

Recycle Rockbridge

Edition 4

June 2008

It's a Dirty Job

Composting at Home

The next time you stop by one of the manned recycling centers take a look at the new Earth Machine. It is a black, barrel shaped, container used for composting.

What is Composting??? Composting is the controlled breakdown of carbon-containing materials, such as yard waste, kitchen scraps and paper, into stable organic matter. The end product is compost, a crumbly, earthy material that can be used in place of peat moss or as a soil amendment.

The employees at the recycling centers will be using the compost containers for their food scraps, coffee grounds, and the yard debris collected from site cleanup. The County Administrative Offices will also be contributing to the compost collection. This will help reduce the waste contributed by the County Offices. Unfortunately these machines are not large enough to take compostable material from the general public. But by seeing them in action we hope it will encourage residents to start a home composting project. It is very simple and has minimal odor and maximum benefits. Home composting is not just an easy and inexpensive way to have a beautiful garden and yard but home composting, combined with recycling and yard debris programs can reduce the local waste stream by as much as 80%.

Now that you have been convinced that this is something that you, and your garden, can't live without you will need to pick out a compost container. There are many different compost containers on the market. They vary in size and price. You can also build your own compost

container. The Recycling Office has several designs and building instructions available if you are interested in going this route. Just stop by the Recycling Office at 150 south Main Street Lexington and look through our folder on compost bins. We will be happy to make copies of any plans that interest you.

Once you have your compost container in place you can start to add material and begin composting. You will want to feed your composter a balanced diet of "greens" and "browns". Kitchen greens can consist of fruit and vegetable scraps, houseplant cuttings, coffee grounds, rice, pasta, egg shells and tea bags, just to name a few. Be sure to stay away from meat, fish and dairy products. Yard greens are items such as flowers, vegetables, plant trimmings, hedge clippings and small amounts of grass. Kitchen browns are items like coffee filters, bread, paper towels, dryer lint, and even hair. Yard browns are leaves, straw, small twigs and chips, dried grass and weeds. The time table for harvesting your compost will vary depending on the materials added and the temperature it maintains throughout the process. There are a lot of tips and resource information available to beginning composters. One good source for information is the Virginia Tech/Virginia Cooperative Extension website. This can be accessed at www.ext.vt.edu/resources. There is also more information available at the Recycling Office.

Happy composting!!

Every year, each American throws out about 1,200 pounds of organic garbage that can be composted.

Special Interest License Plate

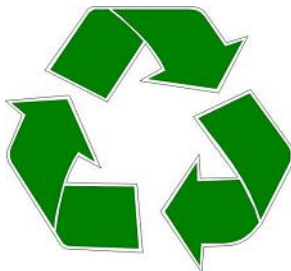
The VRA has designed a special interest license plate that will promote recycling in Virginia. Their goal is to have 350 prepaid applications by November. Delegate David Poisson from Sterling, Virginia has agreed to sponsor the license plate in the 2009 General Assembly session. To sign up for the license plate go to the VRA website at www.vrarecycles.org/plate and download the application form. You may also pick up the form at the Recycling Office and the DMV.



2007 Recycling Rate

The Rockbridge County Recycling Office would like to express their appreciation to all residents and businesses for their support and continued recycling efforts. After completing the 2007 Recycling Rate Report for DEQ it has been determined that Rockbridge County has a 31.7% recycling Rate!!! This is up from 24.5% reported in 2006. As we move closer to the closure of our landfill, it becomes increasingly more important to raise this number. We are on the right track.

Keep up the good work!



Buena Vista Curbside Recycling

Buena Vista is the first city in Rockbridge County to begin a curbside recycling program. This program kicked off on June 16. The program was made possible due to the joint efforts of the City of Buena Vista, Auto Recycler's and APT Services.

All Buena Vista residents have been supplied with a blue recycling tote. This tote is to be used to collect recycling. Paper, plastic (1 through 7), tin, aluminum and glass go in the tote and on trash day the tote is to be placed out beside your trash cans. How much easier can it get???

A few things to remember are to rinse out containers before placing them in the tote, remove plastic lids and dispose of them, place paper products in a plastic bag and tie it up to prevent water damage and the possibility of wind blowing it around, place heavier items on top and if you have cardboard boxes flatten them and place them under the tote. Also, please keep the tote in a dry place until time to put it out beside your trash.

If you have further question please go to the Buena Vista Website at www.buenavistavirginia.org.



On average, it costs \$30 per ton to recycle trash, \$50 to send it to the landfill, and \$65 to \$75 to incinerate it.

RECYCLE ROCKBRIDGE!

Going Green

Yard Waste Program

The Rockbridge County Solid Waste Department would like to announce the beginning of a Yard Waste Program. This program has been established in an effort to reduce the solid waste stream in Rockbridge County by both weight and volume.

Beginning June 9, 2008 Rockbridge County Solid Waste Department started directing yard waste and wood debris from the waste stream. This diversion is taking place at the landfill site and the Saillings Mountain Convenience Center in Glasgow. We are using these two sites as a pilot program in hopes to expand to other locations in the future.

When you visit these sites to drop off waste, you will be directed to a designated area to unload the yard and wood debris. Please make sure that trash is kept separate. No metal, such as fencing, is to be placed in the yard debris pile. Also keep treated and painted wood separate this should be disposed on with regular waste.

After the County has collected a sizable amount, the pile will be chipped. Once the material has been chipped, it will be put to use throughout the County. This is a major step in the reduction of our solid waste stream. Solid waste reduction has become increasingly important as we move closer to converting our disposal methods from a landfill to a transfer station. Please make every effort to assist the County with this program.

As much as 40% of the waste of a typical household comes from yard clippings.

How's your garden growing???

I don't know about you, but I've had a time with critters getting into my garden. Especially the crow. I have my ever so trendy scare crow standing guard and a few rubber snakes placed here and there but the crows just keep coming. Week before last a flock of birds came through and picked every single cherry off of my cherry tree in a matter of an hour or so. I was so disappointed when I went out to get my snack. I could have just cried. Oh well, I should have gotten busy and picked them myself before the birds got there.

I was complaining to my mom and step dad about my missing cherries and my pinched off tomato plants and they had a suggestion. My step dad, Marshal Hamilton told me to use old or scratched CD's to scare away the birds. You string them loosely across the garden using wire, string or fishing line. The movement of the disks and the light reflecting off of them will frighten off the birds. My step dad has about the prettiest garden ever and the best tomatoes around so I figured I might as well give it a try. So far it seems to be working and what a great way to reuse those old discs.

If you have any reuse/recycle tips for the garden I would love to hear about them and pass them on. Please send your ideas to recycling@co.rockbridge.va.us.

