

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



408-283-9250
www.westvalleyrecycles.com

Summer 2007



Annual Cleanup Program

West Valley Collection & Recycling (WVC&R) will collect an unlimited number of items from your curb at no additional cost for one day only.

WVC&R will notify you by mail two weeks prior to your annual cleanup date.

WVC&R will collect:

- Items weighing up to 70 pounds (except as described below)
- Garbage in 32-gallon plastic bags, 35-gallon cans, and sturdy cardboard boxes
- Tree prunings and branches up to 3" in diameter and 3' long, tied in bundles and weighing up to 70 pounds

WVC&R will not collect:

- Concrete or Dirt (call Guadalupe Landfill at 408-268-1670)
- Tires (call Guadalupe Landfill at 408-268-1670)
- Hazardous Waste (call the Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste Program at 408-299-7300 or visit www.hhw.org)
- E-Waste, Universal Waste, Motor Oil and Water-Based Paints:
 - You can drop off TVs, computers, household batteries, motor oil, and water-based paints at WVC&R's processing facility by appointment. For more information, call customer service at 408-283-9250 or visit www.westvalleyrecycles.com.
- Large items or containers over 70 pounds:
 - WVC&R will collect large items, such as sofas and refrigerators, for a fee. To schedule an appointment, please call customer service at 408-283-9250.

WVC&R makes it easy for you to donate your reusable items. For assistance locating local charitable organizations, visit www.westvalleyrecycles.com or call 408-283-9250.

Please remember to place recyclables in your recycling cart for your regular weekly collection.

To learn more about any of these programs, visit www.westvalleyrecycles.com or call customer service at 408-283-9250.



Recycling Reminders

As you know, you may now mix all recyclables together in your blue cart. While you don't need to do any sorting, we do need your help keeping the recyclables clean:

1. Please empty all containers before placing them into your recycling carts. Food cans and jars should be empty. Bottles and jugs that held liquids should be emptied and drained. Boxes should have all of their contents removed.
2. Break down your cardboard and other boxes, and put the flattened cardboard into your cart. (WVC&R won't pick up cardboard left next to your cart.) Make sure that the flattened cardboard fits loosely in your cart. If the cardboard is too tight against the sides of the cart, it may not empty properly.
3. Remember to place only the recyclable items that we accept into your blue recycling cart. This includes paper and cartons; textiles (clothing); metals; glass bottles and jars; and plastic bottles, containers, and bags. We do NOT

accept disposable diapers for recycling—those belong in your WVC&R brown garbage cart.

For more information, visit www.westvalleyrecycles.com or call customer service at 408-283-9250.



Truck talk



West Valley Collection & Recycling (WVC&R) proudly services the City of Campbell, Town of Los Gatos, City of Monte Sereno, and City of Saratoga with an array of different trucks. You may have noticed that some of these trucks are very different from those used by the previous hauler.

For example, WVC&R collects single-family residents' garbage and green waste carts with state-of-the-art automated, split-body, side-loader trucks. The truck is referred to as a "split-body" truck because of a vertical metal wall that splits the body into two separate compartments. One of the compartments contains garbage and the other compartment contains green waste. Carts are lifted by a mechanical arm and dumped into the truck's hopper. The driver can control a metal flap in the hopper to funnel the garbage and green waste into the appropriate compartment. One advantage of the automated, split-body technology is that it enables collection of two separate materials in a single pass. The number of collection vehicles on the road is reduced, decreasing wear and tear on city streets and creating less noise and fewer air emissions. A separate, automated standard-body truck services your recycling cart.

The garbage and recycling bins found at multi-family complexes and commercial businesses are serviced by a front-loader truck. This truck has a forklift which lifts the bin over the cab and drops the garbage or recyclables into the truck's hopper.

Bulky waste, which is heavy and awkward, is picked up curbside by a "boom" truck. The boom reaches out and grabs the bulky waste, then lifts it and places it into the truck.

Rear-loader trucks are used to collect materials during annual cleanups. Rear-loaders are what you might think of as a "typical" trash truck. These trucks are manually loaded into a hopper at the back of the truck.

A flatbed truck is used to deliver and pick up WVC&R carts.



10 Tips for summertime shopping

Ahhh...summertime. Family vacations, lounging by the pool, picnics with friends, and back-to-school shopping. Whether you're getting ready for school yourself, getting someone else ready for school, or just taking care of your own summer shopping, there are things that you can do before, during, and after your shopping trip to reduce your waste, improve our environment, and save money, too.

1. Clean out your closets and cabinets. If you are sending a student off to college, you may find that you have plenty of towels and sheets without buying new ones. If you're sending a student back to school, you might discover unused notebooks, pens, and pencils or remember that last year's backpack is in great shape. If you're shopping for housewares, garden supplies, or even food, you may learn that what you need is already sitting on your shelf!
2. Organize what you already own. We've all watched those organization shows on TV. How many times have you watched someone find more than one iced-tea maker or enough white T-shirts or tank tops to clothe everyone on the block? While most of us aren't quite that organization-challenged, we often have some area—a junk drawer, a pantry shelf, or a laundry room

closet—that could use some attention. When you organize what you have, you'll find things you can still use. This is also a great way to find the stuff you no longer want that you could sell or give away.



3. No matter where you are shopping, plan ahead and make a list. Going to the hardware store? Make a list. Going to a clothing store? Make a list. We all know that we make fewer impulse purchases at the grocery store when we shop from a list—the same is true at other kinds of stores, as well.
4. Shop for reused items first. Before you hit the mall, check the neighborhood garage sales or stop by thrift stores or secondhand shops. You can find clothes, shoes, appliances, books, toys, games, office supplies, household goods, and more.
5. Look for recycled-content products. Since it is back-to-school season, paper is a great place to start. The average American uses 660 pounds of paper each year. Recycled-content notebooks, loose-

leaf paper, and printer paper are readily available, high-quality, and cost-competitive. Making new paper from recycled paper creates 74 percent less air pollution and 35 percent less water pollution than making the same paper directly from trees. And don't forget recycled-content tissues and paper towels. These items are often on school supply lists. You'll be teaching a great lesson to the whole class by sending recycled-content tissues or paper towels to school.

6. Paper isn't the only recycled-content product, of course! Look for pens, pencils, scissors, rulers, file folders, binders, storage containers, jewelry, and outerwear, such as fleece pullovers and scarves, to name just a few. If you don't find recycled-content alternatives, tell the store manager that you want them. The store may be able to order them for you now or stock them in the future.
7. Select durable, reusable products that also reduce your waste or energy use at home. For example, if you have a drying rack, you won't need to use your dryer and you might be able to avoid the iron, as well. When you purchase electrical appliances or electronics, look for the Energy Star label, which guarantees you an energy-efficient product. Choose reusables, such as refillable mugs and insulated cold cups. Many stores will refill your mug or cup—sometimes at a slightly discounted price.
8. Shop for food and flowers at Farmers Markets. These markets provide fresh food without extra transportation or excess packaging. Wouldn't it be nice to enjoy fruits and vegetables without throwing away a lot of plastic bags and containers? National Farmers Market Week is August 5-11, so go out and show your support for our



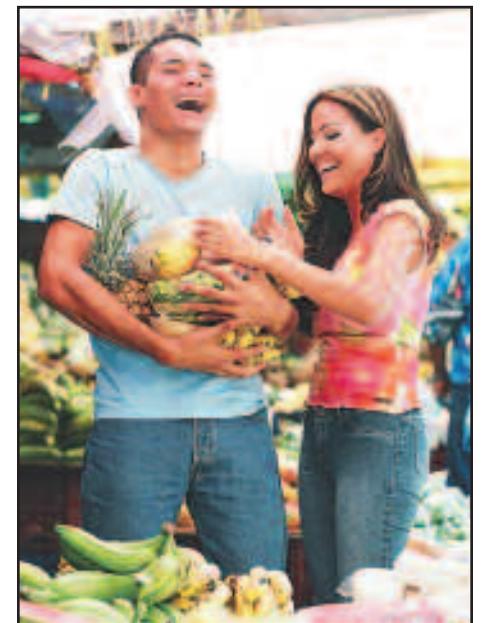
- local farmers. For more information about Farmers Markets or to locate them here or as you travel, go to www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/.
9. Avoid non-recyclable packaging. Know what to recycle so that you can select products packaged in locally recyclable containers as you shop. Remember—the word “recyclable” on a package doesn't necessarily mean that we accept the item in our local recycling program.
 10. Say “no thanks” to overly packaged items. Ask yourself, “If I buy this item, how many layers of packaging are going to go straight into my trash or recycling?” If your answer is more than two, see whether an alternative product is available that has less packaging.

Learn more! Do more!

Buy Wisely, a program of the Center for the New American Dream
www.NewDream.org/buy

Greener Choices: Products for a Better Planet, a project of Consumer Reports
www.greenerchoices.org

The Green Guide, a service of National Geographic
www.thegreenguide.com



Get Reel

A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.

James Dent

A gas-powered lawn mower, with its noise and noxious fumes, can certainly take the shine off a perfect summer day. However, there is a mower that will keep your lawn trimmed and still allow you to enjoy the birds and the breeze—a reel mower.

A reel mower is a manual lawn mower. Unlike the reel mowers of 50 years ago, today's reel mowers are lightweight and easy to push. Here are just a few of the great reasons to use a reel mower:

- Reel mowers leave behind healthier grass plants because they “snip” the

grass, cutting it in the same way that a pair of scissors would. (Powered rotary mowers actually tear the grass blades.)

- Reel mowers don't need gasoline, so an empty gas can will never change your plans.
- Reel mowers produce no harmful emissions and emit no exhaust into your face and your neighborhood's air.
- It goes without saying that reel mowers are whisper quiet, allowing you to hear your children playing and enjoy the birds chirping. You can still listen to your MP3 player, but you won't have to!
- Users get to enjoy a brisk walk and some resistance training.
- Reel mowers are virtually mainte-

nance-free. Occasionally, the bearings and cutting edges may need a little lubricant and a slight adjustment. The cutters will need to be sharpened every couple of years.

- You'll never struggle with the pull cord on a reel mower. Simply start walking and the mower starts, too.
- Reel mowers take less space in the garage or shed and take less of a bite out of your budget.

A reel mower isn't right for every yard. The mowers are best suited to smaller yards, such as those that are 10,000 square feet (about one-quarter acre) or less. Many of today's yards are no bigger than this.

As yards have gotten smaller, reel mowers have begun to make a comeback. An estimated 350,000 reel mowers were sold in the U.S. last year—up from about 100,000 five years ago. About two-thirds of the customers purchasing reel mowers are women.

If you'd like more information about reel mowers, ask at your hardware store, garden center, or home supply store. You can also learn more at www.cleanairgardening.com/reellawnmower.html, www.planetnatural.com, www.reelin.com, or www.reelmowerguide.com/.



NO IMPACT MAN

A New York man and his family are in the middle of a year-long experiment. Their goal is to find ways to create no net environmental impact. This means giving up most activities and habits that create negative impacts and offsetting the ones they can't give up with positive changes, such as cleaning out closets and giving away reusable clothes and books, volunteering for beach cleanups, and planting trees.

Having dubbed himself "No Impact Man," Colin Beavan, his wife, small daughter, and dog began their adventure last November in stages. Stage 1 was to eliminate garbage by avoiding disposable products and giving up everything that had packaging. Stage 2 added a twist, creating the least amount of environmental impact in selecting and preparing food for baby, dog, and parents. Stage 3 takes the next step, finding ways to reduce consumption to only what is absolutely necessary and then learning how to make or

acquire those things most sustainably. At each stage, the challenges increase.

Friends have questioned whether No Impact Man and his family have any hope of accomplishing their goal while living in New York City. They claim he'd be better off living in a rural area where gardening and composting are more convenient. However, Beavan responds, "The fact is that if city dwellers can't learn to live without reducing their ecological footprint, then we're in deep trouble because most of the world's population now lives in cities." In the United States, more than 68 percent of Americans live in cities with populations greater than 50,000.

No Impact Man records his trials and errors in a blog, inviting dialogue with people from around the world. In his blog, he muses on everything from plastics to finding a garden plot to composting toilets. Beavan is writing a book, which will be published in 2009, about his fam-



ily's year-long experiment. A documentary is also being produced. Read more about this family's adventures in no-impact living at www.noimpactman.com.

If you're interested in the experiments of other families trying to create a more positive impact, visit www.pathtofreedom.com. This website is devoted to the Dervaes family's "urban homestead" on a 1/5-acre urban lot in Pasadena, California.

QUOTES REQUOTED

My mind is conditioned to believe that if I can't have it right now—RIGHT NOW!—then I'm deprived. [But] is being able to have something at a moment's notice real progress?

Colin Beavan
Author and "No Impact Man"

Books for a better world

Take a couple of college friends, piles of textbooks, and a need for cash, and what do you get? In the case of roommates Xavier Helgesen and Christopher "Kreece" Fuchs, the answer was to sell the books online and to begin selling books for others. Within a year, they had organized a campus-wide book drive, collecting over 2,000 books for reuse and raising \$8,000 for an after-school reading program sponsored by the University of Notre Dame.

With help from a third former roommate, Jeff Kurtzman, Helgesen and Fuchs decided to take the good idea and turn it into a business, which is how Better World Books was born. The business, founded in 2003, assists colleges and universities, as well as libraries, in organizing book drives, selling reusable books, and donating a portion of the proceeds to literacy organizations.

To date, more than 900 colleges and universities and 500 libraries have taken part, collecting over 3 million books

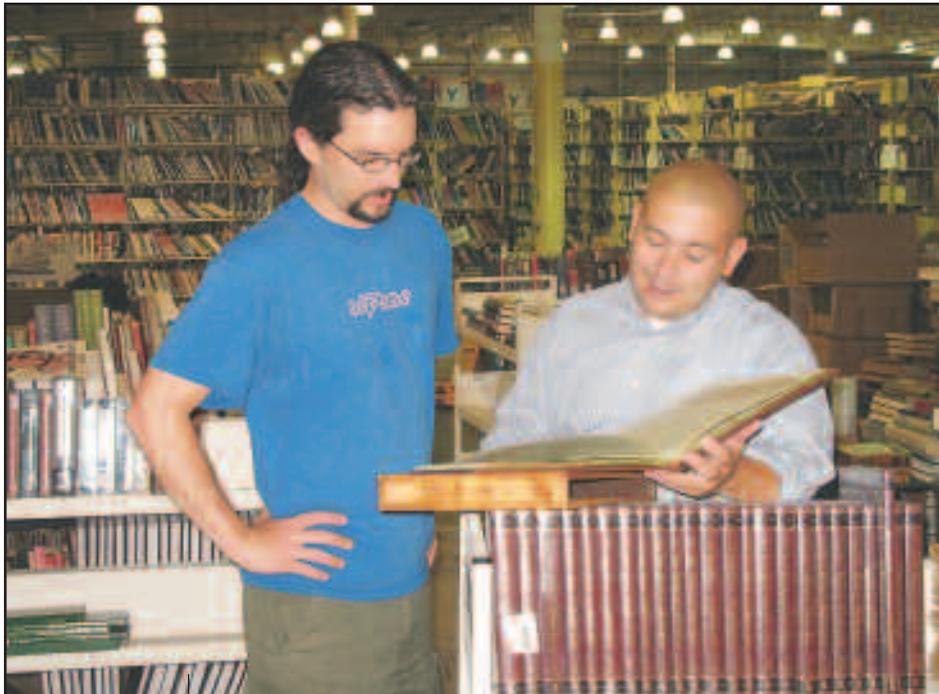
weighing more than 8 million pounds. Many of the books would have otherwise ended up in landfills, but not with Better World Books in charge. Some of the books are sold through the company's

Room to Read, National Center for Family Literacy, and Worldfund. All of the books that cannot be sold or reused are recycled.

Describing itself as a "for-profit social venture," Better World Books earns money by the sale of reusable books. However, financial profit isn't the only motive; the company also strives to generate a "social profit" by contributing to improvements in literacy in the U.S. and around the world. Since its

inception, Better World Books has donated \$1.3 million to 70 non-profits that promote literacy and education. The non-profits are usually selected by the organizations running the local book drives. More than 450,000 books have been donated to Books for Africa and the National Center for Family Literacy. In addition, over \$475,000 has gone back to the college and university service clubs and library volunteer organizations that have run the book drives.

For more information about Better World Books, visit www.betterworldbooks.com or e-mail info@betterworldbooks.com.



website, www.betterworld.com, and others are sold through other online book-sellers, such as Amazon.com. Reusable books go directly to the partner literacy organizations, including Books for Africa,




BetterWorld
BOOKS

WHAT'S UP?



School Outreach Program

West Valley Collection & Recycling (WVC&R) offers classroom presentations that educate students on the benefits of recycling, reducing, and reusing. WVC&R presentations are geared to the schools in Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga that are interested in expanding their recycling programs.

For more information on our school outreach program or to schedule a classroom demonstration, contact the outreach department at 408-283-9250 or e-mail us at customerservice@westvalleyrecycles.com.



Contact Information

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408-299-7300
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70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS
CONTENT, USING SOY INKS
*Please recycle this publication
after you have read it!*

A cart for green waste

Green waste carts are set out at the curb on the same day as the garbage and recycling. Place these yard trimmings in your green cart for collection:

- Branches (3 feet or shorter in length and 6 inches or less in diameter)
- Flowers
- Grass clippings
- Leaves
- Palm fronds
- Small prunings
- Sod (Remove as much soil as possible.)

Please remember—NO ashes, concrete, dirt, fruit, vegetables, lumber, pumpkins, pet waste, or rocks should be placed into the green waste cart.

You can reduce the amount of material that goes into your green waste carts by backyard composting, which we described in our last newsletter, and by “grasscycling.” To learn more about grasscycling, read on.



Do you grasscycle?

If not, you should! When you “grasscycle,” you simply let clippings drop back onto the lawn as you mow. Nature takes care of the rest!

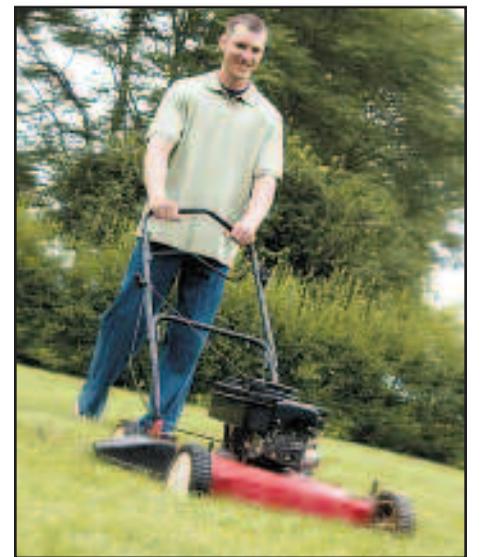
Grass clippings provide your lawn with nitrogen, a food that it needs. In fact, letting your grass clippings drop back onto the lawn each mowing season may cut in half the amount of lawn food (fertilizer) that you’ll need. Grass clippings, which are 80 to 90 percent water, provide some of the moisture your lawn needs, meaning you water less often, too.

Grasscycling also saves you time. When you grasscycle, mowing takes about one-third less time. So if your lawn takes an hour to mow when you bag the grass, it will only take about 40 minutes when you grasscycle. The way we see it, that’s 20 more minutes for taking a walk,

reading a favorite book, or napping!

Any mower can be a grasscycling mower. Mulching mowers will chop the grass blades into tiny pieces. However, other mowers can grasscycle, too. Simply remove the bag attachment from your mower and insert the “chute cover,” a safety device that covers the hole where the bag is normally attached.

No matter what kind of mower you use, you should be “trimming” your grass. In other words, give it regular trims, not one big “haircut.” Each time you mow, you should trim the top one-third or less off your lawn. If the grass is growing quickly, you may have to mow more than once a week. The small clippings will quickly begin to rot before the next mowing. If you chop off more than one-third in a single mowing, it is hard



on the grass plants and you leave behind long clippings that take longer to break down.

Keep your toxics out of the trash

Household toxics, which include unwanted chemicals, old electronics, and unneeded “universal” wastes, don’t belong in the trash—or the recycling or green waste cart. Instead, deliver these materials for disposal and recovery to a facility designed to handle them safely.

WVC&R’s Material Recovery Facility accepts Universal Waste and Electronic Waste by appointment only. This service is available *for residents only* for materials used in and around

their homes. Please call 408-283-9250 to make your appointment.

Universal Waste includes common household batteries, water-based paints, used motor oil and oil filters, fluorescent tubes and bulbs and other mercury-containing lamps, thermostats, electronic devices, electrical switches and relays, pilot light sensors, mercury gauges, mercury-added novelties, mercury thermostats, and non-empty aerosol cans that contained hazardous materials.

E-Waste is discarded electronic equipment, such as television sets, computer monitors, central processing units (CPUs), laptop computers, external computer hard drives, computer keyboards, computer mice, computer printers, cell phones, DVD players, and VCRs.

Other hazardous materials, such as automotive fluids, lawn and garden chemicals, and household cleaners and poisons, can be disposed through the Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Recycling and Disposal Program. For details, call 408-299-7300 or visit www.hhw.org.



Commercial Corner

West Valley Collection & Recycling provides multi-family housing complexes and commercial businesses with services similar to those offered to single-family residences. You can now place all of your recyclable materials in the white recycling bin like the one shown here. (In the event that you only have blue recycling carts, please put all of your recyclables into these carts.) Recycling is included in the cost of your garbage service, so there are no extra fees for these recycling bins. If you have questions about WVC&R services, please call customer service at 408-283-9250.

