

Have Trash? Recycle!
by
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In the United States we produce millions of tons of trash each day. What do we do with it? Some is burned, but no one wants to live near the burning trash because of the smoke and smell. Some trash is dumped on land set aside for this purpose. This land is called a landfill. When it gets full, another piece of land must be found. Most people don't like living near a landfill either.

The best thing to do with trash is to recycle as much as possible. Useful things can be made from recycled trash. For example, aluminum soft drink and beer cans can be recycled into new cans. Tin cans can also be recycled as well as paper, flattened cardboard, plastic soda bottles and plastic bags.

Several years ago Montgomery County started a recycle program. It is hoped that eventually one half of all the county trash will be recycled. The county has a contract for home pick up.

Once a week a truck picks up items for recycling. Another truck takes garden trash (sticks, leaves, grass, weeds). The truck which collects other than garden trash will take newspapers (tied with string or in paper bags). It also takes clean cans, plastic bottles with necks marked 1 or 2 on the bottom and glass bottles and jars.

If you want to get rid of furniture which is still in good condition, the HOC (Housing Opportunity Commission) will take it. The HOC recycles tables, chairs, sofas, beds, mattresses and box springs. Appliances may not be recycled this way. Call 301-495-0983 to find out when the pickup truck can come.

Don't Dump, Donate! This is the slogan for our county's program to save leftover or used building materials. These include lumber, shingles, carpeting, wallpaper, bathtubs, toilets, cabinets and many more items. Donations of this kind help offer low-income housing. These gifts are tax deductible. They also help save landfill space. To learn more, call 240-777-6400.

Sometimes people wonder what to do with leftover paint. The first rule is to buy only what you need. Try to use all of it. Unopened cans can sometimes be returned to the seller. If not, you may want to donate the paint to a non-profit group such as a church, school or theater troop.

Water base paint will dry up if you leave the lid off. It can then go in the regular trash. Mixing with paint hardener (available in hardware stores) can speed the process. Oil base paints must be treated as hazardous waste.

Montgomery County collects clothing and other household items through the Clothing and Textile Recycling Program. Items which can be recycled include clothes, shoes, belts, purses, towels, sheets, drapes and cloth pieces at least 15" x 15". All must be in good shape, clean and dry. You might want to first check local charities. Call 301-840-2370 for a list of organizations who can use these things. Many take only certain kinds of things.

For full information about recycling, check the website www.MCRecycles.org or call 240-777-6400. Some one there can answer all of your questions about any of the recycling programs. Or you can ask for a free package of facts to be mailed to you.

Recycling helps you by getting rid of what you don't want or need. Recycling helps others by providing things they might not otherwise be able to get.