



Re-Co-Ver Review

Master Composter/Recycler Newsletter

From the MCR Desk

August 2009

“To achieve true sustainability, we must reduce our 'garbage index" - that which we permanently throw away into the environment that will not be naturally recycled for reuse - to near zero. Productive activities must be organized as closed systems. Minerals and other nonbiodegradable resources, once taken from the ground, must become a part of society's permanent capital stock and be recycled in perpetuity. Organic materials may be disposed into the natural ecosystems, but only in ways that assure that they are absorbed back into the natural production system.”

- David Korten

Closing the Loop. We do it every time we feed food scraps to our compost or wormbin, or send paper, plastic and glass to the curb in the recycling bin. This afternoon the manager of a local factory, Tetra Pak, came by with three members of the company's “eco-team” to look at our composting systems. Tetra Pak makes aseptic packaging for dairy products at their Vancouver facility, a product which by the way can be recycled curbside, This group wants to get their 180 employees started on food scrap composting. After their visit here they plan to build a worm bin and perhaps do a lasagna garden at their campus. How did they find us? The Master Composter/Recycler program staffed a booth at their Earth Day celebration in the spring of 2008!

It can be easy to get discouraged about human impacts to our planet, but days like today remind me how we can make a profound difference, and might never know how much of an effect we have on the world. It's like pebbles tossed into a pond spreading ever-expanding and overlapping ripples, the original pebble has a far-reaching effect.

I am inspired to see local businesses green-teams and eco-teams embrace and demonstrate closing the loop. Hurrah for our local Tetra Pak Plant for their great corporate role-modeling. Thanks to you all for being the pebbles!

My best,

Jo Anne Dolan

Master Composter/Recycler Coordinator

Sustainability Programs Director, Columbia Springs

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Please note: All links in the MCR newsletters are live. This means that when you hold your cursor over a green-colored link and click you should be directed to the web-site or email referenced.

See Tetra Pak's website for more on their green initiatives. <http://www.tetrapak.com/environment/pages/default.aspx>

Compact Fluorescents - Greener for Your Wallet and the Earth



Saving money on electric bills while reducing greenhouse emissions is a win-win with an easy switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). If you've been putting off making the switch from incandescent, consider this: the average homeowner can save up to 70-80% of the average cost of lighting per year by replacing their light bulbs. An energy star light bulb, while more expensive initially, will save you @ \$30 over its lifetime. If you want to compare costs and quality of CFLs check out this excellent article in Popular Mechanics in which various brands were evaluated <http://tiny.cc/D7YLN>

While compact fluorescent bulbs should last you several years, when they do burn out you can't just trash them. CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, and **must be recycled**. Recyclable materials that can be recovered from CFL tubes/bulbs are aluminum, glass, phosphor and nearly pure liquid mercury. The following locations will take your used and unbroken CFL bulbs:

Clark Public Utilities customers can drop off burned-out compact fluorescent light bulbs to any Clark Public Utilities office and receive a new compact fluorescent bulb for each one dropped off free of charge. Here are locations where you can take advantage of this great offer:

- Energy Services. Open: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. 100 Columbia Way, Vancouver, WA.
- Orchards Service Center. Open: Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 8600 NE 117th Avenue, Vancouver, WA.
- Vancouver Service Center. Open: Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 1200 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver, WA.

In addition you can recycle CFLs at these other Clark County locations:

- Home Depot. 8601 NE Andresen Rd. and 330 SE 192nd Ave, Vancouver.
- Philip Services Corporation. 625 S. 32nd Street, Washougal. Open: First Tuesday of each month 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Washougal Transfer Station. 4020 South Grant Street Washougal. Open for Household Hazardous Waste drop off the third Saturday of every month 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- West Van Materials Recovery Center. 6601 NW Old Lower River Rd., Vancouver. Open: Friday and Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If you break a CFL bulb immediately open windows to vent vapors. Use stiff paper to pick up large pieces, use duct tape to pick up tiny pieces and powder, wipe area clean with damp paper towel and place all materials in sealed container. Wash your hands and dispose of the materials at a hazardous waste facility, not in the trash.

Volunteer Meeting



September Volunteer Meeting , Thursday, September 17

6:30- 8:00 p.m. Clark County 78th Street Operations Center

4700 NE 78th Street, Vancouver

The Master Composter/Recyclers and the Naturally Beautiful Backyards volunteers September meeting will feature a recycling update and refresher. Representatives from the City of Vancouver and Waste Connections will visit us to update us on the Vancouver roll cart roll out, as well as answer your recycling questions. Please bring your recycling questions and a snack to share if you like.

Volunteer News

The Master Composter/Recycler booth at the Clark County Fair was a great success. Over the course of the ten-day event MCR volunteers provided quality information to 2150 visitors to our booth! Wow!

Thank you so much to everyone who made it possible for us to staff the fair, we could not have done this without you! Kris Alexander, Werner Baumgarten, Linda Burns, Brenda Demaree, Bill Drummond, Nancy Finn, Elizabeth Gibson, Tom Gibson, Jean Harrington, Mary Hinojosa, Shirley Hoffman, Anne Holbert, Bob Ives, Ellen Ives, Dawn Johnston, April Jones, Sara Keirns, Amanda Lucas, Sharyl Mackay, Jerry MacQuarrie, Mary Neptune, Mary Olczak, Dennis Parker, Carlos Rodriguez, Erin Rowland, Laura Sauer-milch, Cindy Stanley, Kellie Strutz, Lisa Sundby, Andrea Thompson, Barbara Welsh, Erskine Wood, Sandy Wood - you all rock!



You can watch video of the Clark County exhibit area and our very own Shirley Hoffman in action at the MCR booth at <http://www.clark.wa.gov/CVTVfocus.html> click on Clark County Environmental Exhibit.

Photos: (Top right) the MCR booth at Clark County Fair. (Left) Ginger May, Werner Baumgarten and Amanda Lucas cheerfully share advice at the fair.

Volunteer News - Volunteers in Action

Photos: (Clockwise from top)

Bill Drummond, Barbara Welch and April Jones pack up the MCR booth at the end of the county fair; Elizabeth Gibson, our youngest MCR volunteer and friend shake, rattle and roll to Recycleman and the Dumpster Divers at the summer volunteer picnic; MCR and Naturally Beautiful Backyards volunteers enjoy great food and company at the picnic at Heron House; freshly screened top-quality compost at the Columbia Springs composting demo site - courtesy of Master Composter Sifter Bill Drummond; the worms at the CASEE composting demonstration site have a new shade and rain canopy made of recycled materials thanks to Brigg Franklin's building skills and worm husbandry, and Mark Ablin's generous donation of recycled building materials.



Upcoming Volunteer Events and Opportunities



Vancouver Farmer's Market

Saturdays Sept. 12 and Oct.10

We need one person for set up in the morning and one for take down in the afternoon. We'll have an example of the new recycling roll cart available at the fall markets. You'll get to help educate folks on what goes in the bin. (the bin will be dropped off/picked up for us at the market by city staff) Many thanks to Ian Alexander for being the

10 a.m. to close shift!

Block Foam Collection at Clark College

Sept. 5: Volunteers are needed for this event. The collection will be held at Clark College in the Yellow #1 parking lot and will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please call Elsie at 360.619.4122 or email

Elsie.Deatherage@ci.vancouver.wa.us to volunteer to help.

Backyard Composting Workshops

Sept. 29, 6-8 p.m. at Columbia Springs; Oct. 24 and Nov. 14, 10 a.m. to noon at CASEE.

Our fall workshops are very popular. We need at least one or two people to help with greeting and classroom set up and registration help for each of these three workshops.

Old Apple Tree Festival

Saturday, October 3' from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Old Apple Tree Park

This is a free, family friendly event with information booths, kid's activities, music, food, a baking contest and free cuttings from the Old Apple Tree! We would like to have an MCR booth with a children's activity at this event and promote fall leaf composting and recruit new MCR folks for 2010 training.

Teacher Workshop Worms Go To School

Tuesday, Oct. 20, 4-7:30 at Columbia Springs

Helpers for this class will learn the facts of worm life, observe several environmental education activities, and help teachers to build a worm bin to take back to their classroom. Two volunteers are needed to help set up and provide support for this workshop.



The Master Composter/Recycler Program is funded by Clark County Solid Waste Program and administered by Columbia Springs.



Comments, questions, suggestions, brainstorm, anything at all...mcr@columbiasprings.org (360) 882-0936 x 224 Or stop on by the Heron House at Columbia Springs, 12602 SE Evergreen HWY, Vancouver, WA 98683

Upcoming Volunteer Events and Opportunities (cont.)

Columbia River Watershed Festival

Sept. 16-18, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Here's a fun, easy way to accrue volunteer hours, plus you can enjoy a few hours at Vancouver Lake and a free lunch is provided! If you would like to help out as a class guide or other volunteer at the Watershed Festival on September 16, 17, and 18 please sign up ASAP. We're still short of help guiding classes to their next presentation - all you have to do is meet the teacher and his or her class at the bus and shepherd them to each presentation. Four-hour shifts are available on each day between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. **Volunteers are needed particularly on Wednesday and Friday.** Please see form at the end of this newsletter for more information on tasks and how to register. This event is co-sponsored by Columbia Springs, Clark County Clean Water and Solid Waste Programs, US Fish and Wildlife, Clark Public Utilities, and the City of Vancouver.

Help us Spread the Vermicompost Word!

Family Wormshop: Thursday Oct 1: 6-8 p.m. and Sat. Nov. 7 10 a.m.

to noon at Columbia Springs How can you help? Several volunteers are needed to make these worm workshops happen. Here are some easy worm-related ways to get some MCR hours .

- Prior to the class we need help collecting shredded paper. Bring us shredded paper for the worm classes and we will be so grateful! We need several big bags of clean long-strip shredded office paper (no carbon paper or glossy and the strips should be longer than 4" long please).
- Are you handy, and like projects involving a drill? Prior to the class we also need help drilling bins.
- Volunteers help host the workshop - setting up and breaking down the classroom, greeting and signing-in attendees, setting up the bin building station and helping folks build their bins.
- If you have a wormbin, grow and donate worms for the our workshops and for us to donate to other programs such as schools and the home-grown garden program. You can count your worm tending time for MCR hours!



Are you tracking your volunteer hours? Please, use the timesheet at the end of this newsletter to keep track of your monthly volunteer hours. Thank you!

