

WASTELINE



November 2007
City of Omaha
Mike Fahey, Mayor

Recycling, Garbage and Yardwaste Information for the Citizens of Omaha, Nebraska
Public Works Department Robert G. Stubbe, P.E., Director Environmental Quality Division



Before the Snow Falls



Moving garbage and recycling containers to the curb or approved alley for collection can be difficult for Omaha residents who are elderly or have a medical condition limiting their mobility. Winter weather conditions can increase the difficulty they face. For these Omahans a service where solid waste is collected from a special location is offered.

This service allows garbage, recyclables, and yardwaste to be collected from a designated special location that the citizen chooses.

To qualify for this service all members of the household must be

either 70-years old or older, or have a doctor-verified medical condition that prevents them from being able to move their containers to the curb or alley for collection.

Please note that households on the special collection service must have the street address clearly displayed, and in the winter a path must be scooped through heavy snow to the special collection location.

It takes several weeks to get this service set up, so apply now. To begin the application process call 444-5238 from 8AM to 6PM weekdays. **!**

Prepare for Christmas

Christmas trees are not collected as part of the garbage collection service. Instead, Omaha offers Christmas tree drop-off sites so that the trees can be used for a beneficial use.

There will be five sites in Omaha this year. This includes the site that Elkhorn has operated in the past.

Watch for the next issue of WASTELINE for more Christmas tree drop-off site information.

Plan now on how you will dispose of your Christmas tree. Here are three easy options:

- ▶ take your tree to one of the drop-off sites the same way you brought the tree home;
- ▶ place your tree securely in your yard and wait for yardwaste collection to resume the week of April 7, 2008;
- ▶ consider an artificial tree which can be used for many years. **!**



10 Tips for Greener Gift-Giving

As the holiday season approaches, you may feel that you've entered the realm of science-fiction. News reports will talk about "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday," and you may begin to wonder if aliens are due on the planet. Never fear, these news reports are talking about shopping, not space invasions!

Black Friday, so dubbed because it helps put retailers "in the black" for the year, is the day after Thanksgiving. Often referred to as the busiest shopping day of the year, the Friday after Thanksgiving finds shoppers at stores before sunrise on a spending spree. Black Friday is no longer a one-day affair, with many of the special deals continuing on Saturday and Sunday to create "Black Friday Weekend." According to the National Retail Federation, 140 million shoppers hit the stores for Black Friday weekend 2006, doling out an average of \$360.15 each.

Cyber Monday comes the day after Black Friday weekend as kids head

back to school and adults head back to work. As adults log onto the Internet Monday morning, the carts at online retailers begin to fill up. Last year, 60.7 million Americans planned to shop online on Cyber Monday, a day which features sales and specials, as well as offers for free or reduced shipping. Cyber Monday isn't the biggest Internet shopping day of the holiday season, but it garners the most attention.

During 2006, the typical gift giver spent \$2,643 on gifts and \$78 on cards, wrapping paper, and accessories. These included gifts for holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries, as well as thank-you gifts to hosts, house-warming presents, friendship tokens, travel souvenirs given to others, and more. Gift shopping constitutes about 10 percent of all consumer retail purchases.

Source: "The Gifting Report 2007," Unity Marketing

The reason for all the attention? Last year, Americans spent \$457.4 billion (yes, billion!) on the winter holidays. This total included gifts, cards and stationery, wrapping paper and ribbon, food and beverages, party supplies, indoor and outdoor decorations, and more. Of this total, about \$1,200 per household was spent on holiday gifts.

In the weeks leading up to this frenzied shopping season, take some time to reflect on the holiday season you'd really like to have. Remember last year when you spent January and February paying off credit cards? How about the lines at Customer Service returning what you didn't want? Or what about the two



weeks when all of the opened presents sat in the dining room because you had nowhere to put them? Remember trying to figure out what to do with your old stuff that was still usable but now replaced with something almost exactly the same, just newer?

The holiday season leaves behind a lot of waste—usable items that have been replaced, packaging materials, wrapping paper and cards, and unwanted items. Your holidays can be thoughtful without being wasteful. Before you start shopping for gifts, consider these tips for a greener, and hopefully happier, holiday season:

1. Write down all the names of people for whom you normally buy gifts. Is there someone on the list that you'd like to see more often? Instead of giving a gift, make arrangements to get together. Could someone on your list use company throughout the year? Avoid buying a gift and, instead, promise a monthly visit. Do you have adult family members on the list? Suggest a dinner together in lieu of gifts, donate to a charity that you select as a group, have a "white elephant"

see **Green** on back page

Favor de llamar al 444-5238 si tiene alguna duda sobre el sistema de colección de basura en Omaha.



PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1086
OMAHA, NE

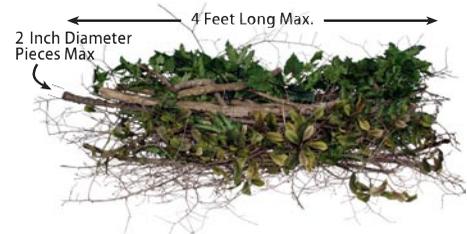
Yardwaste Set out by 6AM

There is no limit to the amount of properly prepared yardwaste that can be collected. Place yardwaste within 5-feet of your curb and leave 2-feet of space between Yardwaste and Garbage containers. **Yardwaste collection season will end the week of November 26 - 30, 2007.**

Yes!



-  Grass clippings and leaves.
-  Garden waste such as fallen apples, rotted or excess vegetables and fruit.
-  Trash cans up to 32 gallons and weighing up to 45 pounds, marked with a YW on both sides.
-  Special yardwaste paper bags weighing up to 40 pounds.
-  Unlimited number of properly prepared marked cans, paper bags or brush bundles.
-  Bundles of branches and brush, tied with string or twine. Bundles may weigh up to 30 pounds.
-  Branches may be up to 2 inches in diameter and 4 feet in length.



No!

-  Plastic bags used in yardwaste collection.
-  Mixtures of yardwaste and garbage.
-  No saw dust, lumber or treated lumber/wood.
-  Litter, trash or garbage.
-  Whole cans of dirt or sod.
-  Street sweeping sand, litter or rocks.
-  Cardboard boxes of yardwaste.
-  Pet waste or kitty litter.
-  Branches over 2 inches in diameter.
-  Branches over 4 feet long.
-  Plastic twine, nylon twine or wire used to bundle brush or branches.
-  Rope of any kind.
-  Unbundled brush.

Yardwaste collection season will end the week of November 26 - 30, 2007.

Alert! Alert!

Be the first to know about any solid waste collection delays due to inclement weather. Sign up for e-mail notification at www.wasteline.org/join.htm.

Reminders are also sent out prior to holidays that affect the collection schedule.

Wasteline.org is your source for Omaha solid waste information. 

Recycling Drop-off Sites

Recycling glass and the occasional extra bunch of recyclables is easy. Here are the drop-off sites that serve the city:

North West: Scrap Central
8518 Blondo Street
Open: Monday-Friday: 9AM-5PM
Saturday: 9AM-3PM

South West: Firstar Fiber
10330 "I" Street
Open: Monday-Friday: 7AM-7PM
Use the East driveway to Firstar. Turn off I Street, then turn left into the fenced parking area on your left before you reach the guard shack.

North East: CARE Recycling
4420 Izard Street
Open: Monday-Friday: 7AM-7PM

South East: River City Recycling
6404 South 60th Street
(Between Harrison & Q Streets)
Open: Monday-Friday: 8AM-4:30PM
Saturday: 8AM-NOON (Winter)
Monday-Saturday: 8AM-4:30PM (Spring, Summer, Fall)

New Mini Site:
This site does not take glass.

Midtown: UNMC Student Parking
519 South 40th Street
(East side of parking lot)
Open: Daily: 7AM-7PM

Garbage Collection Missed? Call 444-5238 after 7PM on your collection day.

Because of state and federal laws, there are limits to the types of waste you may include in your garbage. Each household is limited to 5 properly prepared trash cans or clear bags of garbage per week.

Yes!



-  Trash cans up to 32 gallons that weigh up to 45 pounds when full.
-  Clear plastic bags that weigh up to 30 pounds when full.
-  Up to 5 containers of garbage per week (example 2 trash cans and 3 bags).
-  Place within 5 feet of curb, approved alley or other approved location.

No!

-  A mixture of garbage and yardwaste.
-  Christmas trees.
-  Rocks, dirt and concrete.
-  Dead animals.
-  Any liquids.
-  Loose pet waste or cat litter.
-  Tires, engines or other large auto parts.
-  Bulky items (couches, chairs, stoves, etc.).
-  Dark plastic bags that you can't see through.
-  Motor oil and automotive batteries.
-  Cardboard boxes (empty or full) when not in a can or bag.
-  Items outside a can or clear bag.

Note: Garbage cans must be removed from the curb by 10AM the day after collection. 

Quotes Requested

We're reminded a hundred times a day to buy things, but we're not reminded to take care of them, repair them, reuse them or give them away.

Michael F. Jacobson
Center for the Study of Commercialism





UnderTheSink
Special Waste Facility



Properly dispose of unwanted household, lawn, garden and automotive chemicals at UnderTheSink. Operating hours are:

Wednesday	9:00AM-4:30PM
Thursday	9:00AM-6:00PM
Friday	9:00AM-4:30PM
Saturday	Call for an appointment

444-sink [444-7465]. 

www.underthesink.org



Recycling

Place Materials Out in Green Bin, Before 6AM.

All Clean Paper—In a Paper Sack or Small Cardboard Box
(Do not use plastic bags)

Includes: Most all clean paper.
Things like:

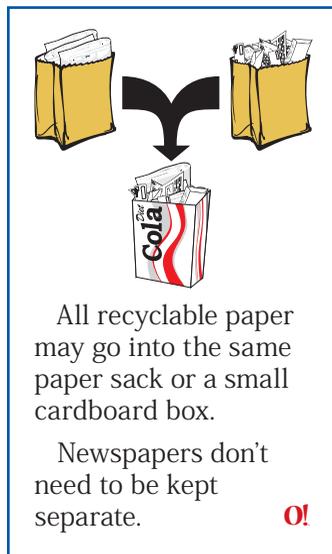
- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Magazines | Greeting Cards |
| Newspaper | School Paper |
| Detergent Boxes | Phonebooks |
| Paperback Books | Junkmail |
| Catalogues | Wrapping Paper |
| Cereal Boxes | Paper Egg Cartons |

Lay sack or box either inside bin, on top of bin, or next to your bin with opening facing away from wind.

Corrugated cardboard. Break down flat and place under bin. For lots of boxes, fold and stuff multiple boxes into one box. Set out next to recycling bin.

NO! Do not include: Any soiled paper or these non-recyclable items:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Pizza Boxes | Hardbound Books |
| Milk Cartons | Rubber Bands |
| Styrofoam | Paper Plates |
| Juice Boxes | Plastic Bags |
| Tissue Paper | |



Containers—Loose in the bin
(Not in plastic bags)

Aluminum cans & Steel (tin) cans, including—empty aerosol cans, empty and dry paint cans. Please don't flatten aluminum cans. Tip: Place the top of food cans inside can and crimp closed.

Plastic bottles marked PETE, including: Bottles that held pop, cooking oil, mouthwash, shampoo or cleaners.

Plastic bottles, tubs or snap top containers marked HDPE, including those that held milk, juice, cleaners, or other food items.

NO! Don't recycle these plastic items, no matter what: Frozen food trays, plastic cups, toys, cookie trays, motor oil bottles, lawn chemical bottles, or hazardous chemical bottles

NO! Glass bottles or jars. (Glass may be taken to drop-off sites or placed in garbage)

NO! Lids or plastic bottle caps of any kind. Remove and throw in garbage.

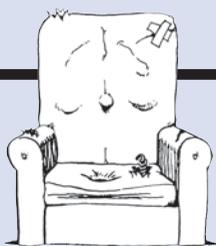


www.OmahaRecycles.com

Bulky Item Disposal

There are options for bulky items not permitted through regular collections. Omaha has a low cost, co-pay system for disposal through a local solid waste transfer station.

Call 444-5238 for information. **O!**



Need a Bin?

If your recycling bin becomes damaged or lost, call 444-4500. A replacement will be delivered at no cost. **O!**



Collection Pointers

- Place all materials at your collection point by 6AM.
- If your collection was missed, call 444-5238 after 7PM on your collection day.
- Leave a couple feet of space between your yardwaste, recyclables and garbage containers.
- Keep your garbage dry—use plastic bags or trash cans with lids.
- One cap full of household ammonia per garbage container will deter animals from investigating and searching for food in your garbage.
- Use clear trash bags.
- If your recycling bin becomes damaged or lost, call 444-4500.
- Yardwaste collection season will end the week of November 26 - 30, 2007.

Within 5 feet of curb or alley Collection problems: 444-5238

Garbage:
Up to 5 containers

Metal or plastic can with handles. 32-gallon, 45-pound max.



Recycling:
Must use bin

No plastic bags. No glass. Paper in paper bag or box. Flatten cardboard boxes.



Yardwaste:
No container limit
Growing Season Only

Metal or plastic can with handles. 32-gallon, 45-pound max. Marked YW. Paper bags only. 40-pounds max.



Set out by 6AM





Oma-Gro
Omaha's Premium Quality Compost

Oma-Gro is a natural compost product made exclusively of grass clippings, leaves and ground wood.

www.omagro.com

Ask for **Oma-Gro** at your favorite garden supply store or buy it direct from the production facility!

City of Omaha Composting Facility
(402) 444-6665
15705 Harlan Lewis Road
Bellevue, NE 68123-5728

Worth Noting

Twenty years ago, on March 22, 1987, the garbage "crisis" was born when a Long Island barge, the Mobro 4000, filled with garbage was rejected by North Carolina officials. For 5,000-miles and 6-months, the barge provided fodder for environmentalists, politicians, the nightly news, and talk shows.

It's journey ended back where it began.

But those six months help to launch curbside recycling programs in almost 10,000 cities, including Omaha in 1991—the first curbside program in Nebraska. Next year, Omaha will reach a milestone by collecting its 500 millionth pound of recyclables. **O!**

Green from front page

- gift exchange, or draw names and buy for just one person.
- Make a list of everyone to whom you plan to give a gift—and check it twice.
- Decide how much you plan to spend, both total and per person. Remember the little extras that can add up, such as stocking stuffers. As you begin to shop, keep track of your receipts. Periodically evaluate how much you're spending compared to the budget that you made.
- Consider gifts of yourself and your time. These gifts improve your relationships, cost nothing, and create no waste. You might offer to drive an older relative on errands once a month. Or, maybe you could wash your Mom or Dad's car monthly. The possibilities are endless—lawn mowing, babysitting, watching movies together. Offer yourself, your presence, and your help.
- Shop for unique reused gifts. Vintage clothing, funky antiques, or used books or CDs are a great place to start. Be sure you know the person's size or taste, since secondhand stores and antique shops may not accept returns.
- Pick up consumables. Food, fruit, and candy are popular gifts and much-appreciated by the recipient.
- Coffees and teas also make great gifts.
- Make gifts. Homemade gifts are a perfect way to honor what someone has taught you. For instance, give a handmade scarf to the aunt who taught you to knit. Glue fishing lures, bobbers, or weights to an old, battered picture frame and include a photo of you and your grandpa fishing together. Refresh a family memory by making your brother or sister the cookies or candy that Mom or Grandma used to make at the holidays.
- Cheer on the home team by giving tickets to sporting events. Support the arts with museum passes or theater tickets. Give movie gift certificates to the movie buff in your life.
- As you shop, carry your own reusable bags. Pull out your canvas bags and throw them into your car. Rather than dealing with lots of plastic shopping bags when you get home, you can begin sorting and wrapping.
- Remember to wrap without waste. Reuse last year's paper (and save this year's for next year). Choose reusable gift bags. Decorate boxes that you use each year for the same person. Use fabric scraps, magazine pages, colorful brochures, or old maps to create unique wrapping "paper." **O!**



Think before you buy

The Center for a New American Dream wants you to be a conscious consumer by thinking before you buy and evaluating your intended purchase. To help you do this, the Center has created a "wallet buddy" which holds a credit, debit, or gift card. The buddy is designed to make you stop and think as you pull out your card to buy something new.

The buddy includes several questions, such as:

- \$ Is this something I need?
- \$ Do I already own something that could serve the same purpose?
- \$ Is it a quality item, that is well made and durable?
- \$ Was it made with environmentally preferable materials?

- \$ Can I borrow one, find one used, or make one instead of buying new?
- \$ Can I recycle or compost it when I'm done with it?
- \$ If I'm still not sure, can I wait a month before deciding to buy it?

These questions can help you save money and make wise buying decisions, as well as reduce the amount of waste that you must reuse, recycle, or dispose.

Download the instructions and pattern to create your own wallet buddy at:
www.newdream.org/walletbuddy.pdf.

For more information about the Center for a New American Dream, visit www.newdream.org. **O!**



Capturing Cans

In 2006, Americans recycled 51.9 billion aluminum beverage cans, a rate of 51.6 percent of all the beverage cans used. Although this rate has held steady for the past three years, it is far lower than it was in 1992, when the recycling rate for cans peaked at 67.9 percent. However, what it really means is that we are still trashing nearly half of all the aluminum cans used in this country.

There's really no excuse for us to be throwing away half of our cans. Aluminum beverage cans are widely accepted in recycling programs. Aluminum is a valuable recyclable—worth about four times as much as the next most valuable recyclable. Aluminum is also endlessly recyclable—your entire aluminum can will be made into a new can. What's more, it will be back on store shelves as a new can in as little as 60 days.

Aluminum recycling saves a great deal of energy. According to the Aluminum Association, throwing away a single aluminum can is like pouring out six ounces of gasoline. For every

21 cans you throw away, you are wasting the equivalent of a gallon of gas! That means we could have saved the equivalent of about 2.3 billion gallons of gasoline if we had recycled the 48.9 billion cans that were thrown away last year. That's a lot of energy that went to waste!

Recycling aluminum creates far less pollution, too. Making aluminum from used cans generates about 95 percent fewer emissions than using virgin materials. Aluminum beverage cans are easy to recycle. After you've finished enjoying your beverage, simply rinse the can with a small amount of water, turn it upside down to drip-dry, and put it into the closest recycling container. If you can't rinse the cans, don't worry. Just turn the can over and shake out the last few drops of liquid. If you're on a picnic or tailgating at a game and there is no recycling container nearby, put the

cans into a bag or box in your car or van and recycle them at home.

On average, each American uses 350 cans per year. Try to capture all 350 of those for recycling! **O!**

