



# Diversions

Winter 2003

A Publication of the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority



## Biostack Compost Bins: A Great Gift for the Gardener

Order by December 12 for  
delivery by December 20!

Order online and pay by credit card:  
[www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org)  
or call 925-906-1806

## State of the Authority: 2003

2003 was a gratifying year for the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority. In the past 12 months we've continued working on behalf of Central Contra Costa residents to reduce the amount of solid waste generated.

### Some of the ways we've worked toward this goal:

- Awarded "Wastebusters" certification to schools for reducing waste
- Held the first curbside collection of athletic shoes ever done in Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe Program
- Shipped bicycles collected in Reuse & Cleanup Days program to Afghanistan.
- Held reuse collection events at multi-family developments
- Created and distributed a new Contra Costa County reuse directory
- Sponsored the second annual "Street Chic" Reuse, Recycling, and Art in Action show
- Continued to subsidize and distribute Biostack home compost bins and sell Earth machine composters
- Held beginning and advanced compost training workshops
- Offered rebates on chipper/shredders for mulching yard trimmings
- Helped member cities and agencies adopt construction and demolition (C&D) recycling ordinances
- Published a new C&D recycling guide
- Funded the Green Resource Center to help reduce construction waste

And that's not all we accomplished in 2003. Check the next issue of *Diversions* for more about the CCCSWA!



## 'Tis the Season for Too Many Catalogs

Holiday time is the peak season for unsolicited catalog mailings. Each time you receive a catalog you don't want, call the 800 number listed for ordering and request to be removed from their mailing list. Or, if there is an enclosed postage-paid envelope, use it to mail your request. Creating a form letter on a computer or copier can save time.

Be sure to request that your name not be sold or traded when you place orders, make donations, enter contests or send in warranty cards. Taking these few simple steps will go a long way toward preventing unwanted mail in 2004. For more junk mail reduction tips, see [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).

### • The Waste-Cutting Edge •

Say No to Single-Use Products

## Disposed to Throwing Things Out?

This holiday season, even more than last year, companies will bombard you with their latest disposable products. Besides disposable pens, lighters, and other throwaways we've grown accustomed to, did you know you can now buy disposable baby bibs, cell phones and even DVDs? That's right. A company called FlexPlay has teamed with General Electric to produce movie discs that self-destruct 48 hours after they are opened. Sound like something only James Bond would use? Thanks to Disney and its Buena Vista Home Entertainment division, "EZ-Ds" have already been successfully test-marketed and will soon hit the stores.



Disney plans to release DVDs with a limited life span.

*"Is the convenience of throwing out a DVD rather than returning it worth the increased environmental impact of generating more waste?," asks Janet Schneider, CCCSWA Executive Director.*

DVDs today are infinitely reusable, as long as they are handled and stored properly. According to Mark Murray of Californians Against Waste, a DVD is normally used by 50 to 100 people. Using disposable DVDs instead of renting would not only increase landfilled waste, but would require more DVDs to be produced, which leads to greater consumption of energy and resources.

Although FlexPlay and GE say their clients will likely encourage consumers to return or recycle the discs, there is no way to do so easily. Besides, our smart readers know by now that recycling is the third R in the "waste hierarchy." Reuse of an existing product is always better than recycling one into something new.



If you would like to voice your opinion about the new disposable DVDs, write to: Consumer Relations, Walt Disney Company/Buena Vista Home Entertainment, 800 Winneconne Ave, 3rd Floor, Neenah, WI 54956. Or send a pre-formatted letter via email by going to Working Assets Long Distance Company's website at [www.workingforchange.com/activism](http://www.workingforchange.com/activism).

If renting is truly inconvenient for you, try a service like [www.netflix.com](http://www.netflix.com). For a monthly fee, you can order DVDs for home delivery, with no due dates or late fees.

## Holiday Collection Schedule

| MON                       | TUES                      | WED                       | THURS               | FRI                                   | SAT                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| DEC 22<br>Regular service | DEC 23<br>Regular service | DEC 24<br>Regular service | DEC 25<br>NO PICKUP | DEC 26<br>Pickup for Thurs. customers | DEC 27<br>Pickup for Fri. customers |
| DEC 29<br>Regular service | DEC 30<br>Regular service | DEC 31<br>Regular service | JAN 1<br>NO PICKUP  | JAN 2<br>Pickup for Thurs. customers  | JAN 3<br>Pickup for Fri. customers  |

Normal collection will resume the week of January 5.

## Curbside Christmas Tree Recycling

Remove decorations and stands, then place clean, **unflocked** trees at the curb on your collection day, according to the schedule below.

**January 5-9** Customers in **Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda** and the surrounding unincorporated areas.

**January 12-16** Customers in **Danville and Walnut Creek**, plus **Alamo, Diablo, Blackhawk** and the surrounding unincorporated areas.

**If you miss your scheduled week**, place your tree at the curb on your collection day the week of January 19-23.

**After January 26**, cut your tree and place it in your yard clippings cart or request an on-call recycling cleanup from Valley Waste Management by calling 935-8900. **NO FLOCKED OR ARTIFICIAL TREES.**



# Ecohouse: a Green Masterpiece!

On Friday, October 10, Bob & Lily Joe—along with nearly 100 guests—celebrated the completion of their spectacular “ecohouse” or green home. You may remember the *Diversions* feature on the Joes earlier this year, when the Walnut Creek house was still very much a work in progress. Well, now it is truly a masterpiece—a monument to sustainable design and construction, without compromise on aesthetics or comfort.

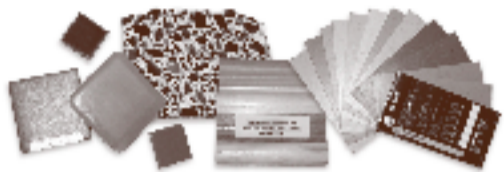
The night of the party, the Joes’ architect, Marek Stoklosa, was on-hand to lend insight into this unique home. “We are very pleased with the results, and we’re excited to be able to claim a first in green architecture,” Mr. Stoklosa beamed. He went on to explain that, as far as he knows, the Joes’ home is the first steel-framed, two-story straw bale building in the world! Stoklosa is also optimistic about



Bob & Lily Joe’s home is a great example of how to create a green building from the ground up. However, you can incorporate green materials into any type of building project, whether it’s a small weekend project or major remodel.

the energy efficiency of the Joes’ house, one of the biggest benefits of green building. For example, Stoklosa’s firm designed a twelve unit green building in sweltering Livermore, where residents have now lived through five summers without needing air conditioning.

Bob was equally hopeful about their newly finished, state-of-the-art house. “Lil and I will spend the rest of our lives enjoying this built environment, knowing that it is the healthiest home we could have built for ourselves and that our lives will be enriched in ways we have yet to imagine.” Congratulations, Bob and Lily, and thank you for being green pioneers in our community!



## Green your Home with Help from the Green Resource Center

Inspired by the Joes? Don’t know where to start? **The Green Resource Center** is a treasure trove of sustainable solutions for building and remodeling.

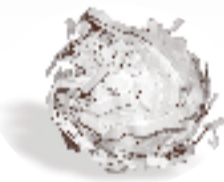
- Call the hotline and speak to an expert.
- Visit the showroom to see actual samples of environmentally-friendly flooring, insulation, countertops, tile and more.
- Options for new construction, remodels – even small projects.

Call (510) 845-0472 weekdays, 9 to 5 or visit [www.greenresourcecenter.org](http://www.greenresourcecenter.org).

## Shipshape Shipping for the Holidays

We’ve given you ideas before about low-waste holiday gift wrapping and how you can recycle the packaging materials you receive with your gifts. One thing we haven’t unwrapped before, though, is holiday gift shipping. Here are a few shipshape ideas we encourage you to try this year:

1. Shred old documents or wrapping paper, grab a handful and press them into a ball. Place them in the shipping box around the gift until it is safely insulated.\* To plan ahead, shred this year’s wrapping paper, and instead of recycling it, use it when you ship next season! (Remember: reuse is preferable to recycling.) If you don’t have a shredder, crumple paper into tightly packed balls.
2. Use holiday towels, table linens or other festive fabrics to guard your gifts against the misadventures packages are likely to endure during shipment.
3. Reduce wrapping waste at your recipient’s end (not to mention money and time of your own!) by using the pre-decorated holiday packages (padded envelopes and boxes) sold by the US Postal Service. Purchase them at your local post office.



\* Idea from Martha Stewart Weddings, Fall, 2003

## Ask the Authority

Dear Authority,

I just bought a new computer, and I’d like to donate my old one, but I’ve heard about “information theft” incidents that happen when data isn’t properly erased. What can I do?

Distressed in Danville

Dear Distressed,

Don’t let this issue stop you from donating or recycling an unwanted computer. There are several programs available that will properly erase your information.

It is true that when files are deleted using the Macintosh “Empty Trash” or Windows “Empty Recycle Bin” commands, only the file name is actually removed from the directory. The data remains, although it is hidden from your average computer user. Unfortunately, there are programs out there that allow unethical people to search and retrieve this hidden information, even from completely reformatted drives. The chances are low that your computer will fall into the wrong hands, but it doesn’t hurt to be careful. Use a program that actually deletes all of the data, not just the file name. For Macs, try “SafeShred” ([www.codetek.com](http://www.codetek.com) or [www.download.com](http://www.download.com)). Windows users can run “Sure Delete” ([www.wizard-industries.com](http://www.wizard-industries.com)).

If you are extremely concerned about privacy, donate your computer to the Alameda County Computer Resource Center ([www.acrc.org](http://www.acrc.org)). The center offers “degaussing,” which uses large magnetic fields, permanently deleting information and rendering the entire drive unusable. This prevents reuse of the drive in a rebuilt computer, but other computer parts will still be reused or recycled.

For computer donation and recycling information, visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).



Think Globally; Shop Locally

## Great Stuff Made Right in Our Backyard!

We’ve all heard of the “Buy American” campaign, and have even been reminded by dancing raisins, “happy cows” and others to look for a “Made in California” label, but how many times have we thought about “Buying Bay Area” or even “Shopping Contra Costa” – in other words, buying products actually made and/or sold within our local borders? The holidays are a great time to think globally and shop locally!

Roughly 80% of the money you spend with a locally owned, independent business (LOIB) stays right in your own community. This contrasts with the mere 20-40% your community will retain when buying from a large franchise. In fact, one dollar spent at a LOIB can return as much as five times that amount locally through city taxes, employee wages and purchase of supplies from other locally owned businesses.\*

Below are some opportunities to support the local economy this holiday shopping season:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Craftsman Extraordinaire: Gifts for the Season</b><br>Nov. 8-Dec. 31 (Wed-Sat)<br>12-5 pm<br>Danville Fine Arts Gallery,<br>233 Front St<br>Info: 925-838-1959   | <b>Lafayette Winter Festival &amp; Boutique</b><br>Dec. 6 & 7, 10 am-4 pm<br>Parks & Recreation Bldg<br>500 St. Mary’s Rd, Lafayette<br>Info: 925-284-2232   |
| <b>Joy of Christmas Craft Show</b><br>Nov. 28 – Dec. 24,<br>10 am-8 pm daily<br>Wards Mall/Contra Costa<br>Center, Pleasant Hill<br>Info: <a href="http://catalog.com/festival">catalog.com/festival</a> or<br>707-886-5355 | <b>KPFA Community Crafts Fair</b><br>Dec. 13 & 14, 10 am-6 pm<br>The Concourse, 8th &<br>Brannan St, San Francisco<br>Info: <a href="http://www.kpfa.org">www.kpfa.org</a> or<br>510-848-6767 x609 |
| <b>Walnut Creek Civic Arts Education Holiday Arts Sale</b><br>Dec 4, 5-9 pm<br>Dec 5-7, 10 am-9 pm<br>Ceramics in Civic Park<br>Other media at the<br>Shadelands Center<br>Info: 925-943-5846                               | <b>Blackhawk Holiday Arts &amp; Crafts Festival</b><br>Dec. 14-23, 11 am-6 pm<br>The Shops at Blackhawk,<br>Camino Tassajara &<br>Blackhawk Rd.<br>Info: 925-736-1751                              |

\*Statistics from the Boulder Independent Business Alliance, [www.boulder-iba.org](http://www.boulder-iba.org).

## Contact information

CCCSWA ..... 906-1801  
fax: 906-1805 ..... web: [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org)  
email: [authority@wastediversion.org](mailto:authority@wastediversion.org)

PLEASANT HILL BAYSHORE DISPOSAL .... 603-1144  
fax: 685-8153

web: [www.pleasanthillbayshoredisposal.com](http://www.pleasanthillbayshoredisposal.com)

For questions concerning billing, special cleanups, vacation hold requests, new service or your blue garbage cart.

VALLEY WASTE MANAGEMENT ..... 935-8900  
fax: 935-1617 ..... web: [www.valleywaste.com](http://www.valleywaste.com)

For questions concerning the service of your burgundy recycling or green yard clippings carts, to request motor oil disposal containers, for recycling cleanups or information on the Walnut Creek Recycling Center.

CONTRA COSTA RECYCLING HOTLINE ..1-800-750-4096

HOME COMPOSTING/GRASSCYCLING .... 906-1806

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE .. 1-800-646-1431