

February  
2010



Get Planting! p. 3

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

# Master Recycler Newsletter

## The Carton Conundrum



By John Matthews

*Q: I have a question about co-mingling. How about the cartons that the microwave meals with the plastic trays come in. Some have a shiny carton like the Healthy Choice meals and the like. Can they go in the co-mingled recycle?*

**Thanks** for your question. It is very pertinent today because of misinformation that has been out in the "recycling information world."

The answer to your question is: "NO."

The shininess of the carton is actually a plastic coating that is "laminated" onto the cardboard or fiber surface of the box. This fiber and plastic combination is called "polycoated"

fiber in the recycling trade and is not easily recycled as a post-consumer material. When it is received in a co-mingled stream of "recyclable" materials it may or may not be pulled out of fiber (paper) material being produced for recycling markets. If it does not end up as garbage at the sort facility (like Garten), it ends up going to a pulp market that is trying to recover paper fiber for making new products.

The polycoated box does not readily pulp in the mill's recycling system and ends up along with other contaminants in the pulp process as waste. At that point it has to be landfilled or otherwise disposed of. If a recycling collector like Garten, allows

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"In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it."

-- Marianne Williamson



# Cartons....



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this material into the recycling stream that we receive and process, it will become a trash cost for us. Or, if we miss it and it goes into the product that we sell to mills for pulping, it will become waste at that destination. It is not only unethical for us to knowingly pass this "waste" on to our buyers, potentially effecting our reputation as a valued recycled material supplier but by allowing this to happen we send you a false message that is "getting recycled".

In Marion County, waste goes to a high temperature "waste-to-energy" facility in Brooks. Polycoated fiber, although not recyclable, can be burned for energy without any negative air pollution consequences because there are no major toxic pollutants released from the polyethylene plastic or the fiber from the box. Although there will be a small amount of carbon released from the coating as CO-2 in the combustion process that will contribute to

## Concerned?

Avoid the problem altogether by making an extra serving or two with each dinner and packing it in your own durable container for lunch the next day. You'll save money, energy and probably eat better too!



net global warming, it is quite a bit less than the much more severe greenhouse gas, methane, that will be released from the purification of the fiber if sent to a landfill. Of course, the better solution, in most cases, would be to avoid purchasing products that are packaged in polycoated fiber.

So, as you strive to do the "right thing" for the "right reasons" please do not include these polycoated materials in the commingled recycling. On that note, some PRE-consumer polycoated material is able to be recycled.

*-John Matthews is the Sustainability Coordinator and Recycling Advisor for Garten Services, Inc. as well as a long time Master Recycler.*

## FLUORESCENT BULB RECYCLING



### NEW! Expanded hours for fluorescent bulb recycling!

8am-5pm, 7 days a week at the  
Salem-Keizer Recycling and Transfer  
Station recycle depot.

(EXCLUDING MAJOR HOLIDAYS). LIMIT 10 BULBS PER VISIT.

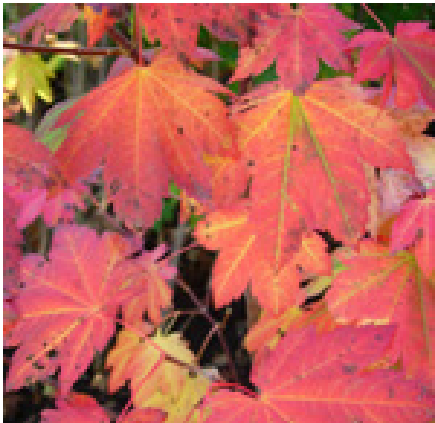
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PUBLIC WORKS ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

[www.co.marion.or.us/pw/es](http://www.co.marion.or.us/pw/es)  
503.588.5169 Se habla español

# Marion County Free Tree Program



The annual Free Tree Program is part of Marion County's ongoing efforts to improve water quality in our local waterways. Marion County will be providing selected Free Native Trees and Shrubs to property owners and organizations interested in planting along streams and rivers. Plants provided include: Pacific Serviceberry, Swamp Rose, Vine Maple, Red Alder, Big Leaf Maple, Oregon Ash.

## Benefits of Planting Trees

### *Reducing Temperatures*

Planting trees and shrubs along rivers and streams shades waterways, reducing stream temperatures. High water temperatures allow for bacteria, overloading of nutrients, and unwanted organism to inhabit the waters we fish and swim in. Too many nutrients makes it difficult for marine life such as fish to live and reproduce.

### *Erosion Control*

Trees and shrubs are also important along streams and rivers to stabilize banks. Rainstorms or even the natural river flow can erode bank sides causing sediment and debris to enter the waterways. Trees and shrubs soak up precipitation before it can run off the soil and cause erosion. Too much sediment and debris is harmful to aquatic life and takes more resources to remove for the Oregonians downstream that use water for drinking.

### *Natural Filter*

Vegetation also acts as a natural water filter, removing toxins from the soil and polluted ground water before it enters surface water.



### *Providing Habitat*

Waterways are prime habitat location as wildlife can find drinking water and an abundance of food. Planting more trees and shrubs will provide more food and shelter for wildlife.

## Are you Interested?

If you are interested, look for waterways lacking shade cover, bank stabilization, or are in need of habitat improvement. This could be your own property or public land, with permission. Determine which plant species and the number of plants needed (Maximum of 5). Remember that all plants, even natives, should receive continual maintenance for increased survival rates.

Maintenance consists of watering during the dry summer months and reducing competition by removing invasive non-native plants. Then, contact Matt Knudsen at (503) 365-3187 or [mknudsen@co.marion.or.us](mailto:mknudsen@co.marion.or.us).



## Drug Take Back

A statewide drug take back event is being organized for **March 13, 2010**.

The Oregon Medical Association Alliance and the Oregon Partnership are organizing the event in communities throughout the state in partnership with local law enforcement and drug prevention coalitions to promote the safe and environmentally sound collection and destruction of unwanted and unused medicines.

Communities currently participating include The Dalles, Grants Pass, McMinnville, Portland, Roseburg, and Salem.

Drug take back programs are one of the tools wastewater utilities will likely deploy as pollution prevention measures under SB 737.



## Oregon E-Cycle Soars



The Oregon DEQ reports that it recovered almost 19 million pounds of electronics in the 2009, the first year of the Oregon E-cycles program - almost 6 million more pounds than estimated.

This includes only computers, monitors and televisions.

The 2009 numbers for all electronics including peripherals and other electronic devices - which are also collected by many programs but not covered in the e-cycles law - have not been tallied yet, but just over 21 million pounds of total electronics were recycled in 2008, meaning Oregon has almost matched that total in the collection of just three types of devices.

Participation in Oregon E-cycles is expected to be even higher in 2010 with the implementation of the disposal ban.

## Save the Sharpie®



Three brands of writing utensils are now joining the ranks of the projects that can be collected and upcycled through TerraCycle's Brigade programs.

Sharpie, Paper Mate and EXPO brands announced a new partnership with the New Jersey-based company today.

TerraCycle will now collect and reuse pens, markers and other writing instruments while also helping raise funds for schools, charities and non-profits nationwide.

The collected writing instruments will be disassembled and reprocessed to make new products.

To learn more visit [www.terracycle.net](http://www.terracycle.net) or any of the three participating brands' websites.

## Small and Mighty

A local co-op in Durham, North Carolina is providing a way for participants to reduce food waste as well as directly benefit from the rich compost it produces.

The organizer, Richard Stenz, pedals around weekly on his bicycle picking up buckets of food waste from households to compost in his backyard. Every four to six weeks he drops off a bucket full of compost instead of an empty one. The cost to the 32 members is \$15-20 a month depending on bucket size.



## Your 15 minutes of fame?

The U.S. E.P.A. is hosting a video competition to promote recycling.

The video contest challenges filmmakers to produce short, creative videos that highlight the "Three Rs" of individual consumption: reduce, reuse, and recycle. The agency is accepting 30 or 60 second submissions for the contest, called "Our Planet, Our Stuff, Our Choice," through Feb. 16.

The winning submissions will be announced in April 2010 in time for the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. Monetary awards will be given to the top three videos. Students, ages 13 to 18, are invited to participate in a separate category.

For more information, log on to [www.epa.gov/recycle](http://www.epa.gov/recycle).



## Reality Trash

A New Orleans garbage man is the subject of a new reality show appearing on TLC next week.

An hour-long pilot of the show "Trashmen," is scheduled to air at 10 p.m. Eastern and Pacific time on Feb. 11. Sidney Torres started his SDT Waste and Debris after Hurricane Katrina struck the city and now operates more than 150 trucks and has 180 employees.

The show will feature Torres and his company's efforts to clean up during a particularly busy weekend that featured Halloween weekend festivities, the Voo

Doo Fest annual outdoor concert, and after a Monday Night Football game featuring the New Orleans Saints.



# Call to Serve



Marion County's Master Recycler classes are currently experiencing record attendance – thank you all for your enthusiasm and willingness to learn about solid waste issues and reduction strategies. Our goal for this year is to experience a record number of MRs serving in the community and reporting their payback hours! There are great outreach opportunities listed below, but they can't be a success without your help. Call today!

## **February 15, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

### **Sizzling Science Day**

#### **AC Gilbert's Discovery Village**

Master Recycler needed to help staff a mini worm bin building activity. MR volunteer would be there to talk about worm composting and could bring a regular-sized work bin to show participants (Marion County has one to loan if needed). AC Gilbert house will be staffing other volunteers to help assemble the worm towers, but they are still in need of those too, if you'd just like to be a "helper." Volunteers are also eligible for a free ticket to Disneyland if they are one of the first million to sign up in their "Give a Day, Get a Day" program.

Call Debbie Schmidt for details on volunteering at 503-623-9332, and Beth Myers-Shenai to arrange pickup of the worm bin if needed at 503-588-5169 x5920.

## **February 25, 1:15p.m. - 2:15 p.m.**

### **Salem-Keizer Recycling & Transfer Station and the Earth Walk**

A Master Recycler is needed to lead a tour for approximately 20 students ages 3-5 and their teachers. If you would like to lead this tour, please contact Diana (371-8689). Once you have confirmed the tour date, please let Bailey ([bpayne@co.marion.or.us](mailto:bpayne@co.marion.or.us)) know so that he can notify the transfer station and give you tips on how to lead the tour.

## **February 25th, March 4th, or March 11th 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**

### **Salem-Keizer Recycling & Transfer Station and the Earth Walk**

A Master Recycler is needed to lead a tour for approximately 20 students ages 3-5 and their teachers. If you would like to lead this tour, please contact Kathy (371-8689). Once you have confirmed the tour date, please let Bailey ([bpayne@co.marion.or.us](mailto:bpayne@co.marion.or.us)) know so that he can notify the transfer station and give you tips on how to lead the tour.

## **March 6 - 7th, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

### **Salem's Green Expo**

#### **State Fairgrounds**

Join the club of local vendors who will be displaying their green wares. Marion County's display will focus on the EarthWISE program and will offer visitors a spin of the Wheel of Waste to win fabulous prizes. MR volunteers are needed to staff a variety of shifts (11 2, 2 to 5, and 5 - 8).

## **April 17th 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

### **Earth Day Fair "A Hundred Acts of Green"**

#### **Oregon Garden**

Come help celebrate the Earth by helping others learn about things they can do to tread more lightly. Multiple volunteers needed for the Marion County booth display (we will focus on composting) or to help with some of the reduce/reuse activities we will be offering to the public (mostly children).

Shifts: 10 -1 or 1-4. Contact Alan Pennington at 503-365-3188 or [apennington@co.marion.or.us](mailto:apennington@co.marion.or.us).

# Events & Occasions



**February 10, 4-5:30p.m. (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grades)**

**February 17, 4-5:30pm (4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grades)**

**Nature Kids Youth Naturalist Class: Turtle Ridge Wildlife Rehabilitation Center**

*Straub Environmental Learning Center, 1320 A Street NE, Salem*

The Turtle Ridge Wildlife Rehabilitation Center is coming for a visit and may bring some wildlife friends! They will talk about the work they do to return injured wild animals to the wild, and what we can do to protect our furry and feathered friends from being hurt. FREE and open to the public! RSVP required due to limited space. Call or email Lisa at 503-391-4145 or [lisa@fselc.org](mailto:lisa@fselc.org) to reserve your space.

**February 11, 6-8 p.m.**

**The Marion SWCD Workshop: *Ethnobotany: How Humans Use Native Plants***

*Dallas High School, Dallas*

**February 25, 6-8 p.m.**

**The Marion SWCD Workshop: *Tricks of the Trade: How to Design with Beautiful Native Plants***

*Pringle Community Hall, Salem*

The workshops are free and open to the public, however, we ask that you please bring a non-perishable food donation for the Marion-Polk Foodshare. Please RSVP at least 2 days before each workshop at 503-391-9927.

**February 11, 2010, Doors open 6:15 p.m., film begins at 7 p.m.**

**Salem Progressive Film Series: *A Sea Change***

*Grand Theater, 191 High Street NE*

Using a delightful series of exchanges between a grandfather and his grandson interspersed with beautifully filmed sequences from around the globe, *A Sea Change* presents in laymen's terms the process of ocean acidification, some of its potential implications for this and future generations, and several examples of concrete steps that we can take to reduce this and other problems associated with increasing carbon dioxide emissions. For more information: visit [salemprogressivefilms.net](http://salemprogressivefilms.net) or call 503-588-8713 or 503-779-5288. **Adults \$3, Students \$2**

**February 14, 2010, 4 – 7 p.m.**

**Oregon League of Conservation Voters: *Show Your Love for Oregon***

*Unitarian Universalist Church 5090 Center St. NE Salem*

Join Marion County OLCV on Valentine's Day and show your love for Oregon. Watch Frank Capra's 1956 classroom classic *Our Mr. Sun, a portentous film about America's need for renewable energy*. Enjoy local wines, cheeses and chocolates, and learn more about the opportunities for solar power in Oregon. Keynote speaker is Ryan Lambert, Vice-President of government relations at Solar Nation, Inc. **Please pre-register** to help us accommodate everyone comfortably at [thedatabank.com/dpg/232/personal2.asp?formid=calolcv&c=7077685](http://thedatabank.com/dpg/232/personal2.asp?formid=calolcv&c=7077685), or call 503-224-4011.



# Events & Occasions....



**February 18, 7 p.m.**

**Amateur Naturalist Class: *Green Landscape***

*Straub Environmental Learning Center, 1320 A Street NE, Salem*

Join Deborah Topp from the City of Salem as she presents tips and ideas to keep your home landscape it tip-top shape - while still being environmentally friendly. \$5 per person, RSVP required due to limited space. Call or email Lisa at 503-391-4145 or [lisa@fselc.org](mailto:lisa@fselc.org).

**February 18, 7 p.m.**

**The League of Women Voters of Marion and Polk Counties Public Forum -Proposed Marion County Home Rule charter**

***Chemeketa Community College Student Services Center, Building 2 (Parking allowed without permit)***

To help League members and the wider community learn more about how county government works, especially in Marion County, and to hear the views of proponents and opponents of Ballot Measure 24-292. We have invited a speaker to give background information before hearing from those who support and those who oppose. This event will be a dialogue, rather than a debate. For information call 503-792-3238.

**February 25, 7 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Straub Environmental Lecture Series: Dr. Michael Skinner**

**“Environment and Disease: The Ghosts in Your Genes”**

***Loucks Auditorium, Salem Public Library, 585 Liberty Street SE, Salem***

Dr. Michael Skinner of Washington State University will provide a general overview of endocrine disruptors. He will talk about how his research has shown that environmental factors change the expression of our DNA - but don't change the underlying DNA sequences - and how these lasting effects can be passed on from generation to generation.



**March 13, 5 p.m.**

**2010 Mid-Willamette Valley Green Awards Dinner and Auction**

***Willamette University—Putnam University Center***

The 2010 Mid-Willamette Green Awards dinner and auction is open to the public! Visit [www.fselc.org/greenawards.html](http://www.fselc.org/greenawards.html) to download a ticket order form for our dinner and auction on the Willamette University campus in Putnam University Center. All proceeds benefit the Friends of Straub Environmental Learning Center's environmental education programs. Hurry, tickets are limited and selling fast!

# The Back Page



Master Recycler Rick Clarkson preaches the gospel of Green Building at the Salem Home & Remodel Show



Marion County Public Work—Environmental Services

5155 Silverton Rd. NE

Salem, OR 97305