

“One Person’s Trash...”

your guide to reducing,
reusing and recycling



Winter 2024

Buncombe County
Solid Waste Department
828-250-5462
buncombecounty.org

Contaminated and Mixed Loads Subject to Fines

Buncombe County works hard to offer and maintain many recycling programs for residents and businesses. These include recycling programs for yard waste, tires, metal, cardboard, clean wood, clean brick/

asphalt/concrete, food waste, and more! For decades, through education and outreach, we have encouraged residents and businesses to utilize these programs. As landfill capacity decreases and waste production increases, it is more important than ever for materials in a load to be sorted correctly BEFORE they arrive at our facilities. It is also against state law to landfill used oil, yard waste, white goods, aluminum cans, scrap tires, lead-acid batteries, motor vehicle oil filters, wooden pallets, and computer monitors and TVs. This is partly why we offer such a robust variety of recycling programs!

As a reminder, loads that contain 5% or more by weight or volume of recyclable materials will be subject to a fine and charged double the base tip fee. However, disposal of many recyclable materials is free or half the base tip fee when appropriately sorted. You can save money, extend the life of our landfill, comply with state law, and recover useful materials by properly sorting your loads.



Christmas Tree Recycling

The holidays are over and many of us have packed away our decorations for next year. If you are wondering how to recycle your holiday tree, we can help!

If your family enjoyed a real Christmas tree, you can recycle it with us this winter. Simply remove all ornaments, lights, garlands, and tinsel, as well as the stand, and deliver the tree to the Buncombe County Landfill. As long as trees are bare and unbagged, residential recycling is free during the month of January. These trees will be chipped and turned into mulch. We cannot accept flocked trees for recycling since the chemicals used to create the snow effect will contaminate mulch. If you dispose of your tree after the end of January, there will be a charge of \$20 per ton (prorated). Mulch can be purchased on-site, as well. Please contact us at 828-250-5462 for details.

In addition to Christmas trees, broken down cardboard and gift boxes and plain wrapping paper (no metal, ribbons, bows, or fabric) can also be accepted.

Drop Off Your Electronics and Household Hazardous Waste at the Buncombe County Landfill

Televisions and computer monitors are accepted daily at the landfill during regular operating hours if you can unload the devices without assistance. Residents will be charged a fee of \$10 per TV or monitor, regardless of size. If you have other electronic waste or if you will need assistance with unloading, please deliver your electronics during the hours for household hazardous waste drop-off on the dates listed here. Other than computer monitors and televisions, we accept most electronics from residents at no charge. Businesses may drop off electronics for a fee of 30 cents per pound.

Household hazardous waste (HHW) and paint are accepted only at the select Friday drop-offs (see box). Clip and save this schedule and keep it for reference. HHW includes unneeded household, garden, and automotive chemicals, paints and stains, fluorescent light tubes and bulbs, and spent rechargeable household batteries. There is a limit of 20 gallons of paint per person per event. The fee for paint and paint-related items, including water-based sealers, paint thinners, enamels, polyurethane, and flammable liquids, such as gas and kerosene, is \$2 per gallon. There is no charge for pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, motor oil, antifreeze, and lead-acid batteries. Please sort and take inventory of the contents and quantity of your items prior to disposal to save time at the scale house and HHW disposal area.

The landfill is located at 85 Panther Branch Road, off 251 North (Old Marshall Highway), north of Alexander. When you get to the landfill scale house, you will be directed to the collection area.



Fees will apply for some items. Proof of county residency is required. Businesses may recycle electronics for a fee but are NOT allowed to drop off hazardous waste. For the safety of staff and residents, materials must be unloaded by the people dropping off the items whenever possible. Visit our website, buncombe.org/solidwaste, for more details.

2024 Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Recycling Drop-Off Schedule

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on these Fridays

- January 12
- February 9
- March 8 & 22
- April 12 & 26
- May 10 & 24
- June 14 & 28
- July 12 & 26
- August 9 & 23
- September 13
- October 11
- November 8
- December 13

Understanding the Hazards of Lithium-Ion Batteries

Whether we realize it or not, lithium-ion batteries have become integral to our lives, powering everything from smartphones to electric vehicles. Their efficiency and portability



This lithium-ion battery pack was most likely to blame for a fire in a trash collection truck that required the load to be emptied onto a street so the fire could be put out.

have changed the way we use technology. However, while they offer many advantages, lithium-ion batteries also have certain potential dangers.

These batteries and other ignitable materials can start fires inside curbside carts, in collection trucks, and at recycling sorting facilities. Lithium-ion batteries from rechargeable devices like cell phones, laptops, and headphones, are the most common cause of fires.

Lithium-ion batteries can easily ignite when damaged, and in the process of collecting and processing curbside trash, they are likely to be mangled. Mechanized trucks typically crush waste when picking it up. At materials recovery facilities (MRFs), items travel across conveyors and tumble through a series of sorting machines. At landfills, waste is compacted by heavy equipment. The fires sparked by lithium-ion batteries not only cause damage to vehicles or facilities, but they also result in injuries to firefighters, monetary loss, and service disruptions in the community. In addition, when we trash our portable devices and their batteries, we cannot reuse the beneficial and often rare materials they contain in new products.

We can all do our part to ensure we properly dispose of these batteries to keep our community safe.



Resolutions for a New and Improved Year

It's the time of year when many of us are making plans and resolving to be better and do better in a variety of ways in the coming months. As you think about your resolutions for 2024, consider some of these ideas that will reduce waste, save money, and build family and community relationships.

- **Focus on family fun:** Plan ahead for family time by swapping board games, jigsaw puzzles, magazines, movies, and books with friends and neighbors. That way everyone gets some fresh fun. You might also look for items to borrow from the local library, find free items through online marketplaces, or purchase used items at a secondhand store.
- **Extend the life of your electronics:** We rely on electronic devices to keep us connected and help us do many everyday tasks. Take care of them to keep them working smoothly by properly charging the batteries, deleting unnecessary files and apps, uploading photos to the cloud or a hard drive, and using a screen protector and case. Frequently clearing the cache and removing temporary files can improve performance.
- **Invest in rechargeables:** Many electronic devices have a built-in battery that you recharge again and again. Why not do the same with all those household batteries powering remote controls, toys, and games? Invest in rechargeable batteries and a charging unit to replace single-use alkaline batteries. You'll spend a little more upfront but have less waste and fewer trips to the store or online shop for replacements. Remember that rechargeable batteries that are spent (can't be recharged) must be recycled.
- **Support local merchants:** The past

few years have been hard on local retail stores. Local merchants offer products that you need and want. They are close to home. They provide jobs in our community. And they support many local events and activities. Also, when you shop in your community, you don't carry home a lot of boxes and packaging waste that you need to recycle or dispose. When it's time to shop, visit them first — whether in their stores or on their websites.

- **Shop smartly online:** It's very easy to make impulse purchases with just a couple of clicks. Instead, shop online as you would at a physical store by setting a shopping time and using a list. Whenever possible, choose the option to "ship items together" to reduce traffic, packaging waste, and vehicle emissions.
- **Remember to recycle:** Your empty cardboard shipping and cereal boxes need to be broken down and recycled. Manufacturers need more of this material to make new boxes, as well as tissue products like toilet paper. Don't forget to recycle your plastic bottles and jugs, glass bottles and jars, and metal cans too.
- **Donate with care:** As you prepare to get rid of old items, be sure to ask yourself whether anyone else might truly want and use them. Donate the good stuff — items that are working and aren't broken, damaged, or torn. Give away "treasures" and put the "trash" into the garbage bin.
- **Shop secondhand:** Don't stop with donating! Shop at secondhand stores for items that you need. This supports the work of local charitable organizations and keeps items in use for as long as possible.

CLIP AND SAVE

Recycle Your Batteries Right!

- Tape the terminal ends of your lithium-ion and other rechargeable batteries.
- Bag lithium-ion and other rechargeable batteries individually in sealable plastic bags.
- Do not place lithium-ion or other rechargeable batteries inside your trash cart!
- Do not place any type of batteries into a recycling cart or bin!
- Recycle these batteries in recycling bins provided at home improvement and office supply stores, such as Lowe's, Home Depot, and Best Buy. For details and additional locations, visit Call2Recycle.org.

Standard household alkaline batteries do not contain hazardous chemicals and may be disposed of in the trash. For added safety, please attach tape to both ends of alkaline batteries before disposal.

The Buncombe County Landfill does not accept any household-type batteries for recycling. At present, we only accept large, lead-acid batteries, like car batteries.



Redefining Consumption: A Life Less Throwaway

In an age of disposability and overconsumption, Tara Button's book, *A Life Less Throwaway*, serves as a wake-up call and a guide to living more consciously. Button begins by addressing our modern tendency to discard items and experiences too quickly, urging readers to reconsider the value of both the possessions and relationships we have in our lives. She proposes mindful consumption, emphasizing quality over quantity, and encouraging us to cherish items that are made to last.

Throughout, Button blends personal stories with well-researched facts, creating a relatable narrative that resonates with readers from various walks of life. She shares her own journey toward a more sustainable and meaningful existence, making the book feel like a conversation among friends rather than a lecture.

From shopping habits to decluttering strategies, she offers actionable steps for those looking to adopt a more conscious and sustainable way of living. *A Life Less*

Throwaway encourages us to slow down, think before we buy, and appreciate the items and experiences that truly add value to our lives.

In a world of endless stuff, Button suggests the true treasures are the connections we make and the intentional choices we pursue. She calls us to embrace a life of quality, purpose, and sustainability in a throwaway culture.



Recyclables Are Commodities

How much do you know about the business of recycling? Most of us understand that when we recycle correctly, the stuff we put into recycling bins gets sorted, baled, processed, and made into new stuff. But how do those steps really work? How do we make sure that what goes into our recycling carts becomes new products?

Understanding that recyclables are commodities in a manufacturing process helps people appreciate why the list of acceptable items sometimes changes and why all recyclables must be as clean and contaminant-free as possible. Your recyclables become resources in manufacturing.

To make new goods, you can start with raw materials, such as harvested trees, mined metals, or petroleum products; with recyclables (those materials that were once in your recycling bin); or with a combination of both. In many cases, there are huge advantages in manufacturing new goods from recycled materials. For instance, using recyclables in manufacturing may require less electricity or other energy or create less pollution and fewer emissions. However, sorting, transporting, cleaning, and, in some cases, preprocessing recyclables cost money. As you can imagine, if the recyclables are contaminated because they are mixed with non-recyclable items or are dirty, those costs increase, which means raw materials may be cheaper and easier to use for manufacturers.

Simply put, your recyclables are a commodity. They are something that we collect because it is good for our economy and our environment. Please help us keep the costs of our recycling program down and the value of our recyclables high by only placing accepted items into your recycling cart. Bottles, jugs, and jars should be emptied, lightly rinsed if needed, and allowed to drip-dry. Paper and cardboard should be dry, and boxes should be flattened. Visit buncombecounty.org/solidwaste to learn more.



Need Help With Your Business?

Waste Reduction Partners is a great local resource for businesses that want to analyze their waste processes and find ways to reduce waste output. To learn more or schedule an assessment, visit wastereductionpartners.org.

Handling Hard-to-Recycle Items

Asheville GreenWorks helps plant trees and native habitats, pick up litter from roadsides and waterways, and educate and inspire young people and adults. But that is not all! They also offer Hard 2 Recycle events several times per year to allow residents to recycle items that aren't accepted in regular curbside or drop-off programs. Accepted items include books, electronics, small appliances, toner and printer cartridges, clean Styrofoam, and other items. The first event of 2024 will be held on Saturday, February 17. For additional information, dates, and locations, or to volunteer for this or other GreenWorks programs, visit ashevillegreenworks.org.



FOOD SCRAPS DROP-OFFS

THERE ARE NOW EIGHT FOOD SCRAPS DROP-OFF SITES!

Buncombe County Landfill Convenience Center 85 Panther Branch Road Alexander	Murphy Oakley Community Center and Library 749 Fairview Road Asheville
Stephens-Lee Recreation Center 30 Washington Carver Avenue Asheville	West Asheville Library 942 Haywood Road Asheville
Skyland/South Buncombe Library 260 Overlook Road Asheville	Buncombe County Transfer Station 190 Hominy Creek Road Asheville
East Asheville Library 3 Avon Road Asheville	Leicester Library 1561 Alexander Road Leicester

If you're registered for one, you're registered for all. Lock codes are the same!



Thank you for using the food scraps drop-offs!

Scan QR code for hours, location, and acceptable materials

Guidelines for Great Recycling

- Know What's Recyclable** – Clip and save the list on the back page or use our online Waste Wizard at buncombecounty.org/solidwaste.
- Label Bins Clearly** – Inside your home, label your recycling bins clearly to remind everyone what can and cannot be recycled. Simple, visible labels can make a big difference.
- Empty, Clean, and Dry** – Empty bottles and other containers, remove excess residue, rinse them out, and allow them to air-dry.
- Save Space in the Bin** – Break down and flatten boxes before recycling. If needed, cut cardboard into pieces no larger than about 18 by 18 inches.
- Keep It Loose** – Don't bag your recycling. Recyclables should be loose as they go into the bin.
- Avoid Hazardous Materials** – Never mix tangles, like hoses or cords, or hazardous waste, such as batteries, chemicals, or medical sharps, with your recycling. These items can endanger workers and damage equipment.
- Steer Clear of Contaminants** – Keep "yucky" items out of the recycling! This includes dirty recyclables, greasy pizza boxes, and, especially, diapers.
- Learn More** – For more tips about recycling, visit buncombecounty.org/solidwaste.



RECYCLE ALL TOGETHER

PLASTIC

Bottles, tubs, jugs and jars



No pumps Empty and rinse

METAL

All cans



Empty and rinse

GLASS

Bottles and jars



Empty and rinse

PAPER

Paper, cartons and cardboard



Flatten cardboard

KEEP THESE ITEMS OUT!



- Aerosol cans
- All batteries
- Ceramic items
- Clothing or textiles
- Diapers
- Disposable cups (plastic and paper)
- Electronics
- Food-tainted items
- Hazardous waste
- Household glass
- Medical waste
- Plastic bags/wrap
- Plastic clamshell packaging
- Scrap metal/wood
- Shredded paper
- Styrofoam/peanuts
- Tangles (cords, hoses, wires, etc.)
- Tires
- Toys

PLEASE DON'T BAG YOUR RECYCLABLES!



If you have any questions, please contact the **Solid Waste Office at 828-250-5460** or the **Landfill at 828-250-5462**.

TV/PAINT RECYCLING EVENTS

Buncombe County Landfill also accepts the following items from residents* **ONLY** during TV/Paint Recycling events. Check our website for event details and dates.

-  **Electronics:** Cell phones, keyboards, etc.
-  **Televisions, computer monitors, and CPUs:** Every day drop-off is available for residents who are able to self-unload.
-  **Paint:** Paint, paint thinners, water sealers, enamels, etc. 20-gallon limit per event.
-  **Flammable liquids:** Gasoline and kerosene.
-  **Pesticides:** Insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc.
-  **Unbroken fluorescent bulbs:** 20 bulbs max per month. Check online for bulb disposal guidelines.

NOTE: Bio-hazardous materials, radioactive materials, and explosives are **NOT** accepted.

*Businesses can recycle electronics by the pound for a fee. No business hazardous wastes will be accepted.

ACCEPTED EVERY DAY


The landfill also accepts the following materials every day at the Convenience Center from residents only — no commercial quantities.

- **Used cooking oil**
- **Motor oil**
- **Lead-acid batteries**
- **Automotive fluids, oil filters and antifreeze**

Buncombe County Landfill Convenience Center

Directions to the Buncombe County Landfill:

From I-240 East or West, take Exit 4A to 19/23 North. Travel 1 mile and then take UNC-A exit. At the end of the exit, turn left. Go to traffic light and turn right onto 251 North. Continue on 251 North for 13½ miles to Panther Branch Road. Turn right onto Panther Branch Road and travel 1/10 of a mile to the Buncombe County Landfill, which is located on the right. The new landfill is 6 miles north of the old landfill.




81 Panther Branch Road, Alexander • 828-250-5462
Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Buncombe County Transfer Station Convenience Center

Directions to the Transfer Station:

From I-240, take exit 1B (Brevard Road/Hwy. 191). At the traffic light, take Highway 191 North. Turn left onto Shelburne Road. Turn left onto Hominy Creek Road. The Transfer Station will be on the left. From I-40, take exit 47 (Brevard Road/Hwy. 191). At the traffic light, take Highway 191 North. After crossing I-240, turn left onto Shelburne Road. Turn left onto Hominy Creek Road. The Transfer Station will be on the left.



190 Hominy Creek Road, Asheville • 828-250-6205
Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Important Phone Numbers for County Residents

Junk Yards/Junk Cars – Jeffrey Byrd	828-424-8162
Bioreactor Manager – Kristy Smith	828-250-5473
Buncombe County Landfill	828-250-5462
Buncombe County Transfer Station	828-250-6205
Waste Pro – Residential Trash Pickup	828-684-7790
Mobile Home Removal – Bob Haynes	828-250-5388
Environmental Control – Kim Spillars	828-250-5470
Recycling Coordinator – Cassandra Lohmeyer	828-220-1361

Important Phone Numbers for City of Asheville Residents

Asheville City Sanitation – Trash Pickup	828-259-5857
Curbside Management – Recycling	828-252-2532

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Get announcements directly in your News Feed about Buncombe County Government activities and programs, including solid waste and recycling. Plus, you'll be able to post your questions and comments, find county job listings, and more. Like us today at facebook.com/buncombeGov.

Follow us on Instagram!

 instagram.com/buncomberecycles

RECYCLEMORE.ORG

BUNCOMBE GREEN

We want your suggestions, questions, and comments!

Buncombe County Solid Waste Department
81 Panther Branch Road, Alexander, NC 28701
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