

ENVIROTalk

Fall 2010



Reusable sandwich bags

It can be hard to pack a lunch without using disposable food storage bags, especially when you have items such as sandwiches, crackers or cut-up fruits and vegetables. But not anymore! Several retailers sell reusable snack and sandwich bags. These bags are made from food-grade fabric that can be washed and air dried and used over and over. Check with your local health food store or online retailer for availability.



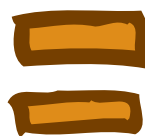
A WASTE-FREE LUNCH IS MONEY IN YOUR POCKET

Did you know that the average lunch packed with prepackaged foods and disposable utensils costs approximately \$1.35 more per day than a lunch packed with non prepackaged foods and reusable utensils? That's a savings of \$350 every school year just for packing a waste-free lunch. Doesn't that seem like an easy way to save money?

Save your hard-earned money instead of throwing it in the garbage (literally) by following these simple money-saving tips for a waste-free lunch:

- ▶ **Use a lunchbox or reusable lunch bag.** Instead of buying something new, try using a small reusable grocery bag, a cloth gift bag or the free bag you got at the last fair or community event.
- ▶ **Use a reusable ice pack** instead of buying an insulated lunch bag or putting your lunch in the refrigerator.
- ▶ **Use reusable containers** (available in every shape, size and color) instead of buying items such as raisins, yogurt, carrot sticks or crackers in single-serve packages.
- ▶ **Use refillable drink bottles** instead of juice boxes/pouches or one-time use plastic bottles. Some drink bottles come with a core that you can freeze to keep beverages cold.
- ▶ **Use a cloth napkin and durable flatware** instead of disposable napkins and plastic utensils. And instead of buying new cloth napkins, make your own using scraps of fabric.

Source: www.wastefreelunches.org



Flood prevention 101:

Keep leaves out of the street

Leaves and debris left on streets or walkways can clog storm drains and cause streets and homes to flood. City street sweeper crews do their best to target areas with the most leaves during the fall and winter, but they can't be everywhere at once, so it's up to everyone to dispose of leaves and yard waste properly and promptly.

Wondering what to do with fallen leaves?

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

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

www.cityoftacoma.org/flood

Introducing... **THE CENTER** for **URBAN WATERS**

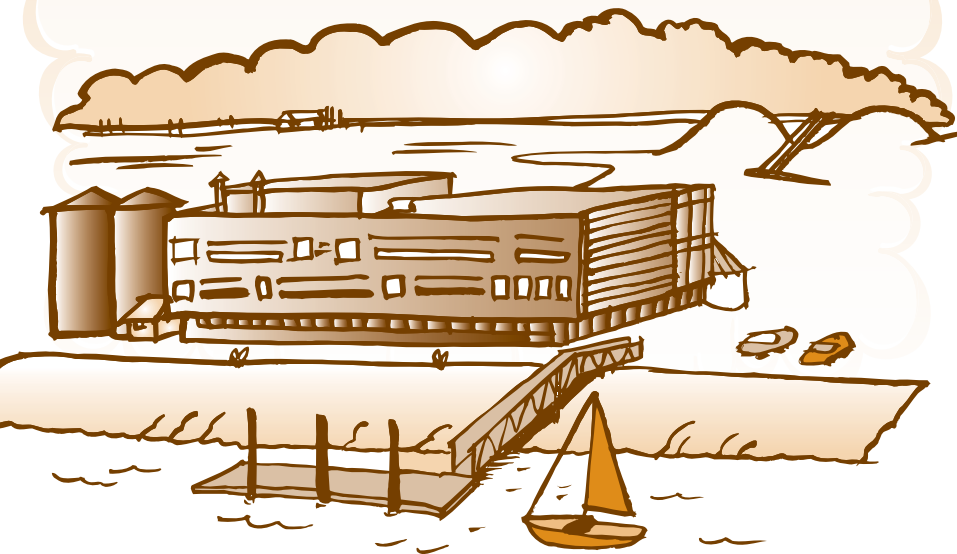
The Center for Urban Waters is home to City of Tacoma's Environmental Services labs and offices, University of Washington Tacoma researchers and the Puget Sound Partnership, and is a model of the best in green building.

The work being done at the center helps protect the investments Tacoma has made in cleaning up the Foss Waterway, restoring habitat and protecting Commencement Bay.

A few facts:

- ☀ Located at 326 East D Street
- ☀ 51,000 square feet
- ☀ Features include green roof, rain garden, pervious pavers
- ☀ Uses 46% less water and 36% less energy than a typical building
- ☀ Built to achieve LEED Platinum, the highest possible green-building rating; expected to be the first lab building anywhere to achieve Platinum certification

www.cityoftacoma.org/urbanwaters



Refresh your lawn with TAGRO Mix

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.

Consider overseeding your entire lawn. Spread grass seed over the TAGRO Mix on your existing lawn at about half the rate needed for a new lawn.

TAGRO Mix

\$8 per yard for City residents
Available for pickup or delivery.
(Delivery is \$15 per 10 miles.)
TAGRO Mix is available free if you shovel it yourself.

TAGRO Office
2201 Portland Ave., Gate 6
(follow the TAGRO signs)
(253) 502-2150

www.tagro.com



EnviroKIDS

Costume time: Dress your kids for less

Whether your child loves to play dress-up for fun, birthday parties or Halloween, you can create costumes that are easy on your wallet and on the environment.

- ✂ **Raid your closet** for things you don't wear anymore. Use your imagination. Great costume accessories include vests, suspenders, belts, hats, stockings and ties.
- ✂ **Visit your local thrift store.** Thrift stores are great places to find 1980s acid-washed jeans or 1990s jackets (shoulder pads included).

- ✂ **Use scraps of fabric, old sheets or an old piece of clothing** to fashion something new.
- ✂ **Turn your old prom or bridesmaid dress into a costume** any fairy princess would love.
- ✂ **Schedule a "trading party"** and invite friends and neighbors to bring last year's costumes to exchange.



Don't be a drip!

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

Help reduce water pollution by regularly maintaining your car and being on the lookout for leaks.

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

www.pugetsoundstartshere.org



RECYCLING

reView

In our previous issue, we asked for your recycling questions. Please continue sending them to envirotalk@cityoftacoma.org.

Are drink lids recyclable now? I remember seeing something that said they are recyclable in Seattle. — Colin T.

No. All caps and lids – plastic and metal – should go in the garbage. Why? Lids are not accepted because they are made of a different type of plastic than the container and are not conducive to the recycling process.

Find answers to more reader questions and a list of what is and isn't recyclable at www.cityoftacoma.org/recyclingreview.

Answer key to last issue's puzzle.

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

Can you find me?

Dear EnviroTalk reader,

It's me again, Sunny Salmon. I'm writing from my new home in the Pacific Ocean, where I may stay for a few years before I head back home.



One thing I keep seeing in the ocean is plastic debris – mostly water bottles. Where do all these bottles come from? I'm quite certain EnviroTalk readers recycle theirs, so please remind others to do the same. I hate seeing my new home so polluted.

It's been fun sharing my adventures with you. One last time, find me hiding somewhere in this issue of EnviroTalk.

Sincerely,

S. Salmon

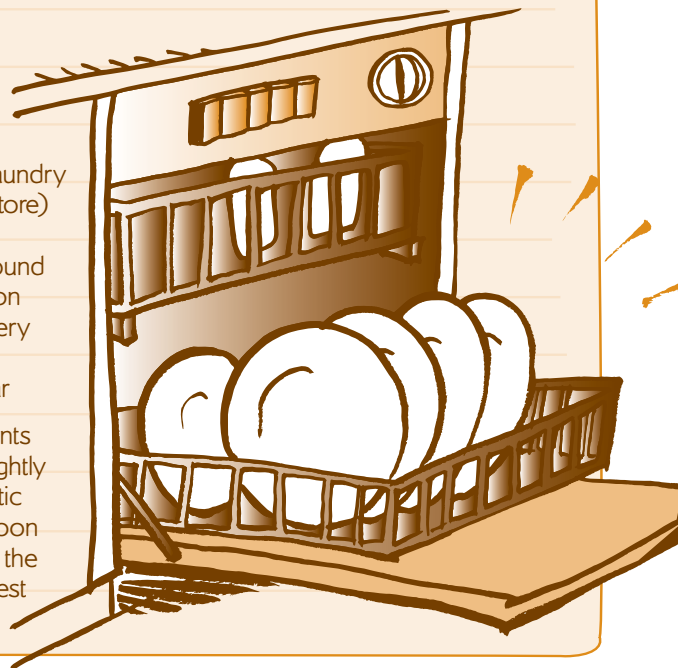
GREENER CLEANER

Dishes that sparkle, naturally

Follow this simple (and inexpensive) recipe for making your own dishwasher detergent.

- ▶ 1 cup washing soda (found near baking soda at the grocery store)
- ▶ 1 cup Borax (in the laundry aisle at the grocery store)
- ▶ 1/2 cup salt
- ▶ 1/2 cup Fruit Fresh (found with food preservation products at the grocery store)
- ▶ Distilled white vinegar

Mix the first four ingredients together and store in a tightly covered glass jar or plastic container. Use 1 tablespoon per load. Add vinegar to the rinse dispenser for the best results.



RESOURCE LIST

Fall 2010

RESOURCE	PHONE	WEB SITE
Solid Waste Management (garbage, recycling, yard waste) Information line (recorded message)	565-5955	www.cityoftacoma.org/solidwaste
General questions	591-5543	www.cityoftacoma.org/garbage
Call-2-Haul	573-2468	www.cityoftacoma.org/recycle
EnviroHouse	573-2426	www.cityoftacoma.org/yardwaste
Hazardous waste	591-5418	www.cityoftacoma.org/call2haul
Landfill scalehouse	593-7724	www.cityoftacoma.org/envirohouse
Wastewater/Surface water		www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste
General questions	591-5588	www.cityoftacoma.org/wastewater
Billing questions	502-2100	www.cityoftacoma.org/surfacewater
Sewer backups, Street flooding & Street sweeping	591-5585	www.cityoftacoma.org/flood
TAGRO	502-2150	www.cityoftacoma.org/streetsweeping
Leaf disposal		www.tagro.com
E-mail listserv		www.cityoftacoma.org/leaves
Twitter		www.cityoftacoma.org/environews
Facebook		www.twitter.com/EnviroTalk www.twitter.com/TAcomaGROw www.twitter.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.

COMPOST Bins

discounted up to 60%

If there's ever a time to try composting at home, it's now. Tacoma residents may purchase deeply discounted compost bins Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

Discounted compost bins

- ☿ The Recycler Compost Bin: \$35
- ☿ The Compost Wizard: \$115

Purchase locations

(call for hours and bin availability)

- ☿ Center at Norpoint: 4818 Nassau Ave NE, (253) 591-5504
- ☿ City of Tacoma EnviroHouse (Tacoma Landfill): 3510 S. Mullen St., (253) 591-5543
- ☿ Seymour Botanical Conservatory: 316 S. G St., (253) 591-5330
- ☿ South Park Community Center: 4851 S. Tacoma Way, (253) 591-5299
- ☿ Tacoma Nature Center: 1919 S. Tyler St., (253) 591-6439

Compost bin quantities limited, two bins per household, available only to residents living within Tacoma city limits

www.cityoftacoma.org/composting
(253) 591-5543

FREE NATURAL YARD CARE WORKSHOPS

Sept. 21 & 28, Oct. 5

6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Center at Norpoint, 4818 Nassau Ave. NE

Sept. 16 & 23, Oct. 1

7 to 9 p.m.

Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 S. Tyler St.

For details and registration, contact Geoff Rinehart at the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, (253) 798-4587.



Q: How do I properly dispose of leftover paint?

A: It depends on the type of paint:

- ☿ **Latex:** If you have more than 1 inch of leftover latex paint, solidify it by stirring in an equal amount of cat litter and allow it to harden. Then place the can in the garbage with the lid off.
- ☿ **Oil-based:** Take leftover oil-based paint to the Household Hazardous Waste Facility (Tacoma Landfill, 3510 S. Mullen St.) for no additional charge.

www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste
(253) 591-5418

Garbage & recycling

Holiday collection schedule

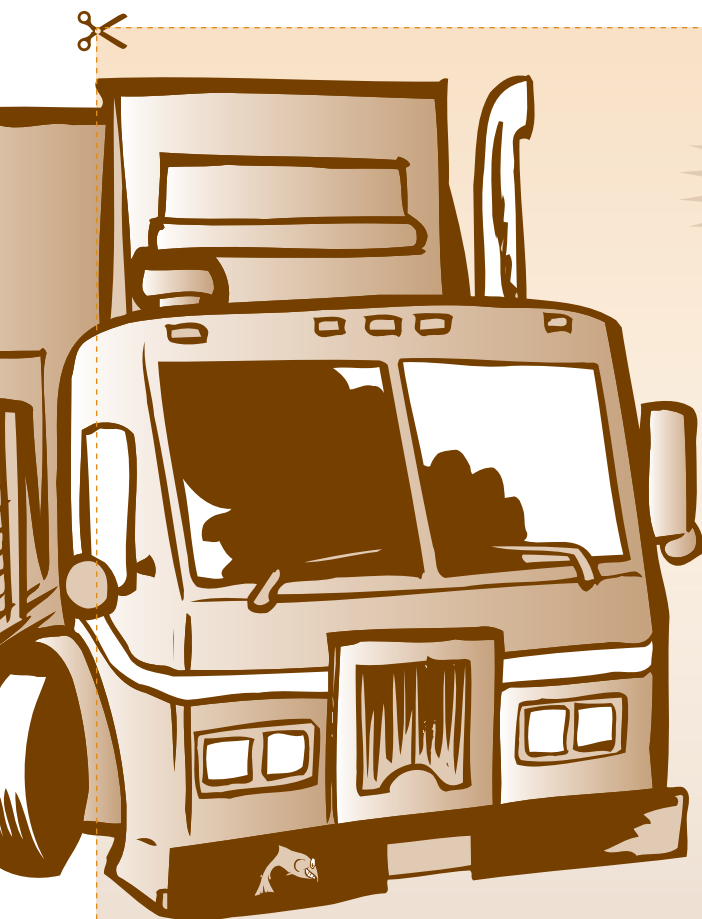
Collection will be on regular schedules for **Labor Day, Veterans Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day 2011.**

If your regular garbage, recycling or yard waste collection day falls on Thanksgiving or the day 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...
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, Nov. 25 Friday, Nov. 26	Friday, Nov. 26 Saturday, Nov. 27

For more information:

- Recorded message specific to the upcoming holiday, (253) 565-5955, press 2
- Collection calendar with holiday schedule specific to your home, www.cityoftacoma.org/collectioncalendar



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

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
TACOMA, WA
PERMIT NO. 2

New and improved!

Street Sweeping Schedule

Wondering when the street sweepers are coming by? New reminder postcards now contain your scheduled sweeping day (printed just below the return address).

Street sweepers help keep Tacoma clean and prevent debris and pollutants from entering local waterways through storm drains.

Please do your part on your street sweeping day:

- ✗ Keep your vehicles off the street between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- ✗ Remove garbage, recycling and yard waste containers from the street.
- ✗ Cut back bushes and trim branches 12-14 feet from the ground.

For more information:
(253) 591-5588
www.cityoftacoma.org/streetsweeping

