

“One Person’s Trash...”

your guide to reducing, reusing and recycling



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

Spring 2024

Food Scraps Drop-Off Program

The City/County Food Scraps Drop-off Program has completed its expansion to eight sites throughout the County. During the first year, the program saw record collection numbers (over 150 tons!) and now collects upwards of three tons of residential food scraps weekly. Registration is free to any Buncombe County resident, and, once registered, participants qualify for a free kitchen compost collector that can be picked up at any of the five library locations.



Credit: Grigorenko | iStock | Getty Images Plus

From time to time, some residents may find these sites at capacity, such as in East and West Asheville. During these times, we encourage residents to use the nearby alter-

nate site when possible. More information about our food scraps drop-offs, including registrations, accepted materials, tips, and answers to frequently asked questions, is available on our website, buncombecounty.org/composting.

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 below right. 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.



Taste It, Don't Waste It

You're invited to the 2024 Taste It, Don't Waste It Asheville Chefs Challenge! Food Waste Solutions WNC is returning to The Mule at Devil's Foot to host our third annual signature Food Waste Reduction Month event on April 28 from 2-5 p.m. This fun twist on a cooking competition invites local chefs to prepare a dish from foods that might otherwise be thrown away. For updates, visit @wncfoodwaste and @buncomberecycles.



Food Waste Reduction Month

Buncombe County has issued a proclamation designating April 2024 as Food Waste Reduction Month! Cassandra Lohmeyer, Buncombe County Solid Waste's Recycling Coordinator and member of Food Waste Solutions WNC, accepted the proclamation.

Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Recycling Drop-Off Schedule

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

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



Grasscycling 101

Maintaining a vibrant and healthy lawn while being environmentally conscious may seem like a balancing act, but there's a simple and effective practice that can help achieve both goals — grasscycling. This eco-friendly approach involves leaving grass clippings on your lawn after mowing rather than bagging and disposing of them. Grasscycling is essentially a recycling process for your lawn. Instead of handling grass clippings as waste, you simply let them remain on the lawn to decompose naturally. As you mow, the clippings are scattered across the grass, providing a layer of organic matter that benefits both the soil and the growing grass.

Grass clippings are rich in nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. By leaving them on the lawn, you return these essential nutrients to the soil, acting as a natural fertilizer. This promotes healthier grass growth and reduces the need for synthetic fertilizers. Grass clippings also act as a natural mulch, helping to retain soil moisture. This means your lawn will require less water, contributing to water conservation efforts and reducing your overall water consumption. Embracing grasscycling significantly decreases the amount of yard

waste generated. Instead of filling up bags with clippings destined for the landfill or a compost site, you're allowing nature to recycle them on-site, minimizing your environmental impact.

Here are some tips to effectively grasscycle:

- Set your mower at the right height. Aim to cut only the top one-third of the grass blades, leaving the clippings small enough to decompose quickly.
- Stick to a regular mowing schedule to ensure that clippings are of manageable size. Infrequent mowing may lead to longer clippings that can smother the grass underneath.
- Mow when the grass is dry. Wet clippings can clump together, hindering their decomposition.

Grasscycling is a simple yet impactful practice that benefits both your lawn and the environment. By embracing this approach, you're not only taking care of your grass, but you're also contributing to reduced waste and water conservation. So, the next time you reach for the lawnmower, think about letting those clippings stay right where they belong — on your lawn.

Spotlighting Community

Recently, 12 members of the Ox Creek Community picked up seven bags of litter around their neighborhood. We appreciate all the efforts in helping keep Buncombe County beautiful and would like to showcase your great work. If you have organized a litter pickup recently that you would like to spotlight, please email recycling@buncombecounty.org with the details.



Wasted! The Story of Food Waste

Wasted! The Story of Food Waste, directed by Anna Chai and Nari Kye, is a compelling and eye-opening exploration of a global issue that affects us all — the staggering amount of food wasted across the world. Narrated by the late celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, the documentary takes audiences on a thought-provoking journey, uncovering the root causes of food waste and offering solutions.

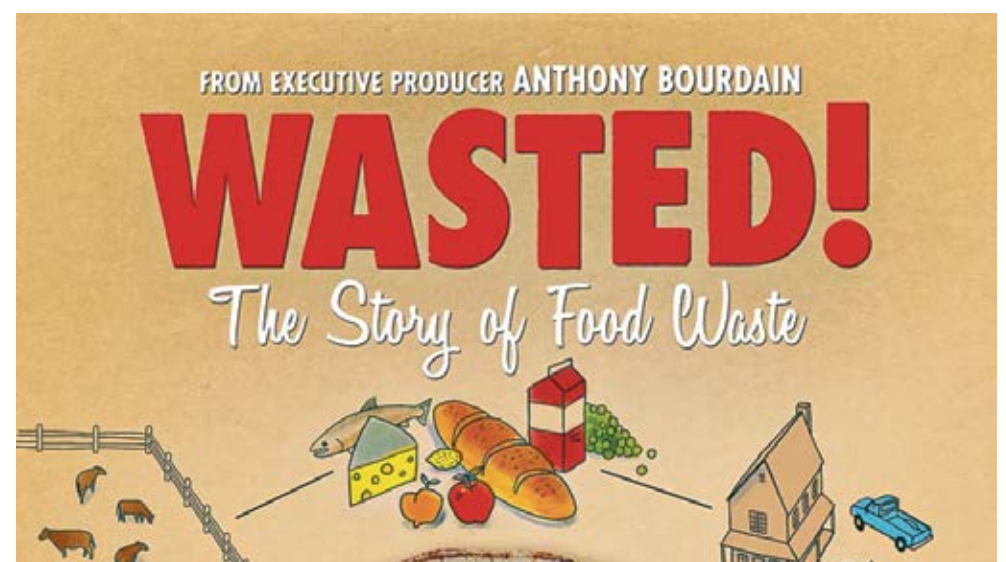
The film skillfully weaves together interviews with chefs, food activists, and experts, presenting a multifaceted perspective on the issue. Bourdain's narration adds a touch of authenticity, guiding viewers through various locations worldwide to showcase the extent of the problem. The cinematography is visually striking, capturing the beauty of food juxtaposed with the harsh reality of its unnecessary disposal.

Wasted! not only sheds light on the environmental impact of food waste but also addresses its economic and social consequences. The film effectively commu-

nicates the magnitude of waste at different stages of the food supply chain, from farms to restaurants and households. It challenges viewers to rethink their consumption habits and encourages a collective shift toward a more sustainable and mindful approach to food.

The documentary also goes beyond highlighting the problem; it offers practical solutions. From creative culinary approaches for utilizing food scraps to advocating for changes in policies and consumer behavior, *Wasted!* inspires viewers to be part of the solution.

Wasted! The Story of Food Waste, which is available on several streaming platforms, combines the charisma of Anthony Bourdain, the expertise of interviewees, and the artistry of filmmaking to create a compelling narrative that inspires action. A must-watch for those interested in sustainability, environmental issues, and the broader implications of our food choices.



The Planet vs. Plastics

Earth Day 2024 signals a strong commitment from EarthDay.org and other organizations to combat the pervasive issues related to plastics in our environment. In a campaign themed "Planet vs. Plastics," EarthDay.org is calling for a significant reduction in plastic production by 2040.

Their aims are to heighten awareness of the environmental risks associated with plastics, push to phase out single-use plastics, advocate at the international level, and reduce the negative environmental impacts of fast fashion.

In our daily lives, each of us can play a role in contributing to this shared vision. Embracing reusable alternatives to single-use plastics is a good first step. Check out "Reduce Your Use of Plastic Disposables" on the next page for easy swaps.

Another impactful area for individual action lies in the realm of fashion. Choose timeless pieces over fleeting trends, prioritizing quality over quantity. Exploring secondhand or thrift stores not only adds a unique touch to your wardrobe but also contributes to the reduction of fast fashion's environmental impact.

As Earth Day 2024 approaches, let's recognize the power of individual action to collectively shape a sustainable future. Earth Day calls us all to be stewards of our environment, embracing a responsibility that extends beyond a single day and influences a lifetime of mindful consumption.





Credit: Zuraisham Salleh | E+ | Getty Images

Reduce Your Use of Plastic Disposables

Have you ever stopped to think that plastic takeout containers, shopping bags, straws, spoons, forks, cups, and lids are all made to be used once and then tossed into the trash? In today's world, there are many things we use just once. However, a lot of them break down easily in nature or can be composted or recycled. Most single-use plastics cannot do any of these. No matter the size, plastics do not break down easily or biodegrade. As a result, almost all the plastics ever made still exist. To make matters worse, almost all lightweight, single-use plastic items are too small or too difficult to recycle, so they end up as litter or in landfills. Plastic straws are a prime example of the sort of plastic item Americans have grown used to using once and throwing away.

It's hard to picture something as small as a plastic straw being an issue. A school bus is much larger. Imagine 125 school buses lined up. This line would be over a mile long. Now picture the inside of all those buses completely stuffed with plastic straws. This is how many plastic straws Americans use in just one day, about 500 million. Now you can begin to see the magnitude of the problem.

The good news is that everyone can do their part to help. Just remember that it is always better to refuse, reduce, reuse, and recycle than to use something once and then throw it away. You can help by remembering to make simple changes each day. Start with a goal of changing one plastic habit per week or month and then add new changes throughout the year. Talk to your friends and family about making these changes, too!

Here is how you can be part of the solution:

- Just say no to plastic straws or stir sticks at restaurants or places where

they are offered. If you really like using straws, consider buying a reusable metal one and taking it with you.

- Instead of plastic shopping bags, use reusable shopping bags.
- Try to use fewer disposable items. At fast food restaurants, take a refillable water bottle or cup and use it instead of a throwaway cup. When buying fruits or vegetables at the store, use reusable bags or consider not using bags at all.
- Cut down on plastic and Styrofoam by using compostable paper plates. Drop off compostable items at our free compost drop-off program. See the front page for details.
- Make your own takeout kit. You can carry your own reusable containers instead of asking for single-use carry-out containers.
- Did you know that many of our groceries have a bulk food area? You may be able to bring your own reusable containers from home to fill with food instead of using the plastic bags provided.

After you have refused and reused all that you can, you should recycle all the plastics that are recyclable. Plastic straws, forks, spoons, cup lids, loose bottle caps, and other small single-use plastic items are too small for us to recycle. **Remember to recycle plastics by shape. At this time, we can ONLY accept plastics in the shape of bottles, tubs, jugs, and jars.** All recyclables should be empty, clean, and dry. Recyclables should be placed loose into the carts, NOT in plastic bags. We need everyone to do their part by reducing their use of non-recyclable plastics and by being realistic about what goes into curbside recycling carts. When in doubt, go find out! Check our website, www.buncombecounty.org, or give us a call at 828-250-5460.

What To Do With Your Plastic Bags

Plastic bags are a significant source of contamination in the recycling stream. When plastic bags are mixed with other recyclables, they get tangled in equipment in the sorting facility, causing frequent stops to remove them and sometimes damaging the equipment. Plus, they do NOT get recycled. Instead of mixing plastic bags with other recyclables, try these tips:

bags, such as bread bags, can be used for food storage or for pet waste disposal.

- **Reuse** plastic shopping bags by taking them back to the store and refilling them with groceries or other purchases.
- **Repurpose** bags around the house. Larger plastic bags can be used as trash liners for small wastebaskets. Smaller
- **Recycle** empty, clean plastic bags, such as shopping bags, dry cleaning bags, and plastic wrappers from cases of water bottles and other drinks. Plastic bags are accepted for recycling in special bins at grocery and home improvement stores, such as Ingles, Harris Teeter, Food Lion, and Lowe's.
- **Replace** plastic bags with reusable shopping bags. The easiest way to deal with plastic bags is to not have to deal with them at all!

- **Reuse** plastic shopping bags by taking them back to the store and refilling them with groceries or other purchases.
- **Repurpose** bags around the house. Larger plastic bags can be used as trash liners for small wastebaskets. Smaller

Handling Old Household Textiles



Credit: FG Trade | E+ | Getty Images

While many textiles, such as sheets, clothing, towels, upholstery, industrial fabric scraps, and most other woven items, can be reused or recycled, do not put them in recycling carts! If you have clothing and other household textiles that you no longer need, donate or sell those that are in good condition. Buncombe County also offers textile recycling at both of its facilities.

We accept clothes, shoes, purses, and other household textiles. All textiles must be bagged, clean, and dry to be properly recycled. Drop them off during our regular hours at these locations:

- Buncombe County Landfill
- Buncombe County Transfer Station



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 (car, lithium, etc.)
- ⊗ 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
- ⊗ Tanglers (cords, hoses, wires, etc.)
- ⊗ Tires
- ⊗ Toys



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. \$10/item
- Paint:** Paint, paint thinners, water sealers, enamels, etc. 20-gallon limit per event. \$2.00/gallon
- 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

Like us on Facebook!

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

We want your suggestions, questions, and comments!

Buncombe County Solid Waste Department
81 Panther Branch Road, Alexander, NC 28701
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PLEASE RECYCLE AFTER READING.