

Conservation News

Environmental News and Information from the City of Melbourne Public Works & Utilities Dept.

Electronics recycling has become a lot easier

It is becoming easy to dispose of old computers and other electronics in an environmentally-friendly way. With Brevard County's new electronics recycling center in operation, there is now no reason to throw your old equipment in the trash.

This is more important now than ever as more people own and then upgrade an ever increasing number of TVs, computers, monitors, printers, scanners, fax machines, cell phones and other electronics.

TVs and computer monitors have cathode ray tubes which contain lead. Other hazardous materials, such as mercury, are also contained in electronics.

In a traditional landfill, these items are crushed, releasing toxins into the environment



Recycled electronics are sorted at Brevard County's new electronics recycling center.

through landfill leachate.

To help eliminate this environmental problem, household electronics can now be taken to the Household Electronics Recycling Center at 2250 Adamson Road in Cocoa, located near the Brevard County landfill.

This is an unsupervised facility that is open from 7:30 a.m. to

5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Salvaging is not allowed.

Businesses, schools, churches and other non-profits can contact Creative Recycling Systems, Inc. at 1-800-797-2061 for recycling cost information and to schedule a special pickup.

For more information on the household electronics recycling program, call 633-1888.

Reduce packaging when you shop, and save

Packaging makes up to 30 percent of municipal solid waste. You can reduce the amount of packaging you throw in the garbage by purchasing products that have less packaging.

Here are some ways to reduce by making good purchasing decisions:

- Avoid buying single-use items like paper plates and plastic cups.

- Purchase concentrates and add water in reusable containers.
- Buy items in bulk that have a long shelf life, such as dog food, detergents, pastas, cereal, cleaners and paper products.
- Buy products that have less packaging, and watch out for products that are wrapped individually and packaged together.

Besides the environmental

benefits, there are other benefits you will notice when you shop this way. Over packaged items often cost more than less packaged products. By shopping smarter, you can save money when buying products with less packaging. By buying in bulk or in concentrate you can reduce the amount of packaging that goes into the trash while you also reduce the number of times you have to go to the store.



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Workers from Waste Management pick up yard waste from a home in Melbourne.

Yard waste tips for prompt pickup

Yard waste is collected once a week. Yard waste is anything that grows around your home or property and that you cut. This includes grass clippings, weeds, twigs, branches, palm fronds, leaves, etc. The key to prompt yard waste pickup at your home is proper preparation. Following are some points to remember:

- Yard waste must be cut to proper lengths and placed in containers for collection. Containers need to be plastic or metal and not exceed 32 gallons in capacity and not weigh more than 50 pounds.
- Branches must be cut in lengths of four feet or less. All branches, leaves, twigs, berries, clippings, etc. must be placed in containers.
- Yard waste is not accepted in plastic bags.
- When placing yard waste at the curb for collection, do not place it on or in storm drains or in any manner that could obstruct drainage.
- Make sure your yard trash is free of any other debris that is not yard waste (such as wood fencing, doors, landscaping timbers, etc.).
- Do not obstruct or conceal fire hydrants with yard waste.

If you would like more information, please call the City's ECO Division at 953-6302 or visit the City's web site at www.melbourneflorida.org. If you are outside of the City, contact Waste Management at 723-4455 or your local municipality.

What you can do to help prevent stormwater pollution at your home

Did you know that anything that is washed into the storm sewer system ends up in our local waterways, primarily in the Indian River Lagoon. That's because, unlike the wastewater from our kitchens and bathrooms, stormwater is not sent to a treatment plant.

There are many things we can all do to minimize harmful pollutants from entering the storm-sewer system, including the following:

- Brushes used with water-based (latex) paint should be rinsed in the sink instead of on the grass or paved area outside. If you have a small amount of paint left in the can,



stuff it loosely with newspaper, let the paint dry out completely, and put it in the trash.

- Save and reuse paint thinner and turpentine whenever you can. Leftover paint and paint thinner can be taken to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center at the Sarno Landfill, located at 3379 Sarno Road. The center is open for collection on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- When washing your car, do it on the grass rather than the driveway and use a hose outfitted with a shut-off nozzle.



- Use fertilizers sparingly. Try also to minimize your use of pesticides and herbicides. They are deadly to fish, birds and other wildlife. If you must use them, make sure you are using the right product and the right amount. If you have landscaping questions, you can contact the Brevard County Extension Service at 633-1702 or visit their web site at <http://brevard.ifas.ufl.edu>.

- Never dump motor oil, antifreeze or any other chemicals down the storm drain. One quart of oil can contaminate 250,000 gallons of water!

- Inspect and maintain your car to keep oil and other fluids from leaking.

- Never dump leaves and grass clippings into ditches, storm drains or creeks. They clog storm sewers, which can cause flooding. Decaying vegetation adds excess nutrients to our waters, which can cause algae to grow too fast and lead to fish kills.

City earns water conservation project awards

At the Florida Section American Water Works Association (FSAWWA) conference held in November, the City of Melbourne, along with the other members of the Brevard Water Resources Conservation Team, earned two awards for water conservation education projects.

The "Best in Show" award was given for the video the team produced called "Conserving Water on the Space Coast." The video is available for checkout at libraries in Brevard County.

A meritorious award was earned for the team's educational placemats project.

Place Christmas trees at the curb for recycling

When the holidays are over, place your Christmas tree curbside for collection on your regular yard trash day. It does not need to be cut into four-foot lengths, as per the usual requirements for yard waste, and do not bag the tree.

Remember to remove all the tinsel and other decorations.

Your old tree will be taken to the landfill and turned into mulch, which is then free for residents.