



Reduce Reuse - Recycle

A Directory to Recycling

This special insert to the *NEBLINE* was prepared by the University of Nebraska/Lancaster County Cooperative Extension, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and City Recycling Office to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Earth Day.

Celebrate Earth Day April 22, 2000!

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Who wants to breathe dirty air or swim in a polluted lake? I don't and I'm sure you don't either. When former Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson noticed our country's air, water, and soil were being polluted; plants and animals were dying, people around the United States were upset. They wanted to change things, but our country's leaders weren't listening. They were not making laws to protect the environment.

Finally, in June 1969, Senator Nelson thought of an idea to get the attention of the politicians. The idea was to have a nation-wide demonstration. If enough people got involved, everyone, from the president to each city's mayor, would have to take notice.

It worked! On April 22, 1970, Earth Day was held, one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of democracy. Twenty million people showed they cared and politicians finally started to listen.

Nearly every town and school in the nation had special

activities. Scientists, doctors, store clerks, police officers, factory workers, teachers, students, and others took time off to show their concern for the Earth. They marched, went to concerts, took nature walks, and studied about pollution. In New York City, the mayor stopped people from driving cars on Fifth Avenue. People began to litter less. Employees traveled to work together in cars and buses. Congress made stronger laws and established a new department called the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA's job was to keep businesses, cities, and states from polluting our country's environment.

Soon the skies, the water and the land began to look cleaner. BUT...ten years passed and Americans started to forget the lessons of Earth Day. They grew careless and began to waste water, fuel, soil, and trees. The United States was not the only one polluting. All over the planet, poisons were quietly filling the air, water and land.

Businesses and governments weren't getting rid of waste safely. They dumped garbage and waste more than ever. They

filled the air with smog and the water with poisons. Store owners changed swamps and prairies into shopping malls. Trees were burned and wetlands destroyed to make farms. Oil spills kept happening. Rain forests, ice fields, deserts, swamps, forests, and prairies were being spoiled or destroyed.

Garbage was piling up. People bought things once, then threw them away; baby diapers, aluminum cans, plastic toys, fast-food packages. Trucks carried the garbage to enormous holes in the ground called dumps. There the trash sat. Millions of acres of land was filled to the brim with garbage. The world's oceans had thousands of tons of trash floating in them. Creatures were getting sick — some were dying from the poisons in the air and water. Pollution was killing the planet and people were scared. Something had to be done.

Dennis Hayes, a lawyer and an important worker in the first organized Earth Day in the 70's, decided to work on Earth Day 1990. He organized people and they came up with plans that reached far beyond the United States. On April 22, 1990, 200

million people, in more than 140 countries, celebrated the second Earth Day. Children around the world formed cleanup teams to pick up litter in the country and cities.

In Nicaragua, people planted 10,000 fruit trees. Japan held a Garbage Festival. People learned how garbage was recycled into everything from postcards to soap. In Jordan, the government planted a tree for every new baby born in the country. A team of mountain climbers from the U.S., Russia, and China climbed Mount Everest to pick up the trash others had left behind.

After Earth Day 1990, world groups continued to share ideas they wanted every country to do. They included: cutting down on garbage, saving forests and animals, cleaning up water and air, farming with fewer chemicals, planting more trees, and using land wisely.

Now, governments are making laws to protect the environment but everyone must do their part. Every action we take will help save the Earth.



This year is the 30th Celebration of Earth Day and each of us should be doing our part to save the planet.

Why not make every day Earth Day. We can by reusing things, cutting down on making garbage and recycling, saving and planting trees, composting. Also saving energy, buying toys that last, learning about nature, saving the rain forests, walking, riding bikes, taking the bus or carpooling. Sending letters to the mayor and city council members, to county, state and national officials requesting them to support legislation that protects/preserves the environment, and most importantly, respect our planet and our environment.

Special Waste Program for Businesses

The mission of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) is to protect and promote the health of the citizens and the environment of Lincoln and Lancaster County. The Special Waste Program ensures proper management of wastes that may pose a hazard to health and the environment.

What is special waste?

A waste generated by industries, commercial businesses or home occupations which:

- ✓ Has the potential to create a negative effect on the public health or the environment.
- ✓ Because of its characteristics, it requires special handling at the landfill.
- ✓ Requires regulation by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, US EPA, OSHA and DOT.

Currently there are 35 types of waste Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) permit and regulate. Eighteen of the 35 are required to have permits regardless of the quantity of waste they generate.

How does a business find out if they have a special waste?

✓ Call TAP (Technical Assistance Program) at LLCHD. TAP is a non-regulatory approach that provides free consultation to help business to understand the processes in their business and how to manage the waste they produce. A technical assistance engineer can give you no nonsense, practical advice and action-oriented solutions for disposal of waste and assistance with regulatory requirements. Call Ron Eriksen at 441-6238 or Beth Mann at 441-6235 for TAP.

✓ Businesses of Lincoln-Lancaster County are required to fill out a special waste inventory. This special waste inventory determines if your business generates special waste and if a permit will be required for disposal.

If your business has not completed a special waste inventory, contact Ron Eriksen or Beth Mann for assistance with the special waste inventory process.

Banned Wastes: The following wastes are banned from Lincoln Landfills.

1. Hazardous wastes
2. Special wastes without prior approval
3. Bulk liquids
4. Waste oil and lead acid batteries
5. Tires
6. Out-of-county waste

Examples of potential hazardous or special wastes:

- ✓ Sludge and sediment from tanks
- ✓ Waste contained in drums or buckets
- ✓ Waste marked with placards, warnings or danger labels
- ✓ Solvents, thinners or paints
- ✓ Petroleum contaminated wastes
- ✓ Asbestos containing wastes
- ✓ Fluorescent light tubes, mercury containing waste
- ✓ PCB wastes, light ballasts, dielectric fluids
- ✓ Infectious wastes including treated Radioactive wastes
- ✓ Flammable, explosive or corrosive wastes
- ✓ Pesticides and herbicides
- ✓ Treated railroad ties, power poles and lumber
- ✓ Industrial/process dusts, airborne wastes

Banned waste recycling options and disposal alternatives:

Businesses in Lincoln-Lancaster County can recycle several of the banned wastes. For information on where to recycle banned waste or alternative disposal options, call Ron Eriksen or Beth Mann.