

# The Green Print

This Issue: Reduce. Reuse. Recycle.

September, 2011



## Plant Life

Plants are abundant all over the world with an estimated 350,000 known species. Every corner of the planet has some form of **plant** life such as flowers, trees, fruits, vegetables, and **ferns**. Most **plants** go through the process of **photosynthesis**, and most are classified as autotrophs.

Visit [www.discoverplants.com](http://www.discoverplants.com) to learn more.



In 2007 Milwaukee County's Board of Supervisors and County Executive approved a Green Print resolution, intended to improve the quality of life of County citizens through a plan to conserve natural resources and use energy more efficiently at County facilities.

To learn more about the Green Print Initiatives, go to

[www.county.milwaukee.gov/DPW/MilwaukeeCountysgreenPrint.htm](http://www.county.milwaukee.gov/DPW/MilwaukeeCountysgreenPrint.htm)

## Miscellaneous Recycling Facts

- ♻️ On average, each one of us produces 4.4 pounds of solid waste each day. This adds up to almost a ton of trash per person, per year.
- ♻️ A typical family consumes 182 gallons of soda, 29 gallons of juice, 104 gallons of milk, and 26 gallons of bottled water a year. That's a lot of containers -- make sure they're recycled!

*Please print only if necessary. Consuming less saves \$ and is beneficial to our environment. Reduce-Reuse-Recycle*



## Recycling 101

### Sheriff's Office leading the way

#### Recycling Vests Illustrates Innovation



The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office recently contracted with Fiber Brokers International, a company specializing in recycling expired bullet-resistant vests. Instead of land filling the vests, the vests are ground up and used to create new products such as plastic rope and brake pads. This new initiative has resulted in more than 500 old vests being recycled (at no cost), avoiding landfill disposal cost and reusing over 1000 lbs of material!












*Bullet resistant vests*



Recycling is the process of taking a product at the end of its useful life and using all or part of it to make another product. The internationally recognized symbol for recycling includes three arrows moving in a triangle. Each arrow represents a different part of the recycling process, from collection to re-manufacture to resale.

But what does all this have to do with you? Well, recycling is a simple way that you, as a consumer, can help out the environment, create a profitable market for recycled goods and help preserve natural resources from being depleted. So... let's get involved!

<u>All Paper</u>	<u>Bottles &amp; Cans</u>	<u>Trash</u>
Magazines & Catalogs 	Soda cans & Aluminum products 	Styrofoam cups, used paper cups, lids & caps 
All paper & Envelopes 	Plastic bottles & Plastic Jugs 	Paper towels, napkins, plastic wrap & bags 
Paper bags & Paperboard boxes 	Glass bottles 	Take-out food containers, plastic utensils, yogurt containers, & all other non-paper waste 



## Recycling Q&A's



### Why do we do it?

- Less waste means lower disposal costs
- Supports a large U.S.-based recycling industry, with an estimated 1 million jobs and payroll of \$37 billion
- Saves energy and reduces pollution resulting from processing of 'virgin' materials
- Decreases GHG emissions
- Conserves scarce natural resources for future generations

### What can I recycle and where?

- Paper, magazines, cardboard, #1 and #2 plastics, glass, aluminum, steel cans
- Depending on your facility, recyclables can either go in a single container or are separated to generate more revenue for certain 'streams' of recycling
- Toner, metals, electronics, oil and other materials are dealt with differently. Ask your supervisor how these are handled at your workplace!

### Some recycling facts:

- It only takes 5% of the energy to produce an aluminum can from recycled aluminum compared to the amount of energy required to produce one from virgin materials
- Glass can be recycled an infinite number of

times and never wears out

- Five recycled soda bottles can make 1 square foot of carpet
- The average person uses 680 pounds of paper each year. Recycling that amount saves the equivalent of 27 cubic feet of landfill space and 1,300 kilowatts of energy, which is more electricity than the average household consumes in a year
- Over 20 billion plastic bottles are thrown away each year in the United States alone

### What is #1 plastic?

PET, such as soft drink bottles. Can be recycled into products including polar fleece and tote bags

### What is #2 plastic?

HDPE, such as milk jugs and detergent jugs. Can be recycled into new laundry detergent bottles, benches and tables.

The County started recycling 20 years ago, but has undergone significant changes as the price of recycling and recovered materials has changed significantly over the years. Many facilities now recycle materials that were not recycled in the past, such as construction waste. In 2010 alone, the County departments generated over \$30,000 in recyclables revenue.

*Ideas? Suggestions?*

*Contact Steve Keith via Lotus Notes email*



## Do Your Part!

The United States and state government recycling initiatives have spawned the Reduce! Reuse! Recycle! Age.

This is, in no small part, because the United States, and its global partners, have recognized the significance of our long-term impact on the planet.

Among the problems we have created over the thousands of years of civilization:

- Massive garbage dumps
- Pollution from fossil fuels
- Impact of aerosol sprays and other chemicals on the air we breathe, and the atmosphere that protects us from solar radiation

**...to name a few!**

While your community probably has a recycling program, there are many ways you can have a personal impact on the waste management and trash problem.

In addition to recycling those bottles and cans, you can recycle many other items as well.

**You can also reuse items, instead of throwing them away.**

Although you may eventually throw away that piece of clothing, you can extend its life cycle and keep it out of the garbage dump by years or even decades.

Consider these options:

- You could place old clothing in a box or trunk and use it for your children's Halloween costumes or for 'dress up' and playtime.
- You could cut the clothing into strips or squares and use these for dust cloths or cleaning rags.
- You could cut your clothing into squares and make a colorful rug or wall hanging or bedspread.

**You see how it works? It's really very simple.**

With some forethought and ingenuity, you can become a recycle/reuse role model for your neighbors, your children and your co-workers.

**Once you get the hang of it, you will no doubt think of some of your own ideas.**

You should consider these techniques at work, at school, at home and while you are out in the environment.

We encourage you to continue your research and build your knowledge in this area.

You can further support recycling and reuse by purchasing products from companies that use recycled materials.

Take the time to consider all the items we throw away that we might be able to recycle or reuse.

Source: [www.reuserecycle.net](http://www.reuserecycle.net)