



# Bellaire Recycling Newsletter

## August 2012

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### Bellaire's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival



The Bellaire Recycling Committee participated in this year's Bellaire 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade and Festival. Committee members walked in front of a decorated garbage truck in the parade. Two members sported recycle bin costumes made from cardboard boxes. At the festival, committee members answered questions and talked to residents about going green. The recycling booth at the festival gave everyone a chance to smash aluminum cans with a rubber mallet to prove going green is fun. Committee members also fielded questions regarding what is and is not

recyclable in Bellaire's curbside program.

### Bellaire Recycling Committee Welcomes a New Member

City Clerk Tracy Dutton swore in two returning members, Seth Miller and Dorene Delaloye-Schroder, and one "kinda" new member, Gayle Davies at the July Recycling Committee meeting. Gayle previously served on the committee from 2000 to 2006 and was instrumental in bringing curbside recycling to Bellaire. We are glad to have her back! Current members of the Recycling Committee include: Bill Stone—Chair, Seth Miller—Vice Chair, Jani Bedi—Secretary, Dorene Delaloye-Schroder—Newsletter, Louella Steller—Communications & Website coordinator, Gayle Davies and Brenda Cauthen—Events coordinators.

### A New Name for the Bellaire Recycling Committee

The Bellaire City Council reviewed and voted on recommendations made in the Sunset Review Committee's (SRC) November 2011 Report at its July 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The SRC was charged among other things, with reviewing existing boards to determine if they should continue or be eliminated, and whether any new boards should be created. In addition, they were charged to review each board's function and responsibilities to ensure the needs and desires of the citizens of Bellaire are met. The SRC recommended the name and scope of duties of the Recycling Committee be changed. After a proposed amendment to the SRC name recommendation and discussion among Council members, it was voted that the Bellaire Recycling Committee will be named **The Environmental and Sustainability Board**. See the complete Report and Recommendations made by the Sunset Review Committee on the City's website under Document Center. <http://ci.bellaire.tx.us/DocumentCenter/> then look for the Sunset Review Committee folder. The name change is not effective until an ordinance is drafted and voted on which should occur in August.

## Committee Seeks Volunteers

The Bellaire Recycling Committee is a very active group and is always in need of additional volunteers to help out with planning and preparing for events, especially Bellaire Recycles Fest, which will be held this year on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Volunteers are encouraged to attend the monthly Recycling Committee Meeting on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Public Works Building, 4337 Edith Street. For more information about becoming a volunteer, please email Brenda Cauthen, co-chair of 2012 Bellaire Recycles Fest, at [bcauthen@ci.bellaire.tx.us](mailto:bcauthen@ci.bellaire.tx.us).

## 2012 Bellaire Recycles Fest—Don't Miss Out!!



Planning for the biggest and best Recycles Fest ever is well underway! **The 2012 Fest will be held on November 3, 2012 from 9 am to 1 pm at 7008 S. Rice at Bellaire Town Square.** Co-chairs, Seth Miller and Brenda Cauthen, are working to compile lists of potential participants and sponsors, along with activities and other details. **CompuCycle** will be on hand again this year to collect electronics for responsible recycling.

Not only are businesses/organizations with an emphasis on green goods/services and activities invited to participate, this year the committee is inviting all Bellaire-area businesses to participate to emphasize the importance of “doing business locally”. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other Children’s organizations are also invited to participate. Develop an educational booth or hold a drive to collect old athletic shoes or children’s books—the possibilities are endless. Businesses/organizations interested in participating should contact either event co-chair: [smiller@ci.bellaire.tx.us](mailto:smiller@ci.bellaire.tx.us) or (713) 892-4873 or Brenda Cauthen at [bcauthen@ci.bellaire.tx.us](mailto:bcauthen@ci.bellaire.tx.us) or (281) 630-8088.

The Bellaire Cultural Arts Commission is sponsoring an eARTH art and photo contest again this year. Contact the Commission for more details on the contest. The Bellaire Building and Standards Commission Green Building Committee of the Whole will be a participant at the event to educate residents on their new website. <http://www.ci.bellaire.tx.us/index.aspx?NID=870>.

The event is being held the same day as The Friends of the Bellaire Library Fall Book Sale and the Bellaire AARP Crafts Fair. If you have old books you no longer want, contact the library at <http://www.ci.bellaire.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=663>. Someone else may be waiting to read what you no longer want!

Be sure to be on the lookout for more information about this year’s Fest. Check the City’s Public Works website and local newspapers for more details on activities and participants as they become available.

## Sponsorship Opportunities

In order to put together the BIGGEST and BEST RECYCLES FEST ever, we need sponsors!! Who doesn’t want to be a part of the biggest and best Bellaire Recycles Fest ever? There are a variety of sponsorship levels for companies and individual/families to choose from to show their commitment to our community and everything green.

That’s right.....this year we’ve added two new sponsorship levels!.....and they are just for individuals, families and children that want to help us put together an AWESOME event. All sponsorship monies will be used to cover costs of the event.

## **Sponsorship Opportunities for 2012 Bellaire Recycles Fest**

### **The Green Giant—\$1,000 and above**



Booth at Fest



Priority Acknowledgement in press releases submitted to community papers and electronic media



Priority Acknowledgement of company name:

- Signage at Fest
- Back of Fest t-shirts
- Fest advertising
- Special verbal acknowledgment of major sponsorship during Fest
- Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

### **The Green Machine—\$500-\$999**



Booth at Fest



Acknowledgment of company name:

- Signage at Fest
- Back of Fest t-shirts
- Special verbal acknowledgment of major sponsorship during Fest
- Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

### **On the Green—\$250-\$499**



Booth at Fest



Acknowledgment of company name:

- Signage at Fest
- Back of Fest t-shirts
- Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

### **Thinking Green—\$100-\$249**



Booth at Fest



Acknowledgment of company name on signage at Fest & in Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

### **In-Kind Sponsorships**



In-kind sponsorships are greatly appreciated! Please contact an event co-chair with details on how you can help (see contact information below).

### **Green Around the Edges (for individual adults & families only) \* — \$50-\$249**



Button recognizing sponsorship



Acknowledgement of individual or family name on signage at Fest & inclusion in Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

### **Up and Coming Green (for children ages 0-17 yrs only) \* — \$5-\$25**



Button recognizing sponsorship



Acknowledgement of individual on signage at Fest & in Bellaire Recycling Committee Newsletter

**\* These sponsorship levels are limited to individuals, families and children ONLY (there are no company sponsorships at these levels)**

**Questions?** Contact Event co-chairs: Seth Miller at [smiller@ci.bellaire.tx.us](mailto:smiller@ci.bellaire.tx.us) or Brenda Cauthen at [bcauthen@ci.bellaire.tx.us](mailto:bcauthen@ci.bellaire.tx.us) or 281-630-8088.

Checks should be made payable to: The City of Bellaire with "Recycles Fest" on the memo line.  
Mail checks to: Bellaire Recycling Committee, c/o Brenda Cauthen, 5409 Valerie St., Bellaire, TX 77401

## Composting- Another Way to Reduce Waste

We live in a “throw away” society. It’s considered easy to get rid of things we regard as useless or unhealthy by wrapping it up and placing it in the garbage can. Nationwide, yard materials account for nearly 20% of all garbage generated each year (Environmental Protection Agency).



Once this “useless” material is taken away to a landfill, it really becomes useless. Enclosed in an oxygen-limited environment, garbage degrades very slowly. Landfills must be monitored to make sure gases such as methane do not build up inside, and to make sure underground water does not become contaminated from landfill liquids. In addition, many landfills are nearing their maximum capacity, and in the near future will need to be closed.

This throw-away attitude is also prevalent with yard materials. Grass is cut, raked, bagged, and put out at the curb. Leaves are raked and bagged as well. Many times a special charge will be made to pick up yard materials. Nutrients present in the materials are removed from the yard. These materials must be taken to landscape composting facilities, where they are composted, screened, and possibly sold back to homeowners!

It’s very easy to turn this into a resource that can be reapplied to a yard. Composting, a biological process that decomposes organic material under aerobic (oxygen required) conditions, is becoming more popular to homeowners. Neighbors see neighbors composting leaves, grass, and some food materials, ask questions, and start making compost themselves. They like the idea of turning a “waste” into something that can be reapplied to the landscape.

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### Composting Benefits



Composting yard materials has many landscape benefits. Nutrients that otherwise are removed when trimmings are bagged can be placed back into the nutrient cycle, lessening the need for fertilizers. When added to the soil, the nutrients present in compost are released slowly, so they are less likely to leach out of the root zone, as compared to regular fertilizer. Soil structure is improved by the addition of organic matter. Organic matter, such as that present in compost, aids in creating a structure that allows good water retention and root penetration. This is accomplished by the way organic matter attaches to soil particles.

As yard materials go through the composting process, there is an increase in temperature within the compost pile. High temperatures kill most disease pathogens present. Most weed seeds and pesticides are destroyed as well because of the high temperature.

Materials that may be acidic when added to a compost pile will become almost neutral in pH when the composting process is complete. Soils that are high or low in pH may make some nutrients less available for plant use, or may let plants take in too much. When added to soil that is acidic or alkaline, compost acts as a buffer against high or low pH.

Earthworms thrive in soil amended with compost. Tunnels created by earthworms increases drainage, and the casts they leave behind are a great nutrient supply for plants.



Source: University of Illinois

## Who Should Compost

In this day and age, everyone who produces waste (and we all do) should be composting. There is no excuse.

Composting is not just about making a pretty nutrient rich soil for your garden. It is about reducing the waste in our landfills (it does not break down there). The average user, if diligent, can save at least 10 pounds of waste a week from going to a landfill.

## The Tips

There are so many things you can do to make your compost experience better for you and your family as well as produce a luscious end result. Here are ten important tips every composter should incorporate into their daily lives. In no particular order:

1. **Aerate.** Your compost needs oxygen if it is going to break down the materials you add. If it is a tumbler, turn it. If it is static then get a stick/pole/shovel and get in there and move it around.
2. **Save the worms.** If you find a worm while you're gardening carefully relocate it to your compost bin. And it will happily work on breaking down your wastes. The more help you have the better!
3. **Go Big.** Container wise that is. Bigger is better when composting but smaller is better than nothing at all.
4. **Get cracking!** Rinse and break up your egg shells before adding them to your compost pile. This gives .

them a head start and you will be less likely to find undigested shell later when you go to use your compost.

5. **Add fluid to your compost.** You don't want it too wet but you do not want it too dry either. Water-downed leftover fruit juices are a great treat for your compost instead of pouring them down the drain.

6. **Sunshine is best!** Composters work quicker in sunny locations but if you have to, partial sun will work too (it will just take longer).

7. **Cover it up.** Keep a clear bag of leaves next to the composter so you always have brown material to cover new waste additions. This will also help keep the fly population down in the summer.

8. **Double duty.** If you have the room, two composters are better than one. While you are busy filling one composter the second one can be busy working in the sun. When it's time to empty one they can switch positions and start all over again.

9. **Cupboard list.** Keep a list posted on the inside of your cupboard door so you can see at a glance what can and cannot be composted so there is no confusion. <http://www.m-e-wood.com/CompostPoster.pdf>

10. **Kitchen Aid.** You're more likely to compost if you don't have to run out to the composter a few times a day. Keep a lidded container in your kitchen for convenience and empty a few times a week.

## It All Starts in the Kitchen

### Making it easier...

One of the best items to ever improve my dedication to composting was getting a kitchen waste collector. This way I wasn't having to run out to the composter every time I was working in the kitchen.

They are becoming more and more decorative to suit decor but they are small enough to be tucked under the counter.

Source: <http://www.squidoo.com/compostingbasics>

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## Trash Talk

*Where can I get more recycle bins? How much do they cost?*

Additional bins may be purchased for \$10 at City Hall, 7008 S. Rice, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor utilities window, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm or at Bellaire Recycles Fest or other events that the Recycling Committee has a booth at.

*How clean do containers need to be before I toss them into the recycling bin?*

That dried-on milk or bit of peanut butter might compel you to run your recyclables through the dishwasher before tossing them in the bin. But a good rinse is good enough; a little residue is fine. Just try to remove all food bits.

*Do I need to take the labels off jars and cans?*

No need to waste water and energy; labels will be burned off during the recycling process.

*I mow my own yard and do not want to leave grass clippings on the grass. Where can I take my yard clippings to be recycled?*

Grass clippings and leaves may be dropped off at Living Earth, which has several locations throughout the Houston area. There is no charge to drop off such items. Note, though, that there might be a charge for tree branches, limbs, and stumps that require more work to break down. Check with Living Earth for more information, locations, and hours.

*My neighbor told me that yard maintenance companies are not to leave bagged grass clippings in Bellaire. Is this true?*

Yes, garbage generated by commercial lawn maintenance companies, tree-trimming companies, handy-men or anyone else not considered the occupant must be hauled away by the service provider. It is up to residents to notify service providers of this requirement and ensure it is met. See Code of Ordinances, Chpt 16, Solid Waste, Section 16-7.

<http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=13798>

*What's the best way to put plastic bags into our recycling bin?*

The most effective way to recycle plastic bags is to put several bags within one plastic bag. Individual bags sometimes get caught in the equipment that sorts the recycling which causes it to break down.

*How do I find out what to do with hard-to-recycle items?*

A surprisingly wide variety of products are recycled by various local organizations. Computers, CDs, cell phones, cooking oil, foam peanuts, light bulbs, batteries and even clothing to name just a few of the items you can recycle with very little effort by taking them to a drop-off center instead of throwing them away. For drop-off centers in your area, visit [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org) or search the internet for the Westpark Recycling Center you can see a large list of accepted items <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/westpark.html> or the South Post Oak Recycling Center.

*I have big blocks of Styrofoam and don't know where to take them to be recycled. Do you know of any place I can take them?*

The Westpark Recycling Center now accepts Styrofoam blocks (not cups, plates, packing peanuts). The Center is located at 5900 Westpark (between Chimney Rock and Renwick) and offers convenient drive through service.

*I have too many recyclables to fit in my bin, so I put what won't fit in a black, plastic garbage bag. Public works employees never pick up the garbage bag sitting right next to my recycle bin. Why is that?*

The Public Works employees have no way of knowing what is inside a black, plastic garbage bag. Rather than risk contaminating a whole truck of recyclables with garbage, the workers are instructed NOT to pick up black garbage bags on recycle Wednesdays.

Other alternatives include (1) purchase more bins for \$10 each at City Hall, 7008 S. Rice, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor utilities window, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm or at Bellaire Recycles Fest or other events that the Recycling Committee has a booth at; or (2) use clear plastic bags so workers can see what is in the bag or (3) place non-glass recyclables in cardboard boxes and place next to your bin.

*Is it ok for my recyclables to get wet?*

Yes, it is ok if they get wet. Rain does not damage or contaminate what is in your recycle bin.

*What happens to the brush and tree limbs picked up by the City?*

Tree limbs and brush are taken to the landfill where it is turned into mulch.

*My recycle bin has disappeared. Can I get a replacement?*

The City only provides one recycle bin per residence free of charge. You may purchase a replacement for \$10 at City Hall, 7008 S. Rice, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor utilities window, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm or at Bellaire Recycles Fest or other events that the Recycling Committee has a booth at. In addition, you can spray paint your address on your bin to minimize the likelihood of someone taking it.

Have a question you'd like answered? Send it to Dorene Delaloye-Schroder at [ddelaloye@ci.bellaire.tx.us](mailto:ddelaloye@ci.bellaire.tx.us).



## New TV Recycling Rules in Effect

If you buy a new TV after July 1, retailers are required to: 1) Provide you with information about the legal disposal and recycling options for your television; and 2) Make sure the television is labeled with the manufacturers brand. Find more information about television recycling by visiting [TexasRecyclesTVs.org](http://TexasRecyclesTVs.org) or calling 512-239-3143.

Find information about the computer equipment recycling program at [TexasRecyclesComputers.org](http://TexasRecyclesComputers.org).

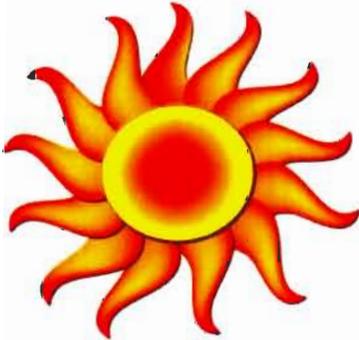
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## Looking for something for the kids to do?

Check out Planet Protectors Club. As a Planet Protector, the mission is to improve the world around you by making less trash. Planet Protectors also help other people learn to reduce, reuse, and recycle. At the EPA's website: <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/education/kids/planetprotectors/index.htm>

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## It's Hot Out There—Watch out for our Trash Collectors



It's summer in the Houston area and temperatures are rising! Our trash/recycle collectors not only are out in the extreme heat daily for 8-10 hours or even more, they are jumping on and off the back of the truck and picking up and throwing your garbage bags into the back of the truck. This is very strenuous work. Employees look out for each other and try to notice whether fellow co-workers are showing signs of heat exhaustion. Please be extra careful when driving near and around the garbage trucks. Heat exhaustion can come on quick and workers may not see or be aware of an approaching car. Safety comes first--employees have to take frequent breaks to cool off in this weather so if your trash/recycling is picked up a little later than normal, please be patient and understanding.