



# Diversions

Summer 2007

A Publication of the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority

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New Life for Kitchen Scraps and Leftovers

## Food Waste Collection Coming to Lamorinda

Did you know food is one of the largest components of landfilled material? Starting in September, residents of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda will be able to send their kitchen scraps to a composting facility rather than the landfill. Each household will receive a convenient kitchen container to collect everything from fruit and vegetable peels to coffee grounds, bread and more. Residents can simply empty the scraps from the kitchen container into their green yard clippings cart for pick-up on their regular collection day.

The kitchen containers and more details about the new program will be distributed in August. If you are part of a neighborhood group or community organization in Lamorinda and would like CCCSWA staff to make a presentation in the coming weeks, please call 925-906-1807.

Don't live in the program area, but would like to recycle food scraps? Try backyard composting with a discounted Smith & Hawken "Biostack" compost bin and sign up for free CCCSWA composting workshops. For more information, visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org) or call 925-906-1806. *Note that meat and dairy products are not recommended for backyard composting.*



## New Collection Rates Effective March 1st

Beginning March 1st, residents in the Lamorinda area will see an increase in their bills for solid waste service, which includes weekly collection of recyclables, yard clippings, and garbage, as well as two Reuse and Cleanup Days per year. Each year, the CCCSWA determines if rate adjustments are necessary by evaluating local service costs. You can lower your rate by reducing your garbage cart size or by becoming a CCCSWA-certified home composter.

Detailed rate information is available at [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).

## Battery Collection Charges Ahead

Over a year ago it became illegal to toss old household batteries into the garbage. Today there are 18 convenient drop-off locations throughout the CCCSWA service area. "I'm thrilled with the new program," says Rossmoor resident Marilyn Young. "I just bring my spent batteries with me when I fill my prescriptions at our local Longs Drugs." To find a location near you, visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org) or call 925-906-1801. All non-rechargeable household batteries, such as AA, AAA, C, D, 9V and the button type, are accepted.



## The Waste-Cutting Edge

Neighbors Call Him "The Greenest Guy We Know"

## Ted Pope's Best Resource Is Common Sense

In the Winter 2006 issue of *Diversions*, we sought nominations for a Green Lifestyle Award – a recognition for Central Contra Costans who take extra steps to make their lives more environmentally sustainable. We ended up with not one, but three winners! You will "meet" each of them in this and the next two editions of *Diversions*.



Green Lifestyle Award recipient Ted Pope was happy to see his plum trees healthy and covered in blossoms this past March.

According to Orinda resident Ted Pope, a green lifestyle doesn't require a lot of effort. On the contrary: keeping things simple and close to home may well be the key to Pope's eco-friendly ways.

"Nothing organic leaves the property," explains Ted as he points to his tumbling compost bin. "Why would I have my kitchen scraps and yard waste hauled away and then buy compost for the garden, when I can make my own?" Ted's thriving plants prove the homemade stuff is at least as good as store-bought. Even his ailing plum trees came back to life after he pruned some of the branches, chipped them, and then used the chips as mulch around the base of the trees.

Energy efficiency is another common-sense principle in the Pope household. The family switched to a hybrid car and replaced all their incandescent light bulbs with longer-lasting and less power-thirsty fluorescents. They also installed a solar roof and are now getting about 60% of their electricity from this renewable power source!

Anybody with an interest in becoming more "green" can count on Ted's advice and assistance. Karen Robinson, the neighbor who nominated Ted for the Green Lifestyle Award, recalls: "We were about to rinse our plates before loading the dishwasher at a neighborhood Christmas party last year. Ted told us they come out just as clean without rinsing, and it saves water, energy and time."

It sounds like Ted has been a wonderful influence on his friends and neighbors and for that, we salute him!

## BEHIND THE SCENES

## After the Curb: Sort Line Workers See It All

This is the first in a series of articles about where recyclables go after leaving your curb.

People toss some strange things in their recycling carts—things they really shouldn't. Each time they do, Pacific Rim Recycling has to deal with them. Pacific Rim is a Benicia company that sorts and sells the recyclables collected from 350,000 residents in central Contra Costa and southern Solano counties. One of the strangest items they've ever encountered on the recycling sort line? Once they found a rocket-propelled grenade launcher!

"A sorter caught it on the conveyor belt," recalls Tyler Lazzarovich, a supervisor. "We called the police."

But anti-tank weapons are the exception. Workers encounter "clothes, syringes and rotting food," the latter being the most common among recycling no-nos, according to Charles Lindsey, a Pacific Rim sorter.

The job of a sorter is a demanding one. At Pacific Rim, 170 tons of recyclables speed by in one 10-hour shift, which sometimes starts at 4 a.m. Sorters must stay on their toes so that only bottles, cans and paper tumble into the huge sorting screen before the separated items move on to secondary sorting stations where they are baled for sale. The companies that buy these materials want clean bales—no paper with the plastics and no plastics with the paper.

Employees like Lindsey, who ensure the quality of the recyclables, are indispensable to a recycling business, says Pacific Rim Recycling president and CEO Steve Moore.



Charles Lindsey removes cardboard from the conveyor belt at Pacific Rim Recycling.

# Green Re-Models Grounded in Health

We are heading into prime home remodeling season. The number one room chosen for improvements? The kitchen. These days there are tons of "green" products out there for remodeling more sustainably—so many, in fact, that we decided to present a series of articles on the subject here in *Diversions*. And what better way to go about it than from the ground up, right?

Though it looks thoroughly modern, Marmoleum™ has been around for more than 100 years. Marmoleum™ is made from 100% natural components, including linseed oil, wood flour, jute, and



Time for a new kitchen floor? Consider eco-friendly and healthy alternatives to vinyl such as Marmoleum™.

natural resins and pigments. Unlike vinyl (actually polyvinyl chloride or PVC), Marmoleum™ flooring contains no harmful chemicals. Even better, Marmoleum™ is available in tile form, so you can replace just the area you need to when it gets worn, rather than tearing out the whole floor. Manufacturer Forbo offers a line of products under the name "Click" that allows you to put the tiles down without glue. This makes it even easier to replace the tiles separately, resulting in much less waste in the long run.

For more information, visit [www.themarmoleumstore.com](http://www.themarmoleumstore.com).

## Canyon Fills Void in Green Construction

# Historic Moraga Barn Goes Green

Canyon Construction has always blazed green trails. They built a sod-roofed, recycled-content home way back in 1969. They are the first (and still the only) builder in Moraga to be certified by the Contra Costa County Green Business Program.



"The Barn" is likely to earn Canyon a prestigious Platinum LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, says president Chris Avant. "Few other U.S. buildings have it."

Now Canyon aims to apply their green values where their employees work. This summer the company will finish renovating and moving into the historic Moraga Barn. Outside, the two-story building that began as a hotel and ended up a bar (with the "N" added to skirt a state law during prohibition) will look much like it did almost a century ago. This time, however, it will have energy-saving solar shingles, a rainwater catchment system, and balconies made of reclaimed redwood. Inside, the thoroughly modern offices will boast natural lighting, soy foam insulation and locally sourced stone floors with radiant cooling and heating.

An employee garden, bike rack and outdoor shower will round out the super-green office building. "It's exciting to be at the forefront," says Avant. "I hope it shows businesses and homeowners what's possible."



Be a "Grass-Cycler" and Save \$70!

# OSH Stores Offer Rebate on Mulching Mower

Residents of Contra Costa County can save \$70 (\$50 in-store coupon; \$20 mail-in coupon) on a Craftsman 19-inch Electric Mulching Lawnmower. This mower reduces air pollution and cuts grass into small pieces that break down quickly, making it easy to mow and mulch at the same time. And with no cleanup, it's perfect for a "Lazy Gardener."

Offer is good until Sept. 30, 2007. For information on OSH stores and eligibility, visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org) or call 925-906-1806. Thanks to Orchard Supply Hardware for co-sponsoring this program.

# The Lazy Gardener

How do you maintain a beautiful garden when you just don't have the time? Consider planting native and other drought-resistant plants. Because they use less water, they grow more slowly and therefore produce less green waste. This saves you time and money. You can also find native plants that attract butterflies and hummingbirds, or provide tasty herbs for your kitchen. Add to this a mulching lawnmower (see rebate above), and you'll have oodles of time and a wonderful yard with very little cleanup!



To get a feel for different types of native plants, you can visit the Gardens at Heather Farm in Walnut Creek ([www.gardenshf.org](http://www.gardenshf.org)). Their demonstration garden puts these principles into practice, with all kinds of plants that are well-suited to California's Mediterranean climate. The garden is based on *Plants and Landscapes for Summer-Dry Climates of the San Francisco Bay Region*, published by EBMUD (see [www.ebmud.com](http://www.ebmud.com)). Heather Farms is located at 1540 Marchbanks Drive in Walnut Creek.

## Ask the Authority

Dear Authority,

Your newsletter talks a lot about recycling, but is *Diversions* printed on recycled paper?

Alice in Walnut Creek

Dear Alice,

Thank you for mentioning the connection between recycling paper and using recycled paper.

Collecting used paper, sorting it into clean bales, and selling it to paper manufacturers are just the first steps in the recycling process. We also have to buy products made with recycled paper ("recycled content") to bring recycling full circle.

*Diversions* is printed on paper with 50% recycled content. Half of this recycled amount is "waste" paper generated during the paper production process; the other half is paper from curbside recycling programs like yours ("post-consumer"). The wood used for the non-recycled paper portion of the newsletter comes from forests that are well managed by companies certified through the Forest Stewardship Council. This means the company is required to protect endangered species, control pests with non-chemical methods, and harvest the wood without significantly impacting the local flora and fauna, among other practices.

Lastly, the paper used for *Diversions* is bleached without the use of chlorine to avoid the release of dioxin, a known cancer-causing pollutant.

Sincerely, The Authority

Do you have a question for us? Please send it to [authority@wastediversion.org](mailto:authority@wastediversion.org).



Paper carrying the Forest Stewardship Council's logo is made from responsibly harvested wood.

## Contact information

CCCSWA . . . . . 925-906-1801  
fax: 925-906-1805 . . . . . web: [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org)  
email: [authority@wastediversion.org](mailto:authority@wastediversion.org)

**GARBAGE:**  
**ALLIED WASTE SERVICES . . . . . 925-603-1144**  
fax: 925-685-8153 . . . . . web: [www.awsgcc.com](http://www.awsgcc.com)  
For questions concerning billing, special cleanups, vacation hold requests, computer & TV collection, new service or your blue garbage cart.

**RECYCLING:**  
**VALLEY WASTE MANAGEMENT . . . . . 925-935-8900**  
fax: 925-935-1617 . . . . . 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 . . 925-906-1806**  
**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE . . . 1-800-646-1431**  
**REUSE & CLEANUP DAYS . . . . . 1-800-999-6067**



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