

# TRASH TALK!

A Quarterly Newsletter of



Fall 2022



## LAUNCHING INTO A NEW SCHOOL YEAR!



Fun? Check! Educational? Check! We are all systems go and ready to visit your school! Join us as we discover how to care for our favorite planet — Earth! We have many ways to explore this year with two educators. Both Amy and Katie will be able to visit your classroom, meet you on Zoom, or set you up with awesome STEM\* kits and videos. We have lots of new programs, contests, and book clubs, so give us a call at 317-858-6070 or email us at [asieferman@RecycleHC.org](mailto:asieferman@RecycleHC.org) or [karcher@RecycleHC.org](mailto:karcher@RecycleHC.org). We will launch our Environmental Education adventure together!

*\* Wondering what "STEM" is? It stands for "Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math."*



## NO NEED TO RAKE? WHAT A "RE-LEAF"!

Fall is truly a beautiful season. Across many parts of the country, leaves turn from vibrant green to flaming orange, red, and yellow before falling to the ground. They dry out, and we enjoy the crispy crunch of walking through them with that familiar fall fragrance all around us. The changing leaves make autumn beautiful — and maybe even your favorite time of year — until it's time to rake. If your yard is large and you have older trees, raking can be a big job. What if you didn't need to rake all those leaves? Well, "be-leaf" it! Leaves can be reused to improve your garden and yard for spring.

Instead of raking, bagging, and having the leaves picked up, you can leave them on the ground to make your soil and grass healthier. Here's how you can leaf-cycle:

- If your family has a mulching mower, run it over the leaves a couple of times to chop them into small bits. If you don't have a mulching mower, simply remove the bagger attachment that catches grass and have a grown-up insert the safety cover on your regular lawn mower. Then mow over the leaves. Your lawn should now be "dusted" with leaf bits. They will break down into the soil by spring to "feed" your lawn and will protect the grass roots from the harsh winter weather.
- With the bagger attached to the mower, mow up the leaves. When you're done,

empty the leaf bits from your lawn onto your garden. This leaf mulch will keep the soil moist for plants in the spring. It will also protect insects and bacteria that help plants grow. In the spring, fluff up the broken-down leaf bits and mix the material into the soil as a fertilizer. If you have a compost pile or bin, you can mix the leaf bits into the compost.

You may have heard older folks talk fondly about the "smell of burning leaves." That may sound like a nice memory, but we now know that burning leaves is dangerous. Fires from burning leaves can burn out of control and cause a lot of damage to both nature and your property. The National Park Service estimates that 85% of wildfires start from people burning leaves and other trash. Also, burning leaves releases several different greenhouse gases and air pollutants. People, especially young children and those with allergies and breathing difficulties, can suffer serious health issues from the effects of burning leaves. Because of this, burning leaves is illegal in many communities.

This autumn, when your parents or grandparents hand you a rake, share the benefits of leaf-cycling. Maybe you will make "be-leafers" out of them!

If you just can't resist the appeal of playing in the leaf piles, you should know how to dispose of them when you're done. Luckily,



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we have you covered. Just put your leaves, along with any other yard waste, in paper bags and bring them to one of our two yard waste recycling facilities. (If you put your leaves in plastic bags, empty the leaves from the bags at the yard waste site. Then take the bags home to reuse or put into your trash.) Our Brownsburg site, located at 90 Mardale Drive, is open on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Our Plainfield site, located at 7020 S. County Road 875 E, is open on Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Both sites are open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. through November. Please note that both locations will be closed during major holidays. You can usually pick up wood chips at our Brownsburg facility, but call 317-858-8231 first to make sure we have those on hand. To learn more about our yard waste recycling centers, visit [www.RecycleHendricksCounty.org/programs/yard-waste-recycling-center-information](http://www.RecycleHendricksCounty.org/programs/yard-waste-recycling-center-information).



## UNCLE SAM SAYS... RECYCLE!

With America Recycles Day coming up, let's talk about how we're doing as a country when it comes to recycling. In the United States, we are recycling and composting about 36% of our trash. However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that we could be recycling and composting as much as 75% of our trash. This means that a lot of the trash going to landfills could be recycled or composted. We can do better!

When we recycle, we save energy, conserve natural resources, and help create jobs. When we landfill, we put a lot of good resources to waste. Did you know that people have been recycling for thousands of years? In ancient civilizations, people would melt down broken metal items to make new things. It was the smart thing to do back then, and it is the smart thing to do now!

One of the goals of recycling is to move toward what is called "circularity," or closing the loop. To understand, think about the three chasing arrows in the recycling symbol. We use an item, recycle it, make something new from

it, use that item, recycle it, and so on. When new products are made from recycled products, we don't need as many new materials from the Earth and reduce the amount of trash put into landfills. This is a win for people, the economy, and the environment.

If your family or school has not yet begun to make recycling a daily habit, start now. If you already have a recycling habit, set a good example and show others how easy it is. Simply place a recycling bin (or bag or box) near the trash can. Make a list of what can be recycled and post it on the refrigerator or near the recycling bin. To learn more about recycling, visit [www.RecycleHendricksCounty.org](http://www.RecycleHendricksCounty.org).

To show that you are serious about recycling in your community and the United States, you can take the America Recycles Day Recycling Pledge. To join over 87,000 others who have pledged to learn about recycling and to share their knowledge, visit <https://kab.org/programs/ard/pledge>. This site is also filled with fun ideas for celebrating America Recycles Day on November 15, 2022.



## I CAN — U CAN 2

You might have seen a great example of reuse at our 4-H Fair this summer. The Hendricks County Recycling District sponsored an art project called "I CAN — U CAN 2." Artists transformed used metal cans into beautiful displays of art. We loved seeing all the different pieces and showing off the creativity of our community.



## RECYCLING DROP-OFF CENTERS

For our residents who are not subscribed to a curbside recycling program, we offer Recycling Drop-Off Centers in Coatesville, Lizton, and North Salem. We accept these materials for recycling:

- Plastic bottles, jugs, and food tubs/cups – Labels and lids can stay on.
- Paper and cardboard – Flatten all boxes; shredded paper must be in a paper bag.
- Metal food and beverage cans – Labels and lids can stay on.
- Cartons (milk, soup, wine, broth, and juice boxes without straws or wrappers)
- Glass bottles and jars – Lids and labels can stay on.

While you're at the Drop-Off Center, look out for our Recycling Right Prize Patrols. They stop by to reward people for recycling right.

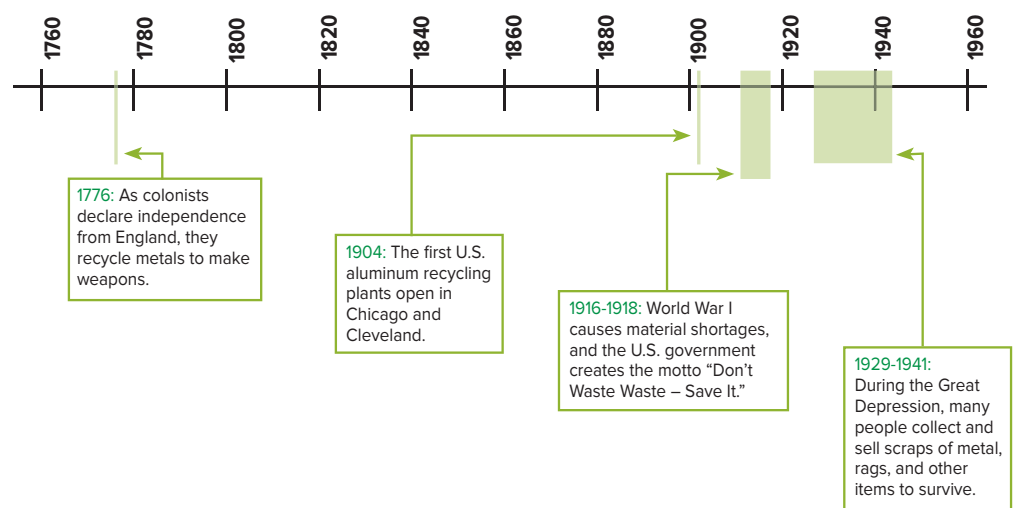


## JUST IN TIME

A timeline is a graph that is used to show the passage of time in a straight line. Timelines are especially useful in showing historical events in relation to each other.

**Instructions:** Below is a timeline showing a small part of the history of recycling in the United States. Use the timeline to answer these questions.

### History of Recycling in the United States From 1776-1941



1. In what year did the first aluminum recycling factories open in the U.S.? \_\_\_\_\_  
In which cities? \_\_\_\_\_
2. During the period shown on the timeline, what were the major reasons that caused Americans to recycle and waste less? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why is there a big, empty part in the middle of the timeline? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What was a U.S. government motto in World War I? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How much time passed between the end of World War I and the beginning of the Great Depression? \_\_\_\_\_



DON'T FORGET THE THIRD ARROW!

Kids and adults all over the world recognize the chasing-arrows recycling symbol. Many of us are great with the first two arrows! Our families reduce waste by only buying and using what we need. We keep paper, plastics, glass, and other items out of landfills by recycling. But sometimes we forget about that third arrow, the one that closes the loop. The way to close the loop is to reuse recycled materials. We do this by buying and using products that were made from materials we tossed into our recycling bins.

It's easy to find out whether an item is made from recyclables — just check the label. If you see the words “made from post-consumer recycled content,” you know that if you buy this item, you are closing the loop. To make recycling work, the materials that you put into the recycling bins must be used to make new stuff to buy and use.

The next time you go to the store, remember to help close the loop by checking labels. Look to see if the packaging or the item you are buying was made with post-consumer

recycled content. If you look closely, you will probably find many, many items, such as cereal boxes, water bottles, paint, floor coverings, napkins, tissue paper, backpacks, and even furniture, that have been made from recycled material. Plus, some items, such as metal food and drink cans, are always made from recycled material.

So don't forget the third arrow! Remember to buy items made from recycled materials whenever possible to be an all-around recycler.



Credit: May Lim | iStock | Getty Images Plus

WHAT'S WRONG?

*In a food web, living things can be classified as producers, consumers, and decomposers. Producers use sunlight, air, and soil to produce their own food (energy). Consumers get their energy by eating other living things. Decomposers get energy by breaking down dead plants and animals. Sarah was supposed to correctly identify producers, consumers, and decomposers on this list, but she was in a hurry and didn't check her work. Six of her answers are wrong!*

**Instructions:** Look at the answers. If an answer is not correct, cross it out and write the letter of the correct answer.

P Producer    C Consumer    D Decomposer

1. Cat	<u>P</u>	_____
2. Worm	<u>D</u>	_____
3. Lettuce	<u>C</u>	_____
4. Hawk	<u>P</u>	_____
5. Bush	<u>D</u>	_____
6. Bacteria	<u>P</u>	_____
7. Human	<u>C</u>	_____
8. Rose	<u>P</u>	_____
9. Mushroom	<u>D</u>	_____
10. Grass	<u>C</u>	_____



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CHECK OUT OUR LENDING LIBRARY

Do you love to read? Do you like fun, hands-on activities? You are in luck! We have an Environmental Lending Library just waiting for you to check out. Classrooms and students are welcome to borrow our materials for up to a month. Contact us at 317-858-6070 to learn more.



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DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE



You may not know it, but you could have dangerous chemicals tucked away in your home. Household hazardous waste, or HHW, can come in many forms. Fertilizers, insecticides, paints, and cleaning products are all examples of HHW. We don't use these items very often, so they may be shoved back into a cabinet or closet and forgotten. It's important to dispose of these chemicals properly if you are no longer using them. They can cause a lot of harm if they are not disposed of properly. Take a day together with an adult in your home to go through your closets and cabinets to look for HHW. Then, take the materials to our next Tox-Away Day on October 22, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Plainfield Middle School. We will be accepting HHW, including pesticides and paint products (no latex paint, please), as well as other items, such as medical sharps, electronics, tires, and appliances. For more information, visit [www.RecycleHendricksCounty.org/programs/tox-away-days](http://www.RecycleHendricksCounty.org/programs/tox-away-days).

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

**Instructions:** Using the clues below, find out which country ranks #3 for recycling the most per person. This country's rigorous recycling laws and economic investments have helped it reach a 95% food recycling rate.

- 1. I am south of Russia and Southeast of Mongolia.
- 2. China is bigger than me.
- 3. I am at the south end of a peninsula.
- 4. I am just west of Japan.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



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# REDUCING LUNCHTIME TRASH

Lunch is one of the best parts of the school day. It's great to have a break to talk with friends, refuel our bodies, recharge our brains, and relax before heading back to class. Unfortunately, it is also when the school creates the most trash. Unless you bring your own lunch in a reusable lunch bag with washable containers, you probably create an average of about 67 pounds of lunchtime trash per year. For an average elementary school, this is about 18,000 pounds of trash per year. Across America, schools throw out about 530,000 tons of food every year. Much of what goes into the trash could be composted or recycled. Of all the garbage in the school lunchroom, about 12% could be recycled, while 57% could be composted.

Here are some tips to reduce waste in the lunchroom:

- If you buy school lunch and are allowed to choose your foods, do not take too much. Only take what you will eat and eat what you have taken.
- If you bring your own lunch, use a reusable container, like a lunch box or insulated lunch bag.
- Use washable containers instead of plastic baggies for items you bring. You can even wash out and reuse tubs from dips, spreads, or deli food items.
- Bring your drink in a refillable bottle from home or a recyclable bottle. Don't forget to recycle the empty bottle at school or at home.

- Use washable silverware from home, not throwaway plastic. If your school requires plastic, use heavy-duty utensils that are washable.
- If you use single-serving containers, make sure the packaging is recyclable and remember to recycle it.
- If you do have leftovers, place them back into your reusable containers and take them home to eat later.



Credit: ferrantraite | E+ | Getty Images

## BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

**Instructions:** Add a prefix or suffix to each word and then put each word into the correct sentence below. (Hint: Change the "y" at the end of a word to an "i" before adding a suffix.)

\_\_\_\_\_ cycle                      \_\_\_\_\_ water  
compost \_\_\_\_\_                      \_\_\_\_\_ uses  
rich \_\_\_\_\_                      healthy \_\_\_\_\_



Credit: Renata Angerami | E+ | Getty Images

1. In November, we celebrate how much we \_\_\_\_\_ as a country.
2. Ashley decided to mix compost into her family's garden to make the soil \_\_\_\_\_ for the plants.
3. Putting food scraps in a compost bin \_\_\_\_\_ food waste.
4. Microorganisms in compost help make the soil \_\_\_\_\_ in nutrients.
5. By \_\_\_\_\_, Marty's family threw away less food waste and reused more materials.
6. If you \_\_\_\_\_ your compost pile, it won't get enough air.

## DARE TO COMPARE

**Instructions:** Use the clues to find the correct answers. Show your work.

The letter B stands for the number of plastic bottles that Carrie recycled last week.

Clues:

- A.  $B + B < 40$
- B.  $B > 10$
- C. B is an odd number.
- D. 5 is a factor of B.

1. Based on the first two clues, make a list of all possible answers. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Using the last two clues, cross out the numbers that cannot be the answer. \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is B? \_\_\_\_\_

The letter C stands for the number of cans that Javier recycled last week.

Clues:

- A.  $C < 10 + 8$
- B. C is not an odd number.
- C.  $C > 9$
- D. 6 is a factor of C.

1. To find C, which clue would you use first? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which clue would you use second? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is C? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How did you figure out the answer? \_\_\_\_\_



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