

December 2010



# Bellaire Recycles



## **BELLAIRE RECYCLES DAY – Residents come out to Promote A Cleaner, Greener, World**



On Nov 13 Bellaire held our second Bellaire Recycles Day. America Recycles Day is November 15 every year. It is the only nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging Americans to recycle and to buy recycled products.

This year at our own Recycles Day celebration, three organizations were on hand to collect items for reuse or recycling. They included Techs and Trainers collecting computers to provide training and computer skills to the disabled; the Bellaire Lions Club who collected eye glasses; and Faith Lutheran Church, which collected coats and blankets for the homeless of Houston/Harris County. All of the organizations were pleased with their collections including Techs and Trainers who collected much more computer equipment this year compared to last year. The Bellaire Lions Club reported collecting about 75-100 pairs of glasses. Faith Lutheran Church collected over 100 coats and jackets along with many blankets and sleeping bags.

Reusing items is a great way to care for others while taking caring of our planet. Way to go!

Nine companies showcasing green goods and services also attended Recycles Day. Shred-It provided a free shredding service for all who brought unwanted private documents to the event. Shred-It estimated they shredded 3000 pounds of paper all of which will be recycled! Educational displays were on hand for attendees including what is and is not accepted in the Bellaire Curbside Program, yard waste, and Reduce Reuse Recycle. A total of 15 recycle bins were sold at the event. But the fun did not stop there. There were also snacks and games for everyone. The kids enjoyed “Smash a Can”, face painting and more. Great giveaways and educational materials were available for attendees. The Bellaire Recycling Committee is grateful for the in-kind donations from our neighbors at Baskin Robbins (Bellaire), Whole Foods Market (Bellaire Blvd.), HEB (Bissonnet), Chick Fil A (Beechnut) and Epic Custom Homes.

When you put that all together this years event was another great Recycles Day success. We were able to collect many items to reuse or recycle and educate our community about recycling. Thanks to everyone who attended and special thanks to our Public Works department for all their great help.



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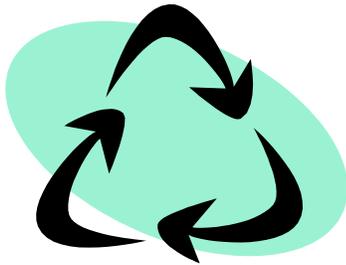
Do you put your Green Recycling Bin  
out each Wed?

If not, why?

If you don't have a bin or need another one-  
Bellaire residents can purchase additional recycling bins for \$10 each at the  
City Hall complex, 2nd floor, M-F during regular business hours.

**Fill those Bins!**

Way to go residents putting multiple bins out each week.



**A Look at the Numbers for Bellaire  
Curbside Recycling**

Currently about 54% of Bellaire residents recycle using their curbside bins each Wednesday.  
This is an increase from last years estimated 30%. We have some residents that put out up to 11  
bins!!



Have questions about where to recycle items not  
accepted by Bellaire's Curbside Program?  
Check out [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com)



**Texas Art Asylum**  
1230 Houston Ave.  
Houston, TX 77007  
(713) 224-5220  
[www.texasartasylum.com](http://www.texasartasylum.com)

The Texas Art Asylum is now open with opportunities to obtain and donate  
items for reuse. It is a combination thrift store, craft store, antique store and salvage yard with  
materials collected from individuals and businesses who recognize that many materials are suitable  
for reuse, repurposing or upcycling. The list of items the Asylum is now accepting is much to long  
to list! Go to <http://www.texasartasylum.com/donations.html> for a list of the many items they will  
accept. Keep them in mind the next time you have odd items you'd like to recycle.



## Save your Recyclable Items

Everyone seems to accumulate incredible amounts of cardboard, plastic and other recyclable items that come along with holiday gift giving. As much as you want to clear it all out on the first trash day after your holiday event, PLEASE sort out the recyclables (especially the cardboard boxes) and save them to put out on the next recycle Wednesday. This will be your gift to our environment! Happy Holidays to all.



## TRASHFormation—Bellaire Recycles Day Art Contest

The first ever ECO-Art contest sponsored by the Bellaire Cultural Arts Commission in connection with this years Recycles Day only had three entries, but they were all great! Norah Schroder, Wilson Schroder and Remy Chritah all entered very thoughtful and wonderful pieces of art made from items that would have otherwise gone in the trash. All entrants were awarded \$25 gift certificates to Hobby Lobby. The art is on display at City Hall at the Mayor's request!



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## Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

The Bellaire Recycling Committee is working with the City of Bellaire so that future newsletters can be distributed by email to reduce the amount of paper being used. Some paper copies will be available at City Hall and other City offices for those who do not use email. The newsletters will still be distributed three times per year around the time residents receive City provided garbage bags. The first Wednesday/Thursday of the month in the months of April, August and December. It is not known at this time when the first edition will be distributed by email.

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## **“GREENSCAPING” Your Lawn and Garden**

American homeowners spend hundreds of hours a year mowing, clipping, raking, and landscaping to keep our yards healthy and our property attractive. Our landscaping practices produce huge amounts of waste. So much in fact, that yard waste is second only to paper in the municipal solid waste stream. By following a few simple waste reduction practices, you cannot only improve your lawn and garden, but also the environment.

To save space in landfills, prevent waste, and reduce gases associated with climate change, many local governments have banned yard waste from their waste disposal programs. Yard waste also is a major expense for municipal waste programs, and one for which we individually pay. In addition, most waste—even organic waste—can take years to decompose in a landfill. In fact, researchers have unearthed whole vegetables and readable newspapers that have been buried in landfills for decades. Landfills can produce methane gas, which is a major contributor to climate change, and incinerated yard waste produces carbon dioxide, another gas associated with climate change. You can reduce the environmental impacts of landscaping your lawn and property by grasscycling. Properly managing your yard waste not only enhances your environment and but also saves you money.

### **Give an Inch, Save a Yard**

Grasscycling is a simple method for recycling your yard waste. If you mow your lawn so that grass is never more than 2 to 3 inches tall, leave the grass clippings where they fall and allow them to decompose. To foster healthy grass, do not cut more than one-third of the blade, and no more than one-inch total. The clippings return nutrients to your yard, and you do not have to spend time and money bagging or hauling them away. One study showed that, by not bagging clippings, mowing took about 38 percent less time.

Contrary to popular belief, grass clippings do not cause thatch. Thatch is actually a layer of organic material made up of grass roots, not mown grass blades. Grass roots contain lignin, a substance that decomposes very slowly and causes thatch. Grass clippings are about 90 percent water, so they decompose very quickly.

Mulching is another way to reuse so-called yard waste. Make mulch from chipped or shredded wood waste or dried leaves. Mulching involves spreading thin layers of dry organic waste around the base of plants to prevent weed growth, retain water, regulate soil temperature, and add nutrients back to the soil. Grass clippings also make excellent mulch.

### **Create Some Space and Compost Your Waste**

Many lawn and landscaping products can be reused or recycled to prevent waste. Composting is one recycling method that turns organic yard waste into a natural soil additive rich in nutrients. Finished compost can improve soil texture, increase the soil's ability to absorb air and water, suppress weed growth, and decrease erosion. In addition, making and using your own compost can save you money and reduce pollution by reducing the need for you to buy and use commercial soil additives.

You can create a compost pile in your backyard or indoors, depending on your available space. To compost in your backyard, choose a level, 3-by-5-foot square spot in an area of your yard near a water source, but away from direct sunlight and child play areas. Clear the spot of sod and grass and set up a compost bin. You can buy a bin from a commercial retailer or build your own out of wood scraps, chicken wire, or concrete blocks. Remember to leave enough space in your bin for air to circulate, and make sure one side is removable for easy tending.

You will need to turn your compost pile every few weeks with a pitchfork to distribute air and moisture. Make sure you also sprinkle water on your pile in dry weather. In most climates, you will have finished compost in 3 to 6 months, when the waste becomes a dark, crumbly material that is uniform in texture. You can then spread your compost in garden beds, under shrubs, or use it as potting soil.