



Environmental Update



Bellaire Recycling Committee

August 2002

What's New with the Bellaire Recycling Committee

By Patricia Ritter

The Bellaire Recycling committee is a committee made up of 9 citizens in the community. These folks volunteer their time and effort in helping the City of Bellaire Recycle, Reduce and Reuse! Currently, our board is 7 strong. If you are an avid environmentalist and would like to help us out, please call our hotline and leave a message. Someone will be in touch with you. Our hotline number is (713) 662-8173.

The Bellaire Recycling Committee is concentrating their efforts on getting a website. This website will feature our guide to recycling as well as various tips on how you can help the Earth. Be looking for it soon!

The committee is also working on how to properly dispose of hazardous waste in the City of Bellaire. We hope to have something in place by next year.

If you love festivals and going to Earthday – you will love our Earthday. We had our first annual Earthday Festival at the Bellaire Wholefoods! There were free give a ways, art contests, among the many booths. We hope that next year we can build a better and bigger one.

The biggest task that is facing the committee is Curbside Recycling. We are looking at the benefits and the negatives of curbside. If you have any input on this subject matter, we would love for you to come to one of our meetings. We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 at the Parks and Recreation building off of Laurel.

Earth Day, Every Day

Tips for Summertime Watering

By Gayle Davies

We are well into the dog days of summer, that time of year when lawns and gardens really take a beating from the heat. Although the Houston area is fortunate that recent rains have mitigated local drought conditions, water conservation is still necessary. Smart water usage reduces water bills, is healthier for plants, and even helps to reduce the mosquito population.

Here are ten tips for outdoor water usage as recommended by the Texas Water Development Board and Texas Agricultural Extension Service:

- Water lawns and gardens slowly and early in the morning to reduce evaporation and increase water absorption.
- Use a sprinkler that makes large water droplets that remain close to the ground, rather than a fine mist that is sprayed up into the air.
- Use drip irrigation (or upside down soaker hoses) on bedded plants to reduce evaporation.
- Avoid watering when it is windy.
- Water the lawn and bedded plants only when they begin to wilt,

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and then water so that the ground is wet from 6 to 12 inches deep.

- Avoid watering too frequently since that prevents air from getting to roots, encourages diseases, and causes salt buildup.
- Avoid over-watering to prevent runoff. Be aware that water runoff into storm sewers provides a perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- Whether you use a sprinkler system or hoses with sprinklers attached, ensure that you avoid watering of streets, gutters, and driveways.
- Set the lawn mower as high as possible, especially for St. Augustine grass, to reduce evaporation, deepen the root system, and help choke out weeds.
- Hand water very small areas and spots that need extra watering (e.g., especially hot and sunny locations).
- When replanting, choose the types of grasses and plants that are drought tolerant with low water requirements.

Toxic Waste Trivia

(or Where Do Old Computers Go To Die?)

By Barbara Rosen

Which toxic materials are being discarded at ever increasing rates each year?

Answer: Lead, mercury, cadmium and arsenic encased in computers and peripherals. About 315 million of them by 2004 according to the National Safety Council's estimates.

Where do dead computers go?

Answer: Usually they are dumped in landfills, fed to incinerators or exported to those few countries still willing to accept them.

Are there environmentally friendly disposal methods?

Answer: Yes. The Environmental Protection Agency approves businesses that meet its guidelines. Some non-profit organizations also accept donations of equipment.

Who wants my old computer?

Techs & Trainers, Incorporated is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing technology to persons who are challenged physically or suffer from mental illnesses. All computers, working or not, are needed. They are useful for several kinds of training:

1. People with barriers to employment practice their skills using these donations.
2. Other workers learn hardware skills by preparing the functioning donations for use and by dismantling obsolete equipment.

The Bellaire Recycling Committee Needs You for Assisted Pickups!

By Frances Freeman

Opportunity is knocking! The First Saturday Assisted Pickup Crew at the Recycling Center would like for you to give a Saturday morning hour or two between 9-12 helping unload cars of recycling materials. Please contact Frances Freeman at 713-668-6858 to volunteer.

Making Bellaire Greener

By Craig Bello and Patricia Ritter

Tea's Nursery is planning on selling its large property on the corner of Newcastle and Bellaire Blvd. Rather than let this site be developed into residential or commercial property, a local grass roots movement has formed to convince the City of Bellaire to purchase this property and convert it into a park.

If you are interested in signing the petition and/or volunteering time to this cause, please contact Barbara Reichlin, an area captain, at 713-664-3101 or via e-mail at breichlin@swbell.net.

What Level Recycler Are You?

By Craig Bello

Recycling in any form is a welcomed and appreciated effort. Whether it be as simple as finding the right disposal container for your soda can at the park or as involved making regular trips to the recycling center, each action

is more help for the environment in which we live.

The Novice Recycler:

The novice recycler occasionally makes an effort to recycle or maybe only recycles a few easy things like newspaper and cans. This person has a general sense that recycling is a good thing to do, but maybe lacks the time or information to do more.

The novice recycler is one that may show up to the recycling center with a big bag of mixed recycleables, once in a while, that needs to be sorted on site.

This is the most popular group and we love them because they are trying to make an effort despite the time-pressure and hassles of everyday life. They are the foundation of a recycling program and are just waiting for the right inspiration and knowledge to do more.

Intermediate Recycler:

The intermediate recycler has decided that recycling is going to be more of a way of life - maybe they grew up with the concept or adopted it as an easy way to help the environment.

The intermediate recycler makes regular trips to the recycling center with his materials already separated for easy drop off. Some in this group have developed recycling centers in their own home, separating the materials on the fly.

This group is the mainstay of the recycling center as these folks bring in high volumes of recycleables per person. Although fewer in number, they generally collect and recycle most of the recycleables accepted at the center.

The Advanced Recycler:

Although their numbers are somewhat small overall, this group is growing fast. The advanced recycler is dedicated to recycling as much of their waste stream as possible.

We see these folks at the recycling center regularly, but they also can be found at other collection centers disposing/recycling of other materials (e.g., paint, motor oil, scrap metal, computers, etc.) properly. At the recycling

center, the separated materials are deposited from bins that are obviously from some type of dedicated home recycling center. The recycleables are rinsed and all non-recycleable pieces (e.g., caps and other attachments) are removed.

This group is loved not only because they recycle lots of materials, but also because they make the recycling easier on the recycling center and the volunteers. They help to produce higher quality loads of recycleables for which Bellaire is able to get the best price.

We at the Bellaire Recycling Committee are thankful for each and every recycler, no matter which level. If you want to do more, please feel free to contact the Recycling Committee for information and tips on how to bring your game up to the next level.

Saving Water Indoors and Out (Excerpts from Parade Magazine 7/21/02)

By Craig Bello

Water is a precious commodity. Providing clean water is becoming more difficult and more expensive every year. Droughts seem to loom every year and battles rage over the ownership of water. In general, preparing surface and groundwater for household use is becoming more sophisticated and expensive as water volumes and contamination levels grow. The water purification infrastructure is pushed a little more with each new development.

Here are some additional ways around the house that you can contribute to water conservation efforts.

- Turn off the tap while brushing teeth or shaving. A running tap wastes about 7 gallons per minute. The advanced version of this involves turning off the water while soaping up in the shower.
- Fix leaks. In general, leaks account for 13% of household water usage. A single dripping faucet can waste up to 2,700 gallons per year. Faucet leaks and toilet leaks can generally be corrected with simple gasket or flapper replacement and cost almost nothing.

- Look for Energy Star appliances when it is time to replace. An Energy Star washing machine can save up to 7,000 gallons of water per year. Consider low-flow toilets and low flow showerheads as well. Make existing toilets lower-flow by adding a brick or water-filled milk bottle to the tank.
- Cover the pool. An uncovered pool can lose 1,000 gallons per month, which can be reduced by up to 90% with a cover.
- Rethink your lawn and garden. An acre of grass can take 27,000 gallons per week to keep green, so consider shrinking the size of your lawn by replacing some with drought-tolerant ground cover plants. Use mulch to reduce water waste in your gardens and consider using more indigenous plants that thrive in Houston conditions.
- Catch the rain. Instead of letting all of the free fresh rainwater roll off your roof and into the sewer, try using an old trick - the rain barrel. Run the downspout into a rain barrel (available at most garden stores) or some other container of your choosing. Use this

water for lawns and gardens before turning on the tap.

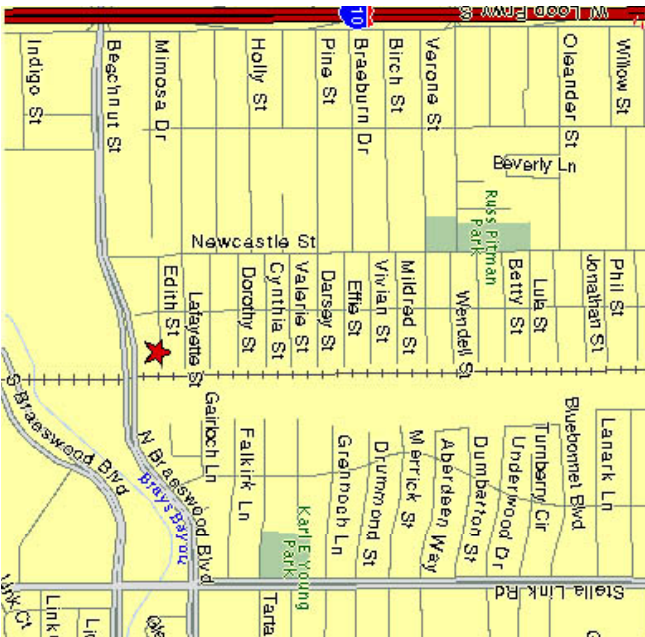
Bellaire Recycling Advisory Committee

Chairperson	Patricia King-Ritter
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Education	Dr. Gayle Davies Meg Healy
Editor / Web Coordinator	Craig Bello Terry Timme
Volunteer Coordinator	Frances Freeman

For comments or to learn more, call our hotline at 713-662-8173 or e-mail us at bellairerecycles@hotmail.com. We welcome everyone to our monthly meetings. Our meetings are held at the Parks and Recreation center on the First Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm.

Bellaire Recycling Center

4337 Edith



Special Thanks to

Office DEPOT



In helping with our First Saturday Assisted Pickups

Next assisted pick up dates:

August 3, 2002
September 7, 2002
October 5, 2002

Do a Good Deed and Recycle