



Butler County Department of Recycling & Waste Management

NEWS Fall 2016



How Do I Recycle...

COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS

Both Lowe's Home Improvement and Home Depot stores accept compact fluorescent bulbs at their service desks for recycling. Just call first to make sure they are still accepting. ECS&R also accepts them for a small fee—call 1-866-815-0016 for more information.

Autumn Composting Tips

Seize the moment! Autumn is a great time to gather materials for composting. This wealth of carbon-rich matter will benefit your compost all year long.

~ **Gather leaves and grass clippings**—leaves are valuable compost material because they are so carbon-rich. Deciduous leaves are best, just wait until the leaves start turning brown before raking and adding to compost. Fresh grass clippings are nitrogen-rich and are compost activators. Add grass clippings to your compost in thin layers to prevent matting.

~ **Collect the skeletons of finished annuals** from the vegetable and flower garden which have finished fruiting/blooming and are now dying back. Large-bodied plants can be chopped a

bit smaller to make it easier to compost. Also, avoid composting any plants which have disease or mold problems.

~ **Place different materials in two separate piles** for layering

As you begin to fill your compost bin, remember to keep combining the “green” ingredients like kitchen peelings and the “brown” ingredients like leaves, twigs and shredded paper to ensure you get a good quality compost. The composting process speeds up when the materials are well mixed. Add just a few handfuls of leaves at a time to the compost bin.

~ **Save wood ash** if you have a wood-burning stove or heater and add them to the compost bin. Use only ash from clean materials and sprinkle onto



compost to avoid clumping.
~ **Cover the pile or use an enclosed composter** so your compost stays moist but not sodden. Any open compost pile should be covered with a tarp to shed excess rain. Enclosed composters are nice because they retain the moisture from the materials being composted, deter pests such as raccoons and mice, and speed up the composting process.

For more information, you can google “fall composting” on the internet.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Proper Disposal of Needles and “Sharps”

Needles and other types of “sharps” from your home should NEVER be placed in a recycling bin, flushed down a toilet or placed in garbage without being placed inside a sturdy container first. Residents should place all sharps in either a sharps

container (available at pharmacies and medical supply stores), or in a sturdy plastic container such as a laundry detergent bottle. When full, place the container or bottle containing the sharps into your garbage —**NOT the recycling**

bin. Never, ever place loose sharps or needles in a garbage bag. Help keep our sanitation and recycling workers safe!





Halloween Luminaries from "Upcycled" Cans and Jars

If you have some large empty cans headed for the recycling bin, you can create some pretty fabulous luminaries for your walkway. Just spray paint the cans black, and use a hammer and nails to punch holes in the sides. These can be Halloween-themed messages or

images - the goal is to create a cool pattern that will shine and twinkle when a candle or LED light is placed inside. Using old glass jars, you can paint the inside with the color of your choice and then add faces on the outside with black paint. Simply

place an LED light or candle inside and voila!
Happy Halloween!



Preventing Food Waste (and Saving Money)

Americans waste about a quarter of all food purchased each year -- worth \$125 billion. Of that, about 97% ends up in landfills. Twenty-five percent of U.S. freshwater supplies go to producing food that is thrown away. Preventing food waste is good for your family, your budget and the environment.

- Shop Smart & Realistically**— Very simply, don't buy too much food. Buy only what you are sure you will eat. You should also try to purchase locally sourced produce and other food from places like your local farmer's market.
- When Cooking, Don't Over-Serve Food**—Smaller portions mean less waste, less money spent and if you are hungry you can always get another helping!
- Save, and Actually Eat the Leftovers**—Make sure you save uneaten food when you either cook too much or you get too much food at a restaurant. Label your leftovers so you can keep track of how long they've been in your fridge or freezer, and incor-

- porate them into your daily or weekly routine.
- Store Food in the Right Places**—Storing food in the right place is really underrated. It's often surprising what kinds of fruits and vegetables want to be at room temperature versus in the refrigerator. There is a lot of information online that will help you identify the correct places to store all types of foods properly.
- Avoid Clutter in Your Fridge, Pantry and Freezer**—Out of sight is out of mind when it comes to storing food. If we forget something is there until it is no longer good to consume, it's a huge waste. Keep things neat and visible, and use the "first in, first out" principle: After you buy new groceries, move the older products to the front so you consume them first.
- Donate to Local Food Banks and Farms When Possible**— Before you throw away excess edible food, look into food banks and charities where you can bring items you know you're not

- going to consume before they go bad and give them to people in need. You can find local food banks by calling Butler County Community Action at 724.284.5125. You can also compost many types of food scraps and expired foods in a backyard composter or sometimes donate it to farms and companies that feed livestock.
- Try Your Hand at Canning and Pickling**— Canning is a great way to preserve most types of fresh fruits and vegetables and increase their shelf life for months. One web site (of many) with how-to instructions is: www.freshpreserving.com

