

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Join us for the next meeting of the Sustainability Committee on September 27!**
- **National Drug Take-Back Day is September 29!**
- **Columbus Day holiday is Monday October 8.**
- **Next staff meeting in Lowell: November 16.**
- **Mark your calendar for moving day: November 17!**

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Premier Issue By Heather Radcliffe

Welcome to the first issue of *Eco-Office Bulletin*, the newsletter of NEIWPCC's Sustainability Committee. The Sustainability Committee is a voluntary committee formed in 2008 with a distinct focus on the areas of water conservation, energy conservation and emissions reductions, recycling and composting, green meetings, and green purchasing.

We have launched this newsletter as a way to provide you with tips on environmental practices in the office and at home and to provide a forum for any and all things related to sustainability. We hope you enjoy this first newsletter featuring articles from our com-

mittee members.

In the future, our goal is to distribute a newsletter on a quarterly basis. We encourage feedback, including your own tips or items of interest. Please forward contributions to hradcliffe@neiwpc.org. All staff are invited to join the Sustainability Committee, which meets at noon on the fourth Thursday of the month.



Teaching future generations: Ava does her shopping with reusable cloth bags.

Please join us at one of our upcoming meetings:

- ◆ September 27, 2012
- ◆ October 25, 2012
- ◆ November 29, 2012
- ◆ December 27, 2012

Great ideas but no time for monthly meetings? Contact Susy King with your thoughts.

National Take-Back Day By Jaclyn Harrison

September 29, 2012
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has scheduled a National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day for Saturday, September 29. This is a great opportunity to safely dispose of unwanted, unused prescription, and over-the-counter medications.

These DEA-sponsored events have been overwhelmingly successful. There have been four National Take-Back Days since 2010. To date, 1.5 million pounds of unwanted medication has been col-

lected in over 5,000 locations nationwide. To search for a collection site near you, visit: <http://1.usa.gov/QyQnlz>.

Proper Disposal of Household Prescriptions and Over-the-Counter Drugs

- ◆ Do NOT flush or pour any drugs down the drain or garbage disposal.
- ◆ When available, take your medications to a local collection event.
- ◆ If there is no collection event in your area, mix the medications



with something undesirable such as coffee grounds, cat litter, or dirt. Dispose of the drugs in your household trash.

The Green Thing Reprinted from anonymous email

“...our generation didn't have the green thing in its day.”



Checking out at the store, the young cashier suggested to the older woman that she should bring her own grocery bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologized and explained, "We didn't have this green thing back in my earlier days."

The clerk responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations."

She was right - our generation didn't have the green thing in its day.

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles, and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So, they really were recycled...but we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

We walked up stairs, because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We

walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks. But she was right...we didn't have the green thing in our day.

Back then, we washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the throw-away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy-gobbling machine burning up 220 volts—wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days.

(Continued on back page)

How to recycle your unwanted items before the office move

Place your recyclable items in the large white bin across from the west lobby elevator on the first floor of our office building. Enter the corridor across from the front entrance of our office space and follow the signs to the west lobby elevator.

Purge Before Packing By Erin Jacobs

Our upcoming office move is the perfect opportunity to declutter in an environmentally friendly way. By recycling unwanted items, we can reduce the amount of waste that an office move can generate. The Boott Mills South building accepts a full range of materials that can be recycled instead of discarded. Remember to purge your recyclable

items before you pack for the move!

What materials can be recycled?

- ◆ Monitors
- ◆ Servers
- ◆ Compact Discs
- ◆ Batteries
- ◆ Scrap metal
- ◆ Fax machines, Scanners, Printers, Copiers
- ◆ Fitness equipment
- ◆ Phones, Cell phones, Chargers
- ◆ Radios, Speakers
- ◆ Switches
- ◆ Wire
- ◆ Refrigerators, Microwaves
- ◆ Light fixtures
- ◆ Electrical equipment
- ◆ Snow blowers
- ◆ Routers, Modems
- ◆ All appliances

- ◆ Battery operated tools
 - ◆ Lawn mowers
 - ◆ A/C units
 - ◆ CPUs and laptops
 - ◆ Fire alarm equipment
 - ◆ Fitness equipment
- *Please call the recycling contractor, Northeast Material Handling (978-459-9595) if you have large items for pick-up (e.g., filing cabinets, metal desks, bicycles, etc.). Please note that the contractor does not accept TVs, toner, or florescent bulbs.*

Feel free to bring in items from home too!

If you have any questions or need help finding the recycling bin, please contact Erin Jacobs.



Recycling at the New Office By Nick Cohen



Did you know that the following items are recyclable at our new offices?

Accounting ledgers, letterhead, stationery, envelopes, loose-leaf, filler paper, brochures and pamphlets, carbonless forms (NCR paper), magazines, computer paper, manila file

folders, copier paper, newspaper, paper bags, printed corrugated containers, domestic manufacture double-lined containers.

Office recycling is picked up weekly and deposited into an onsite recycling compactor. We will recycle plastic ourselves. Other items not recyclable within the building are:

all other types of metal, glass, hard-covered books, clothing, metal blade strappings, egg cartons, rope, food waste, sand, gravel, foreign OCC, styrofoam, garbage, waxed boxes, copy paper ream wrappers.

Why recycle paper products?

According to National Geographic, recycling paper saves “energy and saves trees, which reduces

the amount of carbon dioxide present in the atmosphere. Producing a recycled paper product requires only 60 percent of the energy required to create one from fresh wood pulp, and recycling a ton of paper can save 17 trees. Recycling paper also requires about half the water normally used in processing paper from virgin wood.”

You may also want to consider environmentally-beneficial alternatives to recycling, such as avoiding printing unless necessary (“reducing”) or reusing single-sided paper for scrap paper and notes (“reusing”).

Several electronic and other bulky office supplies are also recyclable at our new office. Look for an email on specific items when we move.



Look for the new blue bin in the old kitchen to recycle batteries, CD's, and DVD's.

From the Chair By Susy King

In recent months, several new energetic staff have joined the sustainability committee, bringing renewed energy and fresh ideas to the table. I am very excited about the creation of our newsletter as a way to update staff on what we are working on and provide tips about being more green both in the office and at home.

I encourage all staff to attend one

of our meetings and learn more about our activities. If you don't feel you have the time to join the committee, please feel free to send us ideas for topics you would like us to research or initiatives you would like us to consider.

We are always looking for new ways that we can reduce our organization's impact on our natural resources, so all suggestions are welcome!



Autumn is Here! By Clair Ryan

Autumn is here! Soon the leaves will change and begin to fall, and homeowners across New England will head outside to clear their yards. Before you tackle this seasonal chore, here's something to consider: Leaves contain nutrients which can cause water quality problems when delivered to

waters in large doses. You might want to consider using a mulching mower to shred leaves and return them to your lawn instead of using lawn fertilizer. Alternately, if your municipality provides roadside leaf collection by a vacuum truck, you can pile leaves in front of your lawns.

However, you should be careful not to pile the leaves in the road or in roadside ditches where they can be washed into storm drains, and you should also avoid piling the leaves more than a day or two before collection occurs. Other municipalities may collect bagged leaves, which should be placed in

biodegradable paper bags and left curbside. Leaves and other yard waste should never be dumped in storm ditches or drains, onto roadways or into wetlands, ponds, and lakes. With this in mind, rake away, and enjoy the season!



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Established by an Act of Congress in 1947, the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission is a not-for-profit interstate agency that employs a variety of strategies to meet the water-related needs of our member states—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. We serve and assist our states by:

- Coordinating forums and events that encourage cooperation among the states
- Developing resources that foster progress on water and wastewater issues
- Representing the region in matters of federal policy
- Training environmental professionals
- Initiating and overseeing scientific research
- Educating the public
- Providing overall leadership in water management and protection

The Green Thing Continued from Page 2

Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing. But that young lady is right...we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

Back then, we had one TV, or radio, in the house—not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of the state of Montana. In the kitchen, we blended and stirred by

hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working, so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity. But she's right...we didn't have the green thing back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty

instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull. But we didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus, and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service. We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza joint.

But isn't it sad that the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were, just because we didn't have the green thing back then?



Ava says no to plastic bags.



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Special thanks to

Ava "Ace" Sylvester for

her fabulous modeling skills!