

IT'S EASY BEING GREEN!

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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE TASK FORCE

www.greenhenrico.com

ECTF Introduction

The Environmental Compliance Task Force (ECTF) is a multi-departmental committee whose focus is to promote environmental stewardship and to address and prevent environmental violations county-wide. Currently, the ECTF is embarking on a Go Green educational effort for Henrico County employees. Please enjoy our first newsletter, *It's Easy Being Green*, featuring articles and tips on how to Go Green both at work and at home. Visit our website at www.GreenHenrico.com

County Employee Feature

Each issue of *It's Easy Being Green* will include a featured County employee who is doing something at home or work to conserve natural resources. This issue's highlighted employee is **Tyrone Watkins** of the Department of Public Utilities.

Tyrone recently switched from a gas powered lawn mower to a manual operated mower. The manual mower was attractive to Tyrone because it eliminates the need to buy gasoline and does not contribute to air pollution. Tyrone also liked the fact that a manual mower provides a reason to exercise. In addition, Tyrone has found that it is easier to "grass cycle" (leaving grass clippings on the lawn so they can return nutrients to the soil) with his manual mower. Unlike his old gas-powered mower his manual mower does not leave behind big clumps of grass that turn brown and look unattractive. Congratulations, Tyrone, on your green efforts!

If you would like to nominate a fellow employee to be featured in an upcoming issue of "It's Easy Being Green", please e-mail John Fowler at fow@co.henrico.va.us.



Green Savers

Here are just a few tip that you can do to save a little money this fall.

Start Composting this fall

-Estimated saving, 25% reductions in trash disposal, and you can use it in the spring in flower beds and gardens.

www.composting101.com



Carpool one day a week

-Saves 20% on gas by riding to work with a co-worker one day a week

Eat more fruits and veggies

-One meatless meal per week saves 20% on your grocery bill .

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meatless_Monday

Make your own cleaning supplies

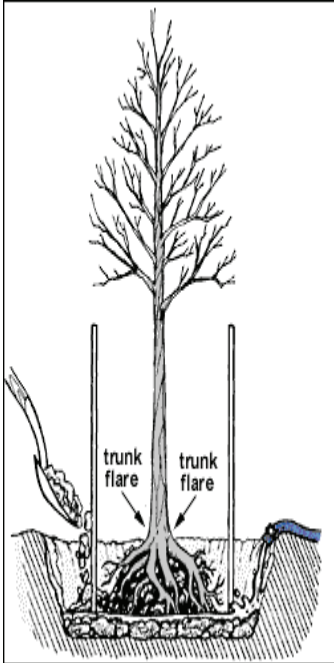
-Can save over a \$100 a year or more.

www.aboutmyplanet.com/daily-green-tips/cleaning-products/

Air dry vs. Electric dryer

-savings depends on number of loads, up to 10% on your power bill

Save Energy with Trees



The simple act of planting a tree can result in energy savings. Planting the right tree in the right place can provide shade, cool air, beauty, and privacy.

Deciduous trees save energy in summer by shading houses, paved areas, and air conditioners. Water vapor exiting the surface of the leaves also directly cools the surrounding air. After the leaves have dropped in the fall, sunlight can shine through the bare branches and provide warmth during winter.

Plant deciduous trees so that they will shade east-facing walls and windows from 7 to 11 a.m., and west-facing surfaces from 3 to 7 p.m. during June, July, and August. Trees with mature heights of at least 25 feet should be planted 10 to 20 feet east and west of the house.

Trees planted to the southeast, south, or southwest will only shade a building in the summer if they extend over the roof.

Air conditioners should also be shaded from mid-morning through evening. Prune branches to allow at least several feet of clearance around the unit to encourage air flow. Shrubs should not be planted near the air conditioner or they will reduce air flow and cooling efficiency.

Avoid creating future problems when planting trees. A four-foot tall, two-foot wide tree might have a mature height and width of 60 feet and 30 feet, respectively. Plant far enough away from sidewalks, driveways, and buildings so the canopy has room to develop, and roots are less likely to penetrate your foundation.

Consider overhead power lines; make sure the tree's mature height will not interfere.

Proper planting procedures are critical to the long-term health of the tree. More than half of the trees currently going into our landscapes are being planted too deeply, greatly shortening their lives. Locate the top-most root in the root ball -- you may have to excavate soil off the top of the ball -- and dig the planting hole no deeper than the distance from this point to the bottom of the root ball. When a tree has been planted properly, the trunk flare is visible above the soil line and any mulch placed on top.

Contact the Henrico Extension Office at 501-5160 for more information about tree selection and planting or visit <http://www.ext.vt.edu>.

**Be a visionary,
plant a tree!**

Curbside Corner

Did you know that every single-family home in Henrico County is eligible to participate in the curbside recycling program? If you are a resident of Richmond, Chesterfield, or another of the 13 participating localities of the Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA), you might be eligible to participate in the curbside program as well.

The curbside program is considered a single stream program because customers do not have to sort any items. All of the sorting is done at the Materials Recovery Facility in Chester.

If you would like to begin recycling at your curbside, please call CVWMA at 804-340-0900 or visit www.cvwma.com.

Items you can recycle:

- Newspaper
- Cardboard
- Magazines & Catalogs
- Mixed Paper
- Phone Books
- Cans and Foil
- Plastic Bottles with #1 or #2
- Glass Jars and Bottles



Did You Know?

You Can Make Fall Leaves Green Again

As fall approaches, everyone looks forward to the display of color presented by our deciduous trees. A sea of reds, oranges, and golds waves in the wind, beckoning us to take a quiet hike through nearby forest paths. The quietness only broken by those brisk fall breezes that rustles through those gorgeous leaves.

Then a few weeks pass. And that beautiful sea of color has turned brown and has fallen to the ground, trying to smother that grass you have lovingly been tending all year. You think to yourself, “those leaves have got to go”; their splendor has passed. So you gather the family and have a raking party. Depending on the locality in which you live, you prepare your fallen bounty to

be transported to either a local landfill or a yard waste recycling facility where local workers turn it into mulch or compost.

Those transportation costs are borne by you, whether you must transport them yourself or pay for the locality to pick them up.

(continued on back)



Recognizing Illegal Discharges

While there are few people who intentionally hurt the environment, every day citizens unintentionally allow or contribute to illegal discharges here in the County.

Here are some things to look for when you are in the field with regards to our waterways and storm water conveyance system:

Storm Water Inlets

- Odors present?
- Discoloration of pavement or concrete?
- Liquid running into the inlet when it's not raining?
- Is the inlet stopped up and not flowing?

Outfalls/Streams

- Odors present?
- Is there an oily sheen on the water?
- Are there solids floating on the surface?
- Opaque water

If you find any of the above, please contact John Fowler @ 501-7319 or fow@co.henrico.va.us

“No one wants to hurt the environment, but we all do things that contribute to the degradation of our waterways.”

How You Can Go Green at Work

- Optimize your computer settings and **turn your monitor off** when away from the desk
- Digitize! The greenest paper is no paper at all.
- Use greener office supplies. From recycled paper and envelopes to pens and pencils, all types of office supplies are available using eco-friendly materials.
- Buy your office supplies in bulk. It saves on shipping and packaging waste is minimized.
- Bring your own drink cup to work. By using a cup that is reusable instead of disposable, you can reduce waste around the office.
- Bring your lunch in a reusable container instead of a brown bag that you throw away.

Did You Know? (Continued...)

Is there a better and “greener” way?

We think yes! Backyard leaf composting is a better way to save you both time and money. Instead of bagging and/or paying for the leaves to be taken away from your property, pick an out-of-way area in your backyard and start a leaf pile. Since the leaves will pack down over the course of the next year, make sure you pick a spot where drainage across your lot or your neighbor's lot will **not** be impeded. While not necessary, you can contain the pile within a bin or other enclosure (i.e., chicken wire and a couple of wooden stakes). Add a little water now and then and turn the pile over about once a month during the warm summer months.

In a little less than a year, what you get is a rich organic crumbly soil amendment. Adding this composted material to your flower beds and other planting beds will help your soil hold more

water during the droughty summer months, and make them easier to weed and cultivate.

You didn't have to pay to transport your fallen bounty offsite and you didn't have to pay to get soil amendments that improve your landscape plantings. That's a win-win!

NOT do with your fallen leaves:

DO NOT pile your fallen leaves in drainageways or stormwater inlets for the next storm to carry downstream. Many streams can be clogged by the overabundance of leaves placed in them by residents. This practice may not result in bad things happening on your property but does negatively affect your downstream neighbors. It's not neighborly and bad for our community's streams.

What you should absolutely

