m.-noon, March 26-April 19.

Classes are free but donations are greatly appreciated. To register, call (253) 256-5116 or email Gallucci@GaudalupeLandTrust.org.

galluccilearninggarden.com



Q: What happens to the food/yard waste we recycle?

A: Tacoma's food and yard waste is recycled into compost at the Compost Factory in Puyallup under contract with the City. Tacoma residents can purchase compost in bulk at LRI's Sales Road facility, 10308 Sales Road, Tacoma, 98499.



Spring at TAGRO

It's grow time

Although TAGRO is available year-round, spring is the busiest season for Tacoma's premium soil products.

- TAGRO Mix
- TAGRO Potting Soil
- Aged Black Bark
- TAGRO Topsoil

TAGRO products are available for pickup or delivery: You can pick up TAGRO products yourself or, for an additional fee, we'll deliver TAGRO products to you. Call for a delivery estimate.

Spring hours start March 15:

Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat. 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
TAGRO (Central Treatment Plant),
2201 E. Portland Ave., Gate 6

(253) 502-2150
tagro.com



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES UTILITIES ARE

Did you know that your Environmental Services utilities are national leaders?

Solid Waste, Surface Water and Wastewater Management have earned dozens of national awards, including these recent honors:

- ❁ Recovery & Transfer Center at the Tacoma Landfill, Gold Award for best Transfer Station and a Project of the Year award.
- ❁ Solid Waste's Food Waste Recycling Marketing, Gold Award for top Communication program.

❁ Wastewater, one of five utilities in the country to earn a Platinum Excellence in Management award.

❁ Central and North End Treatment Plants, multiple "peak performance" awards.

❁ Surface Water, National Environmental Achievement Award for improving stormwater quality in the Foss Watershed.

❁ Greenroads certification for more projects than any other city in the world.

NATIONAL
STARS

GOLD
AWARD

Don't let people trash Tacoma

Garbage dumped on city roadways, streets and alleys affects our safety, property values and quality of life. And it costs you when City crews have to clean it up.

If you see garbage – such as tires, mattresses, furniture and construction materials – dumped on the side of the road, call **(253) 591-5001**.

If possible, give the location of the illegal dumping; the make, model and license number of the vehicle used to carry the items to the site; and the date and time when the dumping occurred. If you want to be contacted about your report, please remember to include a phone number or e-mail address in your message.

Cut the Clutter! **USE CALL-2-HAUL**

If spring cleaning leaves you with household items that can't be reused and don't fit in your garbage container, give Call-2-Haul a call.

Residential Solid Waste customers can use Call-2-Haul twice a year at no additional cost. Service is available by appointment only for either curbside pickup or hauling items to the Recovery & Transfer Center (Landfill) yourself.

For each Call-2-Haul curbside pickup or self-haul, you are allowed:

- ❁ **up to 3 large items** (sofas, refrigerators, water heaters, etc.), and
- ❁ **up to 15 bags or boxes** – light enough for one person to lift – of smaller household junk (clothing, vacuum cleaners, microwaves, etc.)

To schedule an appointment:

(253) 573-2468, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., weekdays

Remodeling and construction type materials are not accepted under this program. See cityoftacoma.org/call2haul for more on what's accepted and not accepted.





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We want to hear from you:
EnviroTalk@cityoftacoma.org



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Environmental Services
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Tacoma, Washington 98402-3769

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TACOMA, WA
PERMIT NO. 2

What's that **WORD**?

Complete the sentences below (you'll find the answers in this issue of EnviroTalk) and then find the word or phrase in the word search below. 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.

- Many products called disposable or flushable don't break up like toilet paper.
- Apply for a Make a Splash grant for a project that helps keep our _____ pollution-free.
- Call-2-Haul service is available by appointment only for either curbside _____ or hauling items yourself.
- Garbage dumped on city _____, streets and alleys affects safety, property values and quality of life
- Pierce County has an air quality problem caused by fine particle pollution from _____ smoke.
- If your tree has outgrown its home, don't make the problem worse with harsh _____.

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

Answers: 1. FLUSHABLE, 2. WATERWAYS, 3. PICKUP, 4. ROADWAYS,
5. WOOD, 6. PRUNING

Please see p. 2 for answers to puzzle in last issue.



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).