

West Valley Recycles!

Summer 2010



Out of the Garbage and into the Garden

Grow your glorious garden refuge with a little refuse

congregated on the underside! Feed the slugs to your turtles, toads or backyard chickens, or toss them in a bucket of soapy water, then into the yard waste. Replace the rind and repeat until you stop catching slugs or you stop seeing damage. Compost the rind.

Walk on eggshells. Add crushed eggshells to the bottom of planting holes, especially for tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant. The extra calcium is good for these crops susceptible to blossom end rot, which is caused by calcium deficiency. Or, use your uncrushed eggshells as seed starters. Once your seeds sprout, plant the seedling, “pot” and all, into the garden. Crushed eggshells will deter slugs, snails, and cutworms. All three of these pests have soft undersides, and

don’t like slithering across anything sharp. Crushed eggshells, applied to the soil’s surface, will help keep them at bay. You could also crush them and add to a dish near the bird feeder. Female birds, particularly during and around egg-laying season, need extra calcium and will definitely appreciate it!

Banana peels. Filled with potassium, this disposable skin helps plants grow flowers and fruit when used as an organic alternative to chemical fertilizers. Plant the whole peel under the soil near the roots of the plant such as a rose bush, or just throw the peel on top of the soil and let it decompose. If you are afraid of attracting pests or animals, try liquefying the banana scrap in a blender with one quart of water before pouring it on to your plant or bush.

Coffee grounds. Just as you may need that cup of coffee to energize your day, our plants need the nitrogen and minerals found in used coffee grounds to boost their life. Other natural elements that sustain plant growth, such as calcium, copper and potassium, are also found in our caffeine byproduct. Some experts suggest using the grounds only on acid loving plants or on alkaline soil. Start slowly by mixing modest amounts in to your potted plants or garden—try a tablespoon for pots and one cup for gardens.

Compost Quick! If you want to reap the benefits of compost but don’t have the patience or a compost heap, you can immediately use these three food scraps to nourish garden soil and tremendously improve plant growth.

Happy planting!

5 green ways to put the summer weather to work for you

1. Line-dry your clothes. Clothes dryers are now responsible for around 6% of residential energy consumption, and running your dryer can cost up to fifty cents per load. At today’s rates, that can equal one or two hundred dollars per year! Line drying your clothes will save you money on electricity—and bleach too, since line drying can also lighten fabrics. Give your dryer a rest and use your clothesline during the summer months.

2. Make sun tea Get yourself a big jar fill it with water and a few tea bags, close the lid and set it on a sunny windowsill. What could be easier? In a few hours you’ll have a jar of gently brewed tea, ready for ice, sugar and lemon.

3. Dust off your push mower. Why drive to the gym? Burn calories in place of fuel emissions or electricity the “newfangled” lawnmowers burn by using your old push mower. While you’re at it, you can grasscycle (another bonus!) Grasscycling is the

practice of leaving your clippings on your lawn to return nutrients back into your soil—naturally and cost free.

4. Send the kids through the sprinkler. While running the sprinkler solely for the delight of your children may be expensive and viewed by some as wasting water, not having your kids suited up and ready to go when you water your lawn would be a waste of an opportunity.

5. Make sun-dried tomatoes. Simply slice tomatoes in half, place

on a raised screen, lightly sprinkle with salt. Cover them with cheesecloth, raised for ventilation, to keep out unwanted critters. Place them in the hot sun until dry. Bring them in at night, so the evening dew won’t un-“dew” your drying process. Drying can take anywhere from a few days to two weeks, depending on the weather. Plan on 10 standard tomatoes to get one ounce of dried tomatoes. Add to pasta, hummus or your favorite soft cheese. Enjoy.

BILL PAY THE EASY WAY

West Valley Collection & Recycling has made it easier than ever to pay your bill. Choose the method that works best for you.

Mail it. Make your check payable to West Valley Collection & Recycling. Be sure to include the payment stub to get credit for your payment right away. Use the pre-addressed envelope included with your bill.

Drop it off. We accept payments at our office Monday through Friday from 8 AM – 4:30 PM

Deliver checks to:
West Valley
Collection & Recycling
1333 Oakland Road,
San Jose, CA 95112

Pay / View Your Bill Online. Visit our new online payment system at www.wasteconnections.com; click on "Online Bill-Pay" and follow a few simple instructions. You must have your current invoice and credit card or debit card information available.

Home banking customers continue to use the remit address:

West Valley
Collection & Recycling
PO BOX 60248
Los Angeles CA 90060-0248

You must have your current invoice available.

Have questions about your recycling service?



Ask Randy

Q: How should I store my gasoline during the hot summer months? **A:** In the summer season, you may be tempted to use portable containers to store and transport gasoline. The problem is these portable containers can emit hydrocarbons, and if not properly sealed can leak or accidentally start a fire.

Use only containers approved by a nationally recognized testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Make sure containers are properly sealed and store in a cool, dry place and never in direct sunlight. *To submit a question for "Ask Randy" send him an e-mail at customerservice@westvalleyrecycles.com with "Ask Randy" in the subject line.*

Paper Mache away a summer day

With summer shifting into high gear, it's time to look to your recycle bin for instant entertainment for bored kids. Paper Mache is a perfect way to help them create something whimsical on a lazy summer day and you can do it with flour, water and recycled materials. You can use wire armature, balloons, plastic milk jugs, cardboard tubes, or just about anything as a base for the creations. There is practically no limit to what can be covered with gooey strips of paper that harden into sturdy little statues. If you want to get really creative, add dryer lint or sawdust to your mix for texture. Here's how to get started:

Make the paste:

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups cold water
- 2 cups boiling water
- 3 tbsp. sugar

Mix together flour and cold water in a bowl. Add this mixture to the boiling water and allow it to return to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in the sugar. As the mixture cools it will thicken as it does.

Start papering:

1. Tear newspaper into strips.

2. Dip one piece of newspaper at a time into prepared paper mache paste.
3. Hold the strip over the paste bowl and run it through your fingers to squeeze off excess paste.
4. Stick the newspaper strip over the form you want to paper mache, and smooth it down with your fingers.
5. Completely cover your creation with layers of newspaper strips. They should all be over-lapping.
6. After three layers are applied, let it dry about 24 hours.
7. Add more layers of newspaper strips, if desired and let dry another 24 hours.
8. Repeat this process until you get the desired effect, but you should have at least three layers.

For Dryer Lint Pulp: Add water and glue and/or wallpaper paste to dryer lint for a sticky mixture that will dry solid as a rock.

For Sawdust Pulp: Mix 2 cups sawdust, 1 cup wallpaper paste and water until you have a thick mixture. You can even sand the finished product, almost as if it were wood.

After dry, paint or cover the entire project with comic strips, tissue paper—whatever strikes your fancy.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE:



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customerservice@westvalleyrecycles.com

How To Eliminate Litter: Remember to place all loose light items such as shredded paper, plastic grocery bags, styrofoam packing peanuts and any other items in a tied plastic bag before placing in your cart.

Household Hazardous Waste: Call the Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste Program at (408)299-7300

For more information about WVC&R's e-waste and universal waste residential drop off program call (408) 283-9250.

Clean Yard Trimmings:

Keep your yard trimmings "Green" and your recyclables clean by keeping all garbage out of your yard trimmings and recycling cart. Garbage contaminates recyclable materials.