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Butte County



Recycling E-Newsletter



www.RecycleButte.net
Your on-line Recycling Guide

Welcome to the Spring 2010 Butte County Recycling E-Newsletter!

This is our third edition of our Recycling Electronic newsletter. We've got a new year, new decade and new challenges. (And some old challenges as well)

As we continue publishing this letter, we will start exploring certain subjects in more depth. Not just information on where to take recyclable materials or what recycling events are coming up, but more into the effects of not recycling certain materials and the costs to both the individual and the County as a whole.

Special thanks to Maxwell Charlton-Robb who contributed much to the production of this E-newsletter.

Do you have a recycling subject you would like explored in more depth? Let us know at the email address below and we'll try to bring it to the E-newsletter in a future edition.

April 22nd is the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day. We can do a lot to make sure the Butte County portion of the earth (and beyond) is well cared for. Locally, we can minimize the waste we produce and reuse or recycle what we can. We can also adopt our favorite county road or volunteer to clean up some public space. Contact us at recycle@buttecounty.net for information on Butte County cleanup programs.

Steve Rodowick
**Butte County Recycling
Coordinator**



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**Keep Butte County
Butte-i-ful**

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**EARTH DAY
APRIL 22**

Recycling Profile - A local Recycling leader: Ward Habriel



Ward Habriel

Here at Butte County we had the opportunity to meet with a local recycling leader by the name of Ward Habriel. Mr. Habriel is a certified Green Building Professional who began his work in Alameda County. He also worked as an educator of environmental outreach for many years. He first generated in this area due to the fact that he and his wife are avid gardeners. After taking a Master of Compost course at UC Berkeley he became known as the "Fast Compost Guy" that could make finished compost in 14 days. In his class he also was elected "Vermadictorian". He is currently working with businesses and recycling companies to start on a Styrofoam recycling program for Butte County.

When we ask Mr. Habriel, "What messages he would like to get out to the public?" he gave us three specific points, "When you think about your personal environment, are you doing the right thing? Education is the key! Help out your neighbor!" What he means by all of this, is that we first off need to take responsibility of what we do the environment. He believes that we all share a personal environment of earth together so we need to make the right choice to keep it sustainable.

Second, he also believes that the only way to know the right choices is through educating the public. His personal example of educating through experience is with children. When he visited an elementary school, children there were being taught in about the values of composting. They then took this information that they thought to be fun and exciting to their parents back home, and wanted to build compost bins themselves. This is just one example of how education is the foundation to creating change.

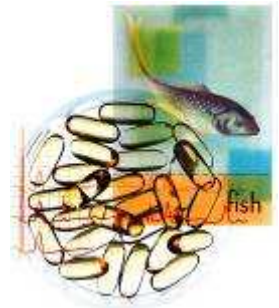
Lastly, he wanted to touch on was helping your neighbor through communication. Ward believes that neighbors should all be able to share the responsibility of recycling together. He also stated "If everyone does a little bit we can all make a huge difference". The area that he focuses on is recycling Poly-Styrofoam (PS 6) Block. His program takes him to local businesses and neighborhoods to collect this Styrofoam material that would otherwise be put to waste in a landfill where it takes anywhere from 700-7000 years to breakdown. So Ward takes this "waste" to a company out of Stockton called Timbron International, where they make "premium interior mouldings are composed of 90% recycled plastic, 50% post consumer, 40% pre consumer". These products can be found at [Timbron International](#). This company is showing great leadership in their industry by taking, "what is a waste and changing it into a product". One of Mr. Habriel's jobs is to show the public this alternative and how they should dispose of their Styrofoam. His goal is to start a county-wide formal Styrofoam recycling program, like the cities of Los Angeles and Roseville.

In the Home: The proper disposal of Pharmaceuticals

It was once common practice for people to throw old or unwanted pharmaceuticals down the toilet and flush. This common practice is not only harmful to our environment, but all of us as well. The chemicals that are contained in these pharmaceuticals, those with warning labels six pages long, are leaching into the groundwater and are being detected in our waterways.

Pharmaceuticals in surface waters

In March of 2002, the United States Geological Society released the results of the first nationwide reconnaissance of the occurrence of pharmaceuticals, hormones and other organic wastewater contaminants in surface waters. USGS surveyed 139 streams across the country, including the Sacramento River, looking for 95 different contaminants. One or more contaminants were found in 80% of the samples, and included common pharmaceuticals. Water treatment plants to date are designed to filter out sediment, bacteria and viruses. They have not been designed to identify and remove the compounds generally found in pharmaceuticals. In addition, the introduction of pharmaceuticals into a private septic tank can interrupt the biological breakdown process to destroy their effective operation.



While it is difficult to estimate exactly how much of these pharmaceuticals are put into our environment each year as a result of improper disposal, it is an issue that needs to be addressed. Much like medical sharps, pharmaceuticals also need to be disposed of properly. In Butte County we currently take pharmaceuticals at the Butte County Household Hazardous Waste Facility in Chico, 1101 Marauder St. Hours are Fridays 9-1 and Saturdays 9-4.

However, a more convenient and more sustainable approach would be for retail pharmacies to offer a pharmaceutical take back program for its customers. Expired or unused medications would be properly disposed of in a controlled and

environmentally safe manner. Ask your pharmacist about offering this service for their customers.

If these alternatives are not available to you, the next acceptable practice would be to render the pharmaceuticals uningestible, (mixed in with wet kitty litter) place in a tightly sealed hard container and deposited in the trash.

On Sunday May 16, The Butte County Public Health Department, Butte County Sheriff's Department and Butte County Public Works will sponsor a "Drop the Drugs" collection event where the public can bring expired or otherwise unwanted drugs to locations throughout the County for proper disposal.

For more information call 879-2352 or log on to www.RecycleButte.net.

Around the County: Illegal Dumping, the causes and the cures

You're driving down a pristine, bucolic country road enjoying the local wonders of nature and you suddenly come across a gross, putrid roadside heap of somebody's trash. It may be household garbage, some smelly sofa or construction debris. Whatever it is, you want to scream.

Who would do such a thing? What mindset would be required to dump trash on the road like this? What caused this? Whatever the cause, ignorance, laziness or other criminal activity, it is generally not that the perpetrator could not afford to dispose of their trash properly. If you examine your average illegal dumpsite, it soon becomes apparent that the person who generated the waste pile has plenty of discretionary income. Located in the heap are easily enough lottery tickets, liquor bottles and fast food wrappers of which their value would easily pay for several months worth of weekly trash service. Construction debris is generally produced by a person performing a service for money and that person is pocketing the cash he was supposed to use for disposal. (Likely not a licensed contractor)

What can you do? First, report it if you see it. Butte County has an Illegal Dumping Ordinance that is used as a model throughout the State to target illegal dumping. The County Public Works Department employs a Solid Waste Code Enforcement Officer that investigates these dump sites and often locates the responsible party. That party is whoever dumped the waste **and** whoever generated the waste. The generator is ultimately responsible for the proper disposal of the waste. This brings us to the second thing you can do. When having garbage hauled off your property by another party, whether construction or general debris, insist on a receipt from a permitted landfill or transfer station before you make final payment for the service.



Bangor Park Rd.

Butte County spent over \$150,000 last year in the cleanup of illegal dump sites from county right-of-ways. This figure does not include the cost to the cities, private property owners, special districts and other state agencies that are impacted as well. Butte County has come a long way in addressing illegal dumping; we still have a long way to go. Our best tool in the protection of our County's environment is each and every resident. To report an illegal dumpsite, call 1-866-369-DUMP

County news: Butte County's Recycling Report Card

As most avid recyclers know, back in 1989, California passed landmark legislation (AB939) establishing the California Integrated Waste Management Board. (Now CalRecycle) The Board's goal was to reduce the waste that is directed to California landfills by 50% by the year 2000. Butte County and all the municipalities in the county have met or exceeded that 50% goal.

In 2006, the last year that that was measured by the amount of material diverted from the landfill as a percentage, the Butte Regional Waste Management Authority, (Biggs, Gridley, Paradise and unincorporated Butte County) diverted 56% of total waste generation away from the landfill. That is to say, of all the trash and recyclable materials produced within the Regional Authority, 44% still made it to the landfill. The City of Chico diverted 58% and the City of Oroville diverted 59%. Starting in 2007, the State changed the measurement methodology and jurisdictions were now being measured by pounds per person per day (PPD) of waste disposal. This system is much easier to tabulate and gives the average waste producer, (That's you and me) a more tangible handle on how much waste we really produce.

The results for 2008 (The last official year) are below.

Jurisdiction	Target P/P/D	Actual P/P/D
Butte Regional Waste Management Authority	4.9	4.3
City of Chico	6.2	5.7
City of Oroville	6.0	6.6
Town of Paradise*	4.8	4.0

* As of 2008, Paradise was reporting on its own

A direct comparison of PPD between cities would not be indicative of one jurisdiction's recycling accomplishment relative to another's. Each jurisdiction has a specific waste profile in that one city may have more industrial manufacturing, which generally produces more waste than another city's. Also, tourism and temporary labor impacts waste production but is not accounted for in year round population figures when factoring PPD.

Although the County has generally met our recycling goals on the whole, it should not be assumed that our job is done. There is still too much perfectly good, recyclable or reusable materials that end up in the landfill every day. The State of California will likely soon be raising the diversion goals to 60% or higher. We all should work to be proactive and reach those goals before they are implemented.

For more information on recycling rates for Butte County and the rest of California, log on to CalRecycle's local government web page at: www.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/

More County News: Neal Road Recycling & Waste Facility update

The Neal Road Recycling & Waste Facility (The Facility) is continuing to prepare for future expansion and hopes to offer additional recycling services in the near future. The Facility's gas to energy project is waiting for dry weather to add additional methane gas wells to feed the power plant that will produce up to 4 megawatts of electricity. Regarding actual disposal capabilities, the new trash module excavated last year will be double lined this summer and be ready to accept waste by 2011. Plans for an expanded recycling facility at Neal Road are undergoing environmental review before permits can be applied for.

Recently, the Facility held an agricultural plastic recycling event that took in and recycled 6.5 tons of plastic chemical containers. Given the great response from the Ag community, the Facility will hold additional events in the future. Also, polystyrene (Styrofoam) has recently been added to what is recycled at the Facility. Clean block Styrofoam will be accepted at a drop off container placed next to the cardboard recycling bin.

As the Facility expands the number and type of materials it accepts for recycling, it is important for customers to load their trucks and trailers so that recyclable material can be easily unloaded before dumping of the residual waste. Materials that are currently recycled are: Tires, electronics, appliances, scrap metal, brush, wood, cardboard, Styrofoam, bicycles, household batteries, fluorescent tubes/CFL's and inert materials (Concrete, etc.).

Tour our Facility

Would your club, classroom or organization like a tour of the Neal Road Recycling & Waste Facility? Give us a call during regular business hours to schedule a day and time. Call us at 879-2352.

Coming in the Summer 2010 Issue:

- **Used Oil & Oil Filter Recycling**
- **Recycling Profile: Chico State Associated Students Recycling Program**
- **Once in the can, then what? The route your recycled materials take**
- **Recycling Etiquette 101**
- **Recycling on the trail, in the boat or tubing on the river**

Questions, comments, suggestions? Email us at recycle@buttecounty.net. We will try to respond as soon as possible.



Consider the trees and those over-priced ink cartridges. Please don't print this newsletter.