







WINTER/SPRING







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A REPORT ON MANAGING SOLID WASTE IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

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*This newsletter is sent to you by the Hillsborough County Public Utilities Department, Solid Waste Management Division as part of its on-going Recycling and Waste Reduction Public Education and Awareness Program*

This newsletter is printed with soy based inks on recycled paper.



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"Working locally to effect change globally"

# THE RECYCLING PLANET



WINTER/SPRING 2011

A REPORT ON MANAGING SOLID WASTE IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

## SINKHOLE AT SOUTHEAST COUNTY LANDFILL

On Dec. 14, 2010, a sinkhole formed at the Southeast County Landfill. This event is unprecedented at this facility, which is located in a remote area on County Road 672. Hillsborough County conducted extensive research before choosing this location for the landfill. These studies showed geologic conditions in this area to be extremely stable and not prone to sinkholes.

When the sinkhole formed, the Hillsborough County Public Utilities Department acted swiftly to notify environmental agencies, create a highly-skilled project team, and implement a plan to monitor groundwater and surface water quality. Detailed plans are guiding our efforts to assess and mitigate any potential impact to the environment, stabilize the sinkhole, repair the clay liner and restore the damaged slope.

A sinkhole in a landfill is unusual, and the situation will take some time to resolve. It is imperative that the remediation work proceed with great care and the right equipment and expertise. Every effort is being



made to minimize any further impacts to the environment, ensure the safety of the workers and not impede the daily operations of the landfill. We are moving forward as quickly as possible, given the many complex factors involved. ●

To follow our progress, visit

[www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/sinkhole.cfm](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/sinkhole.cfm).

# WHAT'S NEW? DEPARTMENT NAME CHANGE

**T**he Solid Waste Management Department is now called the Solid Waste Management Division.

Why a division? It's part of a major restructuring of Hillsborough County government by County Administrator Mike Merrill. Rather than using traditional budget-cutting measures to make up for declining property tax revenues and customer fees, Merrill believes it's time to rebalance the organization and the way services are delivered.

Across County government, programs are being evaluated, functions are being consolidated, better ways of providing services and reducing costs are being identified, and new revenue sources are being explored.

In the new structure, the Solid Waste Management Division is combined with the Water Resource Division under the new Public Utilities Department.

For our customers, the transition is seamless and won't impact how your services are delivered, billed or accessed.

For information about Solid Waste Management programs, services, facility locations, holiday collection schedules and more, you may continue to visit [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste), or call (813) 272-5680. ●

## SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT

### What is this discount?

A discount of 25 percent on the Solid Waste Disposal Assessment portion on a resident's annual property tax bill.

### Who qualifies for this discount?

Residents of unincorporated Hillsborough County who:

- are 65 years or older, and
- own and live in a residence that shows a charge for Solid Waste Disposal on their annual property tax bills.

### How would I know if I already receive this discount?

You are receiving the discount if the Solid Waste Disposal Assessment on your property tax bill is:

- \$72.11 for single family homes
- \$54.08 for condominiums.

If you previously applied for the discount, you **DO NOT NEED TO APPLY AGAIN** unless you moved to another address that you own.

### How can I get the discount?

Applications may be printed from <http://hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/resources/publications/seniordiscount.pdf>, or may be requested by calling the Solid Waste Management Division at (813) 272-5680.

**For residents to receive the discount for 2012, completed applications must reach the Solid Waste Management Division by Aug. 1, 2011. ●**

## Watering Restrictions Reminder

**D**id you know that lawn watering restrictions apply to nearly all residents of Hillsborough County - including those who get their water from a private well?

Water restrictions are in effect year-round, and can change depending on weather conditions and supply issues. It's important to check the rules regularly in order to avoid receiving a citation.

The restrictions apply even to residents who are not customers of a public utility like Hillsborough County's Water Resource Division - and most water sources. That includes private wells, and ponds or lakes that are used as alternate irrigation supplies.

Reclaimed water users are exempt from the restrictions, although these customers are asked to use only what they need. ●

For complete information, including the rules for watering new sod and plantings, and watering-in of pesticides and fertilizer, visit [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/water](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/water), call (813) 275-7094 for a recorded message, or call the Water Conservation Team at (813) 272-5977, ext. 43991, during regular business hours.

# HOW TO RECYCLE CURBSIDE

Place these materials in the  
**GREEN BIN**



- **Plastic Bottles and Jugs** with necks or screw-on caps (#s 1 & 2 only) - check bottoms of containers for numbers
- **Glass Bottles and Jars** all colors - remove all caps and lids and place them in trash
- **Aluminum and Steel (Tin) Food and Beverage Cans**

Labels on cans and bottles do not have to be removed

**NO**

**Aluminum foil or foil containers, plastic or metal hangers, household batteries, polystyrene (Styrofoam), plastic bags**

Place these materials in the  
**BLUE BIN**

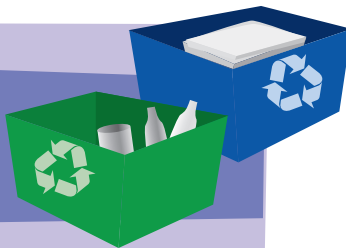


- **Newspaper & Newspaper Inserts** – Remove plastic bags
- **Magazines, Catalogs & Telephone Books**
- **Unwanted Mail & Envelopes** – Remove any plastic wrapping and non-paper items
- **Office Paper** - Contain shredded paper in brown paper bags before placing in bin
- **Corrugated Cardboard** – Flatten and cut to a maximum of 3 feet square
- **Paperboard** – Thin cardboard like cereal boxes, shoe boxes, soda and beer cartons
- **Paper Bags**

**NO**

**Pizza boxes, frozen food boxes, milk or juice cartons**

## HOW TO GET RECYCLING BINS



Two recycling bins per household are provided to residents who:

- live in unincorporated Hillsborough County, and
- receive curbside solid waste collection services, and
- pay an annual solid waste collection assessment on their property tax bills.

To request recycling bins, you may call the Solid Waste Management Division at (813) 272-5680 or go to [www.hillsboroughrecycles.org](http://www.hillsboroughrecycles.org).



**Litter destroys the beauty of a community.**

**Studies suggest that neighborhoods that are heavily littered experience more vandalism and other crimes than areas without litter.**

# RECYCLING FAQs

## 1. Which plastics are accepted?

Hillsborough County collects only #1 and #2 plastic bottles for recycling. Check the bottom of the container for the number inside the recycling symbol. If the plastic container is labeled with a #1 or a #2 symbol and it has a neck, please place it in your green recycling bin. Some common examples include soda bottles, water bottles, milk jugs, shampoo bottles and detergent bottles.

Tubs, trays and bags and other items made of #1 or #2 plastic should not be placed in the recycling bin. Even though many of these items have the same number inside their recycling symbols, they are chemically different than bottles and are not collected in our recycling program.

## 2. What should I do with bottle caps?

Before tossing your plastic bottle into the recycling bin, be sure to remove the cap and place it in your household garbage. The lids to plastic bottles are made of different grades of plastic than the bottle itself. These grades of plastic are not accepted at this time, and mixing lids with plastic bottles reduces the value of the plastic.

## 3. Do I need to rinse containers before putting them in the recycling bin?

A quick rinse is preferred. A little residue at the top of a bottle or the bottom of a can is no problem.

## 4. Do I need to remove the labels from jars and cans?

No. There is no need to remove labels.

## 5. Can I recycle envelopes with plastic windows? What about staples, spiral notebooks, glossy advertisements and post-it notes?

Yes, all of these items are fine to toss into your blue recycling bin. In the recycling process, all paper is converted to pulp and non-fiber material like metal is strained out. So don't waste your time removing staples, spiral bindings or plastic windows.

## 6. Can I recycle books?

Hardcover books cannot be recycled if the cover is in place. Consider donating these kinds of books if they are still in good condition. Or, you may remove the cover and binding and place just the paper pages in your blue bin. Paperback books can be recycled as is. You may place them in the recycling bin.

## 7. Why do I have to flatten cardboard?

Recycling trucks are not "compactors" and cannot crush cardboard boxes. For more efficient collection, cardboard must be flattened and cut if necessary so that the pieces are no larger than 3 feet square. If you do not prepare it this way, the hauler may leave it at the curb.

## 8. Why can't I recycle pizza boxes?

If the pizza boxes were totally clean, they would be recyclable as corrugated cardboard. It is the grease from the pizza that is the problem. So, as a precaution, we request that you place pizza boxes in the garbage.



# HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS AND ELECTRONICS COLLECTIONS



Hillsborough County residents are encouraged to safely dispose of household chemicals and electronics by taking them to the collection events scheduled on the first three Saturdays of each month at the following locations:

- **1st Saturday - Northwest County**  
9805 Sheldon Road, Tampa FL 33635
- **2nd Saturday - South County - Powell Road,**  
¼ mile North of Big Bend Rd. & US Hwy. 41 South
- **3rd Saturday - Northeast County - Hillsborough Heights**  
**Community Collection Center, 6209 County Road 579,**  
**Seffner FL 33584 [Exit 10 from I-4, go ¼ mile North on CR579]**

Insecticides, pool chemicals, fertilizers, motor oil, gasoline, mercury thermometers, paint, ammunition, TVs and computers are some of the items accepted at these collections. For more information, please go to [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/resources/publications](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/resources/publications) or call the Solid Waste Management Division at (813) 272-5680.

In the event of operational problems or for the safety of the public and employees, the collections may be suspended from time to time.

**NO COMMERCIAL OR BUSINESS GENERATED MATERIALS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

**Electronics may also be dropped off at any of the County's Community Collection Centers listed below from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday.**

- **East County/Alderman Ford**  
9402 State Road 39, Lithia  
Phone: (813) 757-3820
- **Northeast County/Hillsborough Heights**  
6209 County Road 579, Seffner  
Phone: (813) 744-5533
- **Northwest County**  
8001 W. Linebaugh Ave., Tampa  
Phone: (813) 264-3816
- **South County**  
13000 U.S. Hwy. 41, Gibsonton  
Phone: (813) 671-7611

## COMPOSTING IN ACTION

The Hillsborough County Extension Service offers composting workshops for adult county residents at the Extension office in Seffner. These workshops also are offered at several public libraries throughout the county, to garden clubs, church groups and civic organizations.

By attending this workshop, participants learn how to turn kitchen and yard waste into nutrient-rich compost and receive one free compost bin and thermometer per household. The training covers both hot and cold composting methods, explains what can and cannot be composted, presents uses for unfinished

and finished compost, and includes a tour of the Extension Service's compost and mulch demonstration areas. At this time, the workshops are free of charge for Hillsborough County residents.

Surveys of 2009 workshop attendees revealed that 67 percent of them are using the compost bin provided at the workshop. What people like most about composting is how it has helped them increase their personal contribution to conservation, reducing kitchen/yard waste, increasing the quality of their garden soil and improving the quality of their overall landscape. The average length of time it took to produce finished compost was three to six months. Finished compost is being used for soil amendments, potting mixes and mulch. ●

## COMPOSTING, WATER-WISE & RAIN BARREL WORKSHOPS

The following workshops are held for Hillsborough County residents at:

Hillsborough County Extension Service  
5339 County Road 579 in Seffner.

### Dates

March 12, 2011  
April 9, 2011  
May 7, 2011  
June 4, 2011  
July 9, 2011  
August 6, 2011  
September 10, 2011  
October 1, 2011  
November 5, 2011

- Compost Happens - 8:30-9:30 a.m.
- Water-Wise, micro-irrigation & landscape tips - 9:30-10:30 a.m.
- Rain Barrels - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Free, one-time attendance for Hillsborough County residents.

Register at:

<http://hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/HomeGardening/event-calendar.html>

