



Newsletter

December 2008

Waste-Reduction & the Holidays

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle! We see and hear these words all the time, but it often seems that RECYCLE is stressed more than REDUCE and REUSE. From Thanksgiving to New Years Americans generate 25% more waste— so in honor of the holidays make December the month to focus on reducing and reusing!

Changing your habits is the key—think about ways you can reduce when you shop, work and play. You can help your children and students learn about waste reduction by getting them thinking about their families'



purchasing habits and how packaging adds to the waste stream.

The best lesson to teach? “Don’t make waste in the first place!” When you avoid making waste in the first place, you avoid disposing or recycling it later!

Go one step further and put the message into practice and hold a Waste-Free Lunch Day , School Swap Day, Book Swap, or collect (nicely used) coats for the needy.

For more information on Waste -Reduction and the Holidays visit:

<http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/publiced/Holidays>



“Americans throw away an additional 1 million tons of garbage during the winter holidays!”

—The EPA, winter facts

Ogden Elementary Receives “Cool Coast Award”

In the fall of 2007, Ogden Elementary began instilling in the K-5 students environmental responsibility by implementing a recycling program. The recycling program has had a huge impact on the amount of waste that Ogden Elementary sends to the landfill. Before the program was in place, Ogden sent 2 seven cubic-foot dumpsters of trash to the

landfill every day. By implementing a successful recycling program, the school has cut the amount of trash they send to the landfill by half!!

Ogden Elementary students are being recognized by Cape Fear Climate Action Network with a “Cool Coast Award” for the environmental responsibility the students have taken on and the work

that they continue to do at their school.

To learn more about Cape Fear Climate Action Network, visit their website:

www.capefearcan.com

Has your school received an environmentally related award? Let us know!

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It Starts With Me!— Buy Local

Talk to parents, students, and classmates about the benefits of buying local!

- **Use less oil:** Produce is shipped an average of 1,500 miles from the time it's picked until it arrives on supermarket shelves. Cut back on oil consumption by buying local produce and taste the difference!
- **Help the grower:** Only 18 cents of every dollar goes to the grower when you buy from a supermarket, while the other 82 cents goes to various middlemen. Invest in your local growers and buy locally grown food whenever you can.
- **Sustainable forests:** Much of the hardwood furniture on the market is made from ancient forests in places like Canada, Tasmania, the Amazon and Central Africa. Help support local sustainable forestry practices by only buying local wood.
- **Agriculture:** Big industrial farms are a huge source of air and

water pollution. Fertilizer and pesticide runoff into our streams and rivers cause severe environmental impacts while waste from industrial animal farms gets into our groundwater.

- **Local Economy:** By spending your money at locally owned stores instead of big chains you help keep the money circulating in your own community.

Ideas for teachers:

- Try to brainstorm a list of locally owned businesses and chain stores or non-locally owned businesses. Which kind are there more of? Where are they located? What are the price differences?
 - Pick one type of item bought by most everyone in the class and create two comparative stories; one life story of the item created and sold through industrial means and one life story of the item created and
- sold locally. For each, ask students questions like: Where were the raw materials that made it mined or grown? Where was it made? Where was it packaged? Where was it sold? Where will the item and its packaging go when you are done with it? What are the environmental and social effects of each stage of this story? Create a time line or storybook with illustrations at each stage!
 - Take a field trip to a local farmer's market. Assign each student to track down one type of produce available at the market. Have them report back on how it is grown, where it comes from, and what differences exist between the item found at the farmer's market and what they might get in a supermarket.

Source: Rainforest Action Network www.ran.org

Fundraiser:

Organize a

CHRISTMAS TREECYCLE PICK-UP FUNDRAISER!

Offer to take your friends and neighbors trees to one of the drop-off sites for a small fee and donate the proceeds earned to your organization.

Help the planet and raise money for your organization at the same time!

Treecycle

Everyone enjoys the holiday cheer brought on by a brightly wrapped present under a beautifully decorated Christmas tree, but shortly after December 25 the torn wrapping paper and browning tree are unceremoniously thrown to the curb.

Recycling your real Christmas Tree is environmentally friendly and is easy! First remove all lights, decorations and tree stand. Then take your tree to one of the following locations. Or if you live in the City of Wilmington, your tree will be picked up with your yard waste.

Treecycle Locations of NHC:

NHC Landfill (5210 Hwy 421 N), Myrtle Grove Middle School, Smith Creek Park (633 Shenandoah St) and Diversified Biomass (on Sunnydale Rd.).

Top 5 Ways to Reduce Your Holiday Waste

1. **Gift= Thought + Kindness:** Consider giving an “experience gift” like tickets to a concert or sporting event, gift certificates to a favorite restaurant or spa, you can even adopt an acre of rainforest or plant a tree in someone’s name! The possibilities are endless!
2. **Wrapping materials:** Buy recycled and recycle your used wrapping paper. You can reuse gift bags, or wrap a gift with fabric or used paper grocery bags— then decorated with old greeting cards or let the kids come up with their own unique design!
3. **Rechargeable Batteries:** 40% of all battery purchases occur during the holiday season. Buy rechargeable batteries to accompany your electronic gifts, and consider giving a battery charger as well. Rechargeable batteries reduce the amount of potentially harmful materials thrown away, and can save money in the long run.
4. **Treecycle!** (see article on page 2) Between 25-35 million live Christmas trees are sold in the U.S. every year! Recycle your Christmas tree!
5. **Holiday cards:** Americans send out more than 2.3 billion holiday cards. Send recycled content cards, holiday postcards or go paperless with e-cards this holiday season to those that have e-mail. For received cards, you can cut them up and use them as ornaments or gift tags, for example.



Recycled Paper Ornaments

Reuse greeting cards to create one of a kind Ornaments!

Supplies needed:

Greeting Cards, catalogs or any other heavy stock paper
Scissors, glue, pen, clips, round lid, ribbon or string, glitter (optional).

1. Trace and cut out 20 circles— using something round like a lid (approx. 2.5 inches) – from the front of a greeting card. You may want to use greeting cards of like colors and patterns. Or experiment with complementing and contrasting colors.
2. Trace the same size circle onto a piece of cardboard and draw an equilateral triangle that fits inside the circle. Cut out the triangle

pattern.

3. Using the triangle pattern draw a triangle on the back side of your greeting card circles.
4. Fold along the 3 triangle lines. Fold towards the front of the greeting card



5. You will need 5 circles for the base, 5 for the top of the ornament, and 10 for the middle band.
6. Start gluing the pieces together. Glue 5 pieces together by only putting

glue on two of the tabs for each of the 5 circles. Clamp each tab with clothes pins or binder clips. Repeat to create base.

7. With a round top and bottom, glue the remaining 10 pieces together to form a straight line.
8. Before closing the shape, add a piece of ribbon to the top piece to hang it with.
9. Begin gluing the strip of 10 around the top then glue on the bottom.
10. Once the glue is dry, your ornament is ready to hang!

Optional: Use glue on the edges to add glitter to your ornament!

For how-to pictures visit:
www.junkmailgems.com/DIY_Ornament.html



Did you know...

More than 17 billion catalogs were distributed in the United States in 1998 -- about sixty-four for every man, woman, and child.

—Environmental Defense Fund

Reduce the catalogs you receive by visiting:

www.catalogchoice.org



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Founded by Wilmington, NC parents, Sustainable Schools Initiative's mission is to foster Green Programs in North Carolina Schools. Partnering with Keep America Beautiful of New Hanover County, we are committed to helping new and established Environmental Committees and their efforts of starting and maintaining green programs in our local schools. It is our goal to unite school communities and give the needed tools and resources to accomplish the Sustainability Goals of each individual school. In doing so, we— along with everyone involved— will foster the development of generations of students becoming good stewards of the earth.

For information on Sustainable Programs in your school visit our web site

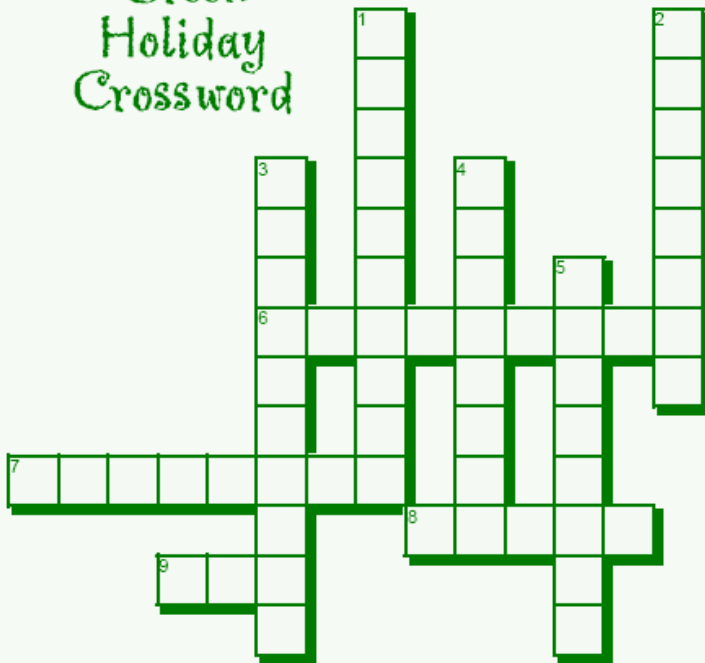
www.nhcgov.com/AgnAndDpt/KAB



For more holiday crafts visit the Recycle Guys at:

<http://www.p2pays.org/recycleguys/crafts/december.htm>

Green Holiday Crossword



DOWN

1. This paper is brown in color because it has not been turned white by chlorine and other toxic chemicals.
2. Millions of these are sent out for mail order shopping, but many are never used and end right into the trash.
3. Word that means taking several people to the same place in one vehicle, instead of everyone driving separately.
4. Avoid wrapping paper with this finish, because toxic chemicals are required to produce its shiny surface.
5. Alternative to a cut tree. Can be planted when the weather gets warmer in the Spring.

ACROSS

6. Different combinations of cardboard, paper and plastic that are made into containers for retail products. Often very wasteful and unnecessary.
7. This kind of paper uses 60% less energy to produce, because some of the pulp has already been used before.
8. Sent through the internet, saving paper, postage and transportation cost of regular greeting cards.
9. Making this much new paper uses up to 7,000 gallons of water and 20 large trees.

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For answers to the Holiday Crossword Puzzle visit our website!!