

# WASTELINE



November 2008  
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

## Time for a Change

For two years, Omaha's recycling program has used the tag line,

## Recycling... It's O! So Easy!

It's been on billboards, bus shelters, litter cans, and our print materials. Nothing has changed—Recycling is still easy. That tag line, has been responsible in part, for a 12% increase in recycling over these two years. It was also part of an overwhelming spike in recycling bin requests this last May, when over a six-week period as many recycling bins were requested as in all of 2007. Now we're looking for a new tag line that will get more material into the bin. That's why Omaha Recycles is looking for your input.

### What Inspires You, Omaha?

Submit your thoughts on a phrase that could be Omaha's next recycling tag line. It can be long, short, inspirational, direct, clever, motivating, witty, emotional, brainy, frank, candid, logical, or sincere. So, be creative and submit your tag line for Omaha's recycling program to [wasteline@ci.omaha.ne.us](mailto:wasteline@ci.omaha.ne.us), or mail to **WASTELINE**, 5600 S 10th St, Omaha, NE 68107-3501. **O!**



## Stop That Litter Bug!

**H**ave you ever been behind someone in traffic, only to be disturbed by witnessing that driver throw litter out their car window? Keep Nebraska Beautiful is proud to partner with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office to offer a Litter Hotline to report persons observed littering. Citizens who spot a vehicle littering in Douglas County may simply call 877-NO LITTR (877-665-4887) or report the litter on-line at [www.knb.org/litterhotline.html](http://www.knb.org/litterhotline.html).

All types of trash and all types of vehicles are subject to be reported, as long as the license plate number is provided. Other information that is helpful in reporting the littering is the date, location, time, vehicle description, and type of litter. Your report is anonymous. The motorist will be contacted by the Sheriff's office and reminded of the penalties for littering in Nebraska.

Currently, only Douglas and Lancaster counties are part of the littering hotline. Keep Nebraska Beautiful hopes to expand the hotline to all other counties in the state within 2 years.



Not only will a reduction in roadside litter improve the view of residents and visitors who travel our highways, but it's a great preservation of our natural environment and will save taxpayer money being spent on cleaning up the discarded trash of careless motorists.

If a Deffenbaugh truck is observed littering, please call the City immediately at 444-5238. **O!**

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

## Prepare for Christmas

**C**hristmas 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.

Again this year, there will be five sites throughout Omaha.

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 6, 2009;
- ▶ consider an artificial tree that can be used for many years. **O!**



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OMAHA, NE

Wasteline is using and developing a new mailing list and we need your help. Please e-mail [wasteline@ci.omaha.ne.us](mailto:wasteline@ci.omaha.ne.us) if you received Wasteline by mail but don't receive Omaha solid waste services. If you know of an address that we missed, please e-mail us that information too.







# Yardwaste

Ends the Week of  
December 1-5

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 runs from the first Monday in April and continues through the week following Thanksgiving (December 1-5, 2008).**

## 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.



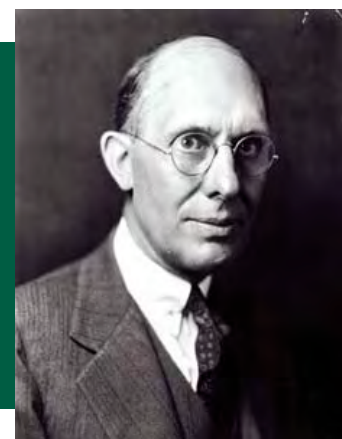
## No!

- 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.
- Brush sticking up out of a can.

## Quotes Requoted

*We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there.*

Charles Franklin Kettering, 1876-1958  
American inventor and engineer



## 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: Peonly Park HyVee**  
7910 Cass Street  
Open: Daily: 7AM-7PM

**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)

### Mini Sites:

These sites **do not** take glass.

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

### Opening Soon!

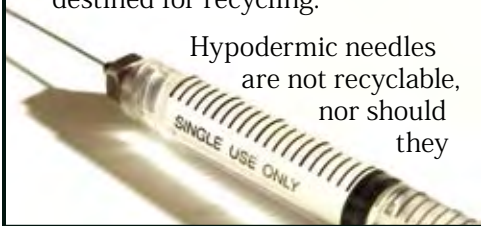
**Creighton: Commuter Parking**  
2116 Cuming Street  
(West side of parking lot)  
Open: Daily: 7AM-7PM

**Yardwaste collection ends for 2008,  
the week of December 1-5.**

## Needles Are A No No!

Recently there have been some tense moments at the Firstar Fiber recycling facility when insulin needles were found in containers destined for recycling.

Hypodermic needles are not recyclable, nor should they



be disposed of carelessly in the garbage. Needles must be disposed of properly. Talk with your doctor, pharmacist or the Douglas County Health Department about the correct way to dispose of needles.

Bottles, cans or plastic containers that hold needles must not be placed in the recycling bin or taken to a recycling drop-off site. **!**

## Worth Noting

What happens when two creative teachers join forces to teach their students about the environment? In the case of singer Jeffrey Walker and musician Michael Droste, who both teach in Illinois, the result was the "Save the Planet" song and video.

The song and video focus attention on the ways that

humans have damaged the earth. However, the song isn't gloomy and doesn't scold anyone. Instead, it reminds each of us that our everyday habits—from conserving water and saving energy to recycling—can make our planet better and healthier for all of us. Visit [www.savetheplanetsong.org](http://www.savetheplanetsong.org). **!**



## 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.** **!**



# Recycling

## Place Materials Out in Green Bin, Before 6AM.

All Clean Paper—To prevent litter, place 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 |

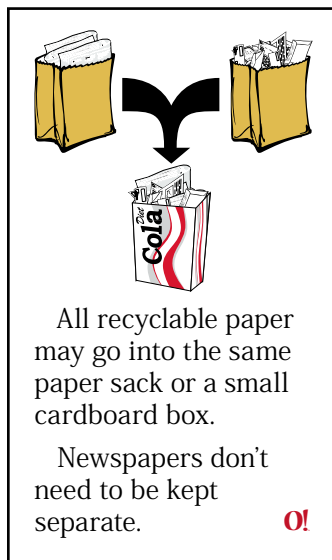


Lay sack or box either inside bin, on top of bin, or next to your bin with the opening facing away from wind.

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 |                 |



All recyclable paper may go into the same paper sack or a small cardboard box.

Newspapers don't need to be kept separate.

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.

Hard plastic packaging and plastic bottles marked V, This packaging is usually used to hold small electronics; must be cut open and is referred to as "blister packs."

Plastic bottles, tubs or snap top containers marked PP, including dairy case items, many other food containers and reusable/disposable food storage containers.

**NO!** Don't recycle these plastic items, no matter what: 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.

Use a paper bag or a small box to hold extra recyclables.

## Need a Bin?

If your recycling bin becomes damaged or lost, call 444-4500 to have a replacement bin delivered at no cost.



Bottles only

Bottles Food Containers

Bottles Containers Packaging

Bottles Food Containers Packaging



[www.OmahaRecycles.com](http://www.OmahaRecycles.com)

## 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.
- Yardwaste collection continues through the week of December 1-5, 2008.

### 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.



Clear plastic. 30-pounds max. Tie shut.

**Recycling:**  
Must use bin

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



Leave space between

**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.



Leave space between

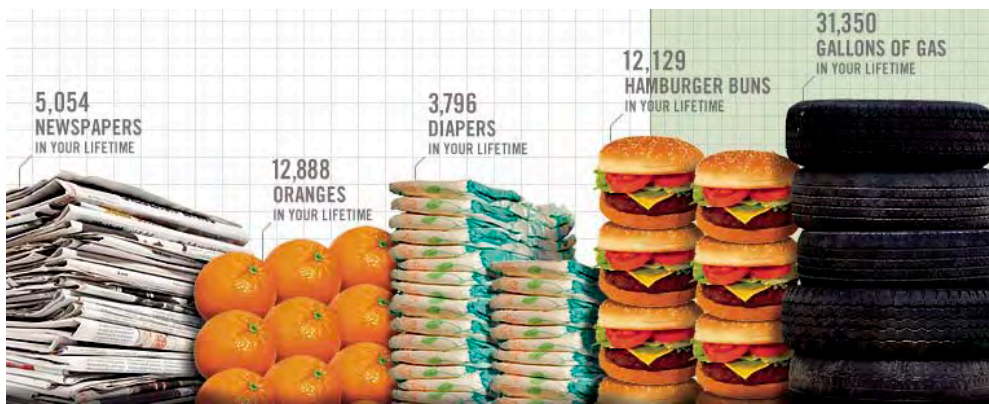
Bundle with string. 4-feet long max. 2-inch diameter branches max. 30-pounds max.



Set out by 6AM







## Measure the Human Footprint



**H**ow big a footprint does the average American boy or girl leave behind over the course of a lifetime?

National Geographic set out to answer this question. The result was the Human Footprint project, which premiered on the National Geographic Channel last spring.

During the film, a lifetime supply of potatoes spills from the back of a dump truck, a lifetime supply of bread is laid out to make an enormous American flag, and 28,433 rubber ducks represent the number of showers the average American will take in a lifetime. There are many other striking images of the sheer mass of consumption that goes into a single American life.

From your morning newspaper to the bananas on your breakfast cereal, you'll see how much one person uses. For instance, over the course of a lifetime, an American will read 5,054 newspapers, which is 43 trees' worth of paper. This same American will eat 5,067 bananas, which will travel a total of 11 million air miles to arrive on the breakfast table.

At the website devoted to the project, you can read a short essay entitled "Trash Talk," which introduces you to the facts and figures of America's waste habits. You can watch three short videos, which are excerpted from the 90-minute program, to get an idea of what "mass" consumption looks like. You'll also find "Consumption Interactive." Click on this and you'll be able to see how your own consumption of eggs, milk, bananas, soft drinks, potatoes, and bread, as well as newspapers, the diapers from your early childhood, your regular showers, and your car, compare with national and international averages. You can also click through to watch the video about each of these items. Go to [www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint).

A DVD of Human Footprint is available. **O!**

## Trashing Everest

**S**ince Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay reached the top of Mount Everest in 1953, more than 11,000 climbers have made the attempt and over 3,000 have reached the sought-after summit. In the process, these climbers have left behind more than 50 tons of waste at the high camps, including tents and gear that were left behind on the descent, oxygen bottles, batteries, and

water bottles. This debris has earned Everest the nickname, "the world's highest garbage dump."

During the 2000 climbing season, Japanese mountaineer Ken Noguchi began the slow process of cleaning up the world's most famous—and highest—peak. His cleanup trips up the mountain have cleared away 9.9 tons of trash so far.



In addition to collecting waste and getting it off the mountain, these trips have raised awareness. As a result, more expeditions are packing down their own wastes. Plus, the government of Nepal has tightened restrictions. Climbing teams must now carry out their gear and trash or forfeit a sizable deposit. **O!**

## Something to Talk About

**I**n January 2008, wireless service providers counted an average of 250 million cell phones in use each day. At present, the average phone is used for about 18 months, meaning that at least 150 million are replaced each year. Of these, most are probably sitting in someone's "junk drawer." However, many of them could easily be refurbished and reused, while the remainder can be recycled.

Cell phones contain lead, copper, and antimony in sufficient quantities that they can be hazardous when mixed with household trash. That's just one of the reasons they shouldn't go into the trash! The other, of course, is that they also contain reusable

materials. For instance, according to a report published by INFORM, Inc., there is enough gold in 200 cell phones to create a gold ring.

According to a study of cell phone life cycles published in the International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment, extending the use of your existing cell phone to 4 years could decrease the environmental impacts of the phone by 40%. Why? Simple—using the same phone longer reduces the need to extract new resources, lowers emissions during manufacturing, and reduces energy use.

To find a collection point for an old cell phone, visit [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org). **O!**

## Extraordinary Uses

**Y**our house is full of ordinary things—such as vinegar, salt, toothpaste, duct tape, and coffee grounds—that can have some extraordinary uses. In the process, you can save time and money and reduce your waste. Are you ready to get started? Check out a copy of the Reader's Digest book, *Extraordinary Uses for Ordinary Things*.

For example, you can only use one mouse pad at a time. So, what do you do with the mouse pads that you get as giveaways or that come when you purchase a new computer? The book

offers these suggestions: Cut the pad into small circles or squares to be used as pads under furniture legs. Make knee pads for gardening. Put the pads under houseplants to keep pots from scraping your fine wood furniture. Use them as hot pads on your dinner table.

Rather than buy special cleaning products and storage containers, take a look at the 2,317 suggestions in this book. You'll find lots of extraordinary uses for your ordinary household things. **O!**

