



Diversions

Spring 2004

A Publication of the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority



Shoe Recycling Hits the Ground Running

The CCCSWA collected more than 800 pairs of athletic shoes during the "Reuse-a-Shoe" recycling drive last fall. Our local program was the first curbside shoe collection in the Nike program's history. Nike even sent a film crew to document this innovative (and convenient!) collection strategy. Thanks to your participation, old shoes will find new life as "Nike Grind," a soft athletic surface material used for playgrounds, running tracks and more.

Due to the program's success, athletic shoes will be collected again this spring on your Reuse and Cleanup Day. Look for details in the mail.



CCCSWA Wins E-Waste Grant

Recently, Dell Computers awarded the CCCSWA one of twelve \$10,000 Dell Recycling Grant awards to conduct a computer collection event in the spring of 2004. As part of the CCCSWA's ongoing efforts to provide member cities with innovative, cost-effective and convenient waste reduction programs, it applied for the funds and was selected from a competitive group of 200 public agency applicants. Take advantage of this great opportunity to responsibly discard your old computer equipment.

Collection Event
May 22, 2004 - San Ramon
Call 925-513-2637
for a drop-off appointment.

• The Waste-Cutting Edge •

"Closing the Loop" Reaches New Heights

Raising the Bar on Product Design

What if you could compost your toaster after it popped its last Pop Tart? Or what if your toddler chewed on the furniture, but you didn't have to worry because the non-toxic finish actually contained vitamins? Ideas like these may sound outlandish to you and me, but to sustainability pioneers Bill McDonough and Michael Braungart, these products are already possible using "cradle-to-cradle" design principles.



Safe enough to eat? Pioneers in product design are working on ways to make products good for people, instead of just less bad.

McDonough (an architect by training) and Braungart (a chemist), advocate what they call "Eco-effectiveness," a different approach to the more common "Eco-efficiency" product design model. Manufacturers that follow "Eco-efficiency" create products less harmful to the environment by making them more efficient, less polluting or less wasteful. The McDonough and Braungart team isn't satisfied with this approach. "Less bad still isn't good," McDonough explains,

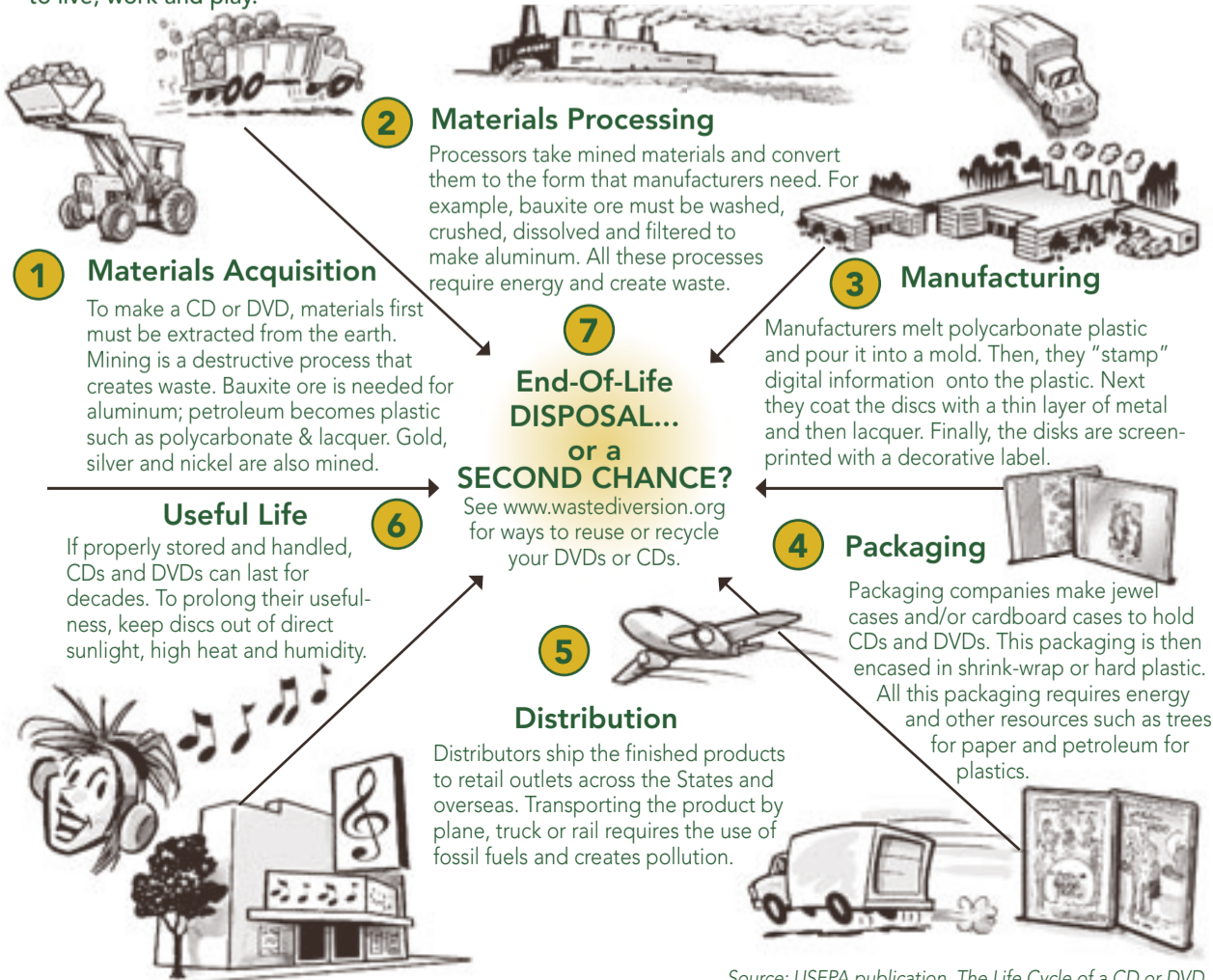
"Why settle for less bad when you can redesign the product into one that is actually good for the environment, using nature, itself, as the model?"

If this sounds like the proverbial pie in the sky, consider this: In the mid 90s, Design Tex, a major European textile manufacturer, asked these two visionaries to help make its effluent (liquid waste) less toxic. The two men looked for ways to go beyond the company's request to help them become more eco-efficient and, instead, applied the cradle-to-cradle model. In the end, the effluent leaving the factory is as clean as the water coming in - in other words as clean as the city's tap water! On top of that, the new fabrics are safe enough to eat (although the company doesn't make any claims about the flavor). Accomplishments like this have since won McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC) such big-name clients as Ford Motor Company, Nike and the City of Chicago. Cradle-to-cradle calls for waste-preventing design on the front-end, not just recycling on the back-end. It's a point we can all apply in our daily lives.

For more information, go to www.mbdc.com or read the book, *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*, published by North Point Press.

The Life Cycle of a CD or DVD

In the last issue, *The Waste Cutting Edge* column focused on waste created by disposable DVDs. In this issue we'd like to revisit CDs and DVDs, and look at the entire process involved in creating, using and disposing of these common items. In honor of Earth Day, reflect on how the earth provides us the raw materials we need to live, work and play.



Source: USEPA publication, *The Life Cycle of a CD or DVD*

Green Builders Can Help You Remodel Responsibly

Have you heard of oriented strand board (OSB)? What about TJI (Truss Joist) floor joists? Plastic lumber? Bamboo flooring? These are just a few of the many environmentally responsible building materials a green construction company might recommend for a remodel, large or small.

Engineered wood products, like TJI floor joists and OSB, are made from wood chips. They are more earth-friendly than dimensional lumber cut from mature trees. Floors built from TJI joists use 50 percent less wood than traditional floor construction. Recycled plastic lumber is made from plastic containers. Bamboo flooring, which performs as well as hardwoods, uses a renewable and fast-growing grass. Each of these materials is different and unique. What they have in common, however, is the sustainable use of natural resources, and the fact that they measure up to the quality of more conventional building products that aren't so resource-savvy.



Jeff Harteau of Gayler Construction stands in front of oriented strand board (OSB) used in a residential addition project in Danville.

To guide you through the myriad options available in a green remodel, George Gayler, president of Gayler Construction says, "Homeowners should start by finding a builder who makes environmentalism an integral part of the business and company culture." The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) is making it easier to find such professionals with its green building training and certification program. Certified companies in the area include:

- Brecht Construction**, Dublin (925) 828-1890;
 - Canyon Construction, Inc.**, Moraga (925) 376 3486;
 - Gayler Construction Company, Inc.**, Danville (925) 820-0185; and
 - Springwood Builders**, Lafayette (925) 283-1222.
- For a complete list, visit www.sfbanari.com/greenremodelers.htm. For a quick-start on the concepts of Green Building, visit the Green Resource Center's website at www.greenresourcecenter.org.

Old Number, New Phone

What to Do with Surplus Cell Phones

In late November of last year, the Local Number Portability (LNP) portion of the 1996 Federal Telecommunications Law went into effect. LNP allows cell phone users to retain their number when changing service providers within the same calling zone. However, due to variations in encryption technology, customers often must get a new phone when they change providers. Given that there are currently 140 million cellular customers in the U.S., this will likely result in millions of unwanted cell phones.

Cell phones contain hazardous substances such as lead and mercury, which could harm the environment if disposed in landfills. If you are one of the mobile masses, please find a responsible disposal option. Here are a few suggestions:

Turn it in. Many cellular companies have take-back programs. Check if either your new or old provider offers a recycling service. The Sprint store at 1406 N. Broadway, Walnut Creek, and the Nextel store in Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek, accept all types of phones, and proceeds benefit charities.

"Phoneraise." Any nonprofit, charity or grass-roots organization can organize phone drives for fundraising purposes. The Wireless Foundation accepts all phones and will pay \$1-\$10 for newer models. Visit www.wirelessfoundation.org or call 1-800-456-9624 for more information.

Donate a phone. Not a nonprofit, but still want to help charities? Organize a collection at work. Money raised will go to hospitals, civic groups or other charities. Great for businesses that would like to develop charitable giving programs. Visit www.wirelessfoundation.org/DonateaPhone for details.

Mail it in. Individuals can also help charities. Mail phones to CALL TO PROTECT, 2555 Bishop Circle, West Dexter, MI 48130-1563. Your phone will benefit victims of domestic violence.



Electric-Grasscycling Mower Sale!

Electric-grasscycling mowers recycle your grass clippings without polluting the air!

Black & Decker corded mower

\$79
after rebate

April 10: Home Depot San Ramon

April 17: Home Depot Pittsburg

7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.



A limited number of \$100 rebates will be available when you trade in your old gas mower for an electric mower. Residents are asked to drain oil and gas before trading in old mowers. Please dispose responsibly by calling 800 NO-DUMPING. Open to Contra Costa residents only. Rebates given on a first-come, first-served basis.

Make Your Own Mulch

Rebates Available for Home Wood Chipper/Shredder



Mulch helps retain moisture in the soil (which means less watering), retards weed growth (resulting in use of fewer or no herbicides), and helps moderate the soil temperature in extreme weather conditions (hot or cold).

While supplies last, the CCCSWA and City of San Ramon are offering \$20 mail-in rebates to its residents on a home chipper/shredder. Just purchase a McCulloch 1400 from one of the stores listed below at the manufacturer's suggested retail price (\$199.99 plus tax). Complete the rebate form, mail with your original receipt, and the CCCSWA will send you \$20.

Orchard Supply Hardware

2050 Monument Blvd., Concord, (925) 685-3000
1041 Market Pl., San Ramon, (925) 275-1670

Yardbirds Home Center

3211 Danville Blvd., Alamo, (925) 837-5038
5400 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Concord, (925) 672-2790
1037 Arnold Dr., Martinez, (925) 370-8300

Ask the Authority

Dear Authority,

I've heard a lot about recycling CDs and DVDs, but what about video tapes? I'm converting my video library to DVD and I have many old movies and other tapes I don't want. What can I do?

Modernizing in Moraga

Dear Modernizing,

Great question! Send those VHS tapes to Alternative Community Training (ACT). Not only will you prevent waste, but you'll also be helping people with disabilities lead productive lives. ACT workers reformat and clean old tapes, then sell them to television stations, universities and thrifty consumers. The revenue generated helps fund ACT programs and pay worker wages. They also accept floppy disks. Donations to ACT, including shipping costs, are tax-deductible. Visit www.actrecycling.org/donations/ or call 1-800-359-4607 for more information.



Contact information

CCCSWA **906-1801**
fax: 906-1805 web: www.wastediversion.org
email: authority@wastediversion.org

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

web: 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

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**